



Article VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Ordinances of the Church

1

What are ordinances?

- What is an ordinance?
- How many ordinances are there?

2

What are your views on baptism?

- Who was baptized as an infant? Were you baptized again?
- Has anyone who was baptized as a child after “being saved” (not as an infant) chosen to be baptized a “second time”?
- For all who have been baptized twice (either as an infant or not), why did you or did you not choose to be baptized again?
- Does baptism do anything or is it salvific in anyway?
- Why is baptism important?
- Is baptism necessary?

3

What are your views on the Lord's Supper?

- What is the Lord's Supper (why do we take it)?
- Is Jesus bodily present in the Lord's Supper?
- Is the grace of God given through the Lord's Supper?
- Should communion only be taken in church?
- How often should we take the Lord's Supper?
- Should the bread and cup be limited to only members of our church or denomination, or can any Christian participate?
- Should we use wine instead of grape juice?

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Our Approach to Article VII

- Southern Baptist theology of the ordinances
- Scripture
 - Scripture of God working through material means
 - Scripture on baptism
 - Scripture on the Lord's Supper
- The ordinances in the Early Church
- The Catholic views
- The Reformation
- A theology of baptism
- A theology of the Lord's Supper

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

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Southern Baptist Ordinances

VII. Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

[*Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.*](#)

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

1. Believer's Baptism

“Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

Who should be baptized?

- Believer's baptism is the doctrine that delineated the early Baptists from the puritan movement
 - “One historian has observed of the Particular Baptists, ‘In fact, Baptism apart, it would be difficult to distinguish their worship from that of Independents.’” — H. Leon McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1987), 93.
- If you accept infant baptism, it would be hard to consider you a Baptist anymore

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Why do others baptize infants?

- **Roman Catholics - Catechism of the Catholic Church, CCC 1250**

“Born with a fallen human nature and tainted by original sin, children also have need of the new birth in Baptism to be freed from the power of darkness and brought into the realm of the freedom of the children of God, to which all men are called. The sheer gratuitousness of the grace of salvation is particularly manifest in infant Baptism. The Church and the parents would deny a child the priceless grace of becoming a child of God were they not to confer Baptism shortly after birth.”

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Why do others baptize infants?

Lutherans – Book of Concord – Defense of the Augsburg Confession Article IX.

1. “For it is very certain that the promise of salvation pertains also to little children... Therefore it is necessary to baptize little children, that the promise of salvation may be applied to them, according to Christ’s command, Matt. 28:19: *Baptize all nations.*”
2. “Secondly, it is manifest that God approves of the baptism of little children. Therefore, the Anabaptists, who condemn the baptism of little children, believe wickedly. That God, however, approves of the baptism of little children is shown by this, namely, that God gives the Holy Ghost to those thus baptized [to many who have been baptized in Childhood]. For if this baptism would be in vain, the Holy Ghost would be given to none, none would be saved, and finally there would be no Church.”

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Why do others baptize infants?

Lutherans – Book of Concord – Larger Catechism – On Infant Baptism

3. “Further, we say that we are not so much concerned whether the person baptized believes or not; for on that account Baptism does not become invalid; but everything depends upon the Word and command of God... Baptism is nothing else than water and the Word of God in and with each other, that is, when the Word is added to the water, Baptism is valid, even though faith be wanting. For my faith does not make Baptism, but receives it. Now, Baptism does not become invalid even though it be wrongly received or employed; since it is not bound to our faith, but the Word... For even though infants did not believe, which, however, is not the case, yet their baptism as now shown would be valid... Thus we do also in infant baptism. We bring the child in the conviction and hope that it believes, and we pray that God may grant it faith; but we do not baptize it upon that, but solely upon the command of God.”

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Why do others baptize infants?

Presbyterians – Westminster Larger Catechism - Q. 166

Q. Unto whom is Baptism to be administered?

A. Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible Church, and so strangers from the covenant of promise, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him; but infants descended from parents, either both or but one of them professing faith in Christ, and obedience to him, are in that respect, within the covenant, and to be baptized.

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Why do others baptize infants?

Presbyterians – Heidelberg Catechism – Q & A 74

Q. Should infants also be baptized?

A. Yes. Infants as well as adults are included in God's covenant and people, and they, no less than adults, are promised deliverance from sin through Christ's blood and the Holy Spirit who produces faith. Therefore, by baptism, the sign of the covenant, they too should be incorporated into the Christian church and distinguished from the children of unbelievers. This was done in the Old Testament by circumcision, which was replaced in the New Testament by baptism.

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

1. Believer's Baptism

- What about our children? Are they saved?
- Why do we treat them like believers by teaching them to pray and worship the Lord when we do not believe that unbelievers cannot do those things?
- How much faith does someone need to be saved?
- When should we baptize our children?

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

2. Baptism by Immersion

“Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

- The proper mode of baptism is to immerse someone completely in water
- This is what we call the “mode” of baptism
- Different modes of baptism:
 - Affusion (Pouring)
 - Aspersio (Sprinkling)
 - Immersion (Dipping)
- ALL Christians accept immersion as a mode of baptism, but others accept other modes as valid
- Should we have people who were baptized through other modes be baptized again?

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

2. Baptism by Immersion

The Didache; Chapter 7

“Regarding baptism, baptize thus. After giving the foregoing instructions, ‘Baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit’ in running water. But if you have no running water, baptize in any other; and, if you cannot in cold water, then in warm. But, if the one is lacking, pour the other three times on the head ‘in the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit.’ But, before the baptism, let the one who baptizes and the one to be baptized fast, and any others who are able to do so. And you shall require the person being baptized to fast for one or two days.”

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

3. Act of Obedience

“It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer’s faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer’s death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus.”

- In Baptist theology, this point is the one that makes baptism important because obedience to Christ matters
- Baptism being an act of obedience is what causes Baptists to question the sacramental views of other Christian groups
- If Baptism is obedience, then baptism is a work, and we are not saved by works but by faith alone (sola fide)

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

4. Only a Symbol

“It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer’s faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer’s death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus.”

- “An outward sign of an inward reality that God has already worked in us”
- There is no power in baptism whatsoever because everything baptism represents has already been accomplished by God
- Baptism has nothing to do with the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38)

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

5. A Public Profession

“It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead.”

- Baptism is our public profession of our faith in Jesus Christ
- For Southern Baptists, this is the ultimate answer to the question, “What is baptism?”
- Baptism cannot be a private affair and must take place in the community of believers

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

6. A Prerequisite

“Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord’s Supper.”

- Baptism is said to be a prerequisite to both church membership and the Lord’s Supper
- If Baptism is by immersion and it is a prerequisite for church membership, then according to the BFM, this is why we re-baptize (or baptize for the first time) all who were not baptized by immersion.

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

7. Ordinances

“Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord’s Supper.”

- *Ordinance* – an authoritative decree; command
- We never see the word ordinance used to describe baptism and the Lord’s Supper, but the idea is there
 - 1 Corinthians 14:37 – “If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord.”
 - 1 Timothy 3:15 – “If I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.”

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

7. Ordinances

- Historically, Baptists believed there were more than two church ordinances
- The Baptist Catechism (1693)
 - Q. 95. What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption?
 - A. The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption are His ordinances, especially the Word, Baptism, the Lord's Supper and Prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

7. Ordinances

- The Baptist Catechism (1693)

Q. 99. Wherein do Baptism and the Lord's Supper differ from the other ordinances of God?

A. Baptism and the Lord's Supper differ from the other ordinances of God in that they were specially instituted by Christ to represent and apply to believers the benefits of the new covenant by visible and outward signs.

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

7. Ordinances

- Are the ordinances required or optional?
- 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith; Chapter 26; Paragraph 6-8:

“The members of these churches are saints by calling, visibly manifesting and evidencing (in and by their profession and walking) their obedience unto that call of Christ;¹² and do willingly consent to walk together, according to the appointment of Christ; giving up themselves to the Lord, and one to another, by the will of God, in professed subjection to the ordinances of the Gospel.”

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

7. Ordinances

- 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith; Chapter 26; Paragraph 7:

“To each of these churches therefore gathered, according to his mind declared in his word, he has given all that power and authority, which is in any way needful for their carrying on that order in worship and discipline, which he has instituted for them to observe; with commands and rules for the due and right exerting, and executing of that power”

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

7. Ordinances

- 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith; Chapter 26; Paragraph 8:

“A particular church, gathered and completely organized according to the mind of Christ, consists of officers and members; and the officers appointed by Christ to be chosen and set apart by the church (so called and gathered), for the peculiar administration of ordinances, and execution of power or duty, which he intrusts them with, or calls them to, to be continued to the end of the world, are bishops or elders, and deacons.”

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Southern Baptists on Baptism

7. Ordinances

- Most Christians use the word sacrament to speak of what we call ordinances
- *Sacrament*
 - St. Augustine – “For a sign is a thing which, over and above the impression it makes on the senses, causes something else to come into mind as a consequence of itself”
 - A visible sign of an invisible grace
 - A means of grace
- For modern Baptists, the use of the word sacrament is almost forbidden (not officially, just in strong opinions)
- The common reasons for not using sacrament:
 - It is not used in the Bible
 - The ordinances do not have any type of saving efficacy
 - Sacrament can be confused with Roman Catholic teaching

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Southern Baptists on Communion

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Southern Baptists on Communion

Terms in relation to the Lord's Supper

- The Lord's Supper has a few different names:
 - **The Lord's Supper**
 - **Communion**
 - **The Eucharist**
 - Like the term sacrament, Baptists hesitate to use this word
 - **εὐχαριστία (eucharistia)** – thanksgiving
 - Luke 22:17 – “And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks he said, ‘Take this, and divide it among yourselves.’”
- **Elements** – the items that are used in the Lord's Supper (bread and wine)

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Southern Baptists on Communion

1. Symbolic

“The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.”

- The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act
- The bread and “fruit of the vine” do not become the actual body and blood as taught in the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation
- They remain the symbols of what they represent

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Southern Baptists on Communion

1. Symbolic

“The Lord’s Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.”

- While Southern Baptists generally deny the real presence of Christ in the Supper, the BFM does not outright deny it
- The use of the language of signs and symbol have always been employed to describe the elements in the Lord’s Supper

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Southern Baptists on Communion

1. Symbolic

- Baptists have always held to a symbolic view of the Supper while still believing Christ is present in the elements in a spiritual nature
- 1689 London Baptist Confession; Chapter 30; Paragraph 7
 “Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this ordinance, do then also inwardly by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually receive, and feed upon Christ crucified, and all the benefits of his death; the body and blood of Christ being then not corporally or carnally, but spiritually present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses.”

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Southern Baptists on Communion

2. Act of Obedience

“The Lord’s Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.”

- The Lord’s Supper is an act of obedience to Christ
- Just as with Baptism, this is the Baptist way of making the ordinances our work and not the work of God

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Southern Baptists on Communion

2. Act of Obedience

- While the Lord’s Supper is an act of obedience, Christians have historically spoken of Communion as the work of God which we receive in faith
- The Baptist Catechism
 - Q. 98. How do Baptism and the Lord's Supper become effectual means of salvation?
 - A. Baptism and the Lord's Supper become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them or in him that administers them, but only by the blessing of Christ and the working of His Spirit in them that by faith receive them.

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Southern Baptists on Communion

2. Act of Obedience

- The Baptist Catechism

Q. 107. What is the Lord's Supper?

A. The Lord's Supper is a holy ordinance, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, His death is showed forth, and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporeal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of His body and blood, with all His benefits, to their spiritual nourishment, and growth in grace.

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Southern Baptists on Communion

3. Members Only

“The Lord’s Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.”

- Participants in the Supper can only be baptized members of the Christian Church
- Baptists have had many debates through history on who is and is not allowed to participate

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Southern Baptists on Communion

3. Members Only

- The practice of not allowing people to participate in the Lord's Supper is often referred to as "fencing the table"
- Why fence the table?
- Who might we refuse from participation if we do?

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Southern Baptists on Communion

3. Members Only

- 1 Corinthians 11:27-30 – Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.

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Southern Baptists on Communion

3. Members Only

- The BFM only requires that participants be baptized believers of a local church, but churches are free to be stricter
 - Some Baptists have proposed that only members of their church are allowed to participate, even refusing other Baptists
 - Others only allow only Baptists to participate for various reasons:
 - Some believe Baptists are the only true Christians throughout history
 - Others will not allow other denominations who practice infant baptism because those believers have never experienced believers' baptism
- Other reasons to fence the table is to refuse the bread and cup from those who are under church discipline

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Southern Baptists on Communion

4. Bread and Fruit of the Vine

“The Lord’s Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.”

- The elements of the Supper are bread and the “fruit of the vine”
- Does it matter what elements we use in the Lord’s Supper?

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Southern Baptists on Communion

4. Bread and Fruit of the Vine

- Yes, it does matter. I'm sorry megachurches, YOU CANNOT USE OREOS AND MILK (OR DR. PEPPER?)
- Both bread and wine have deep biblical connections
- Bread
 - Bread was used in the Passover (Exodus 12)
 - God provided for the people of Israel by raining manna (Exodus 16) which became a central theme in scripture
 - "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11)
 - "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord" (Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4)

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Southern Baptists on Communion

4. Bread and Fruit of the Vine

- Bread (cont.)
 - Jesus calls himself the bread of life, connecting himself to the manna in the wilderness (John 6)
 - We will eat bread with the Lord in the end
 - "Blessed is he who will eat bread in the kingdom of God" (Luke 14:15)
 - "To the one who conquers I will give him some of the hidden manna" (Revelation 2:17)
 - Bread is constantly used as a symbol pointing to Christ

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Southern Baptists on Communion

4. Bread and Fruit of the Vine

- Wine (and I mean wine... the fermented stuff)
 - Wine was used in the drink offering in the OT (Exodus 29:40; Leviticus 23:13)
 - “You cause the grass to grow for the livestock and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth and *wine to gladden the heart of man*, oil to make his face shine and bread to strengthen man’s heart.” – Psalm 104:14-15
 - Wine was a sign of the promises of God being fulfilled in the prophets:
 - “And in that day the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the streambeds of Judah shall flow with water; and a fountain shall come forth from the house of the LORD and water the Valley of Shittim.” – Joel 3:18
 - “ ‘Behold, the days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when the plowman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows the seed; the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it. I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant them on their land, and they shall never again be uprooted out of the land that I have given them,’ ” – Amos 9:13-15

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Southern Baptists on Communion

4. Bread and Fruit of the Vine

- Wine (cont.)
 - Consider the significance of these prophecies as Jesus turns water into wine and what that would mean to a Jew awaiting the Messiah (John 2:1-12)
 - The cup of blessing in the Passover, while not found in the Old Testament, was the cup of wine Jesus gave during the Lord’s Supper (1 Corinthians 10:16,21)
 - “What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord, I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people.” - Psalm 116:13
 - Christ gave us the cup of blessing and then took the cup of wrath for us
 - Finally, we will drink wine with the Lord at the marriage supper of the Lamb

“On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken.” – Isaiah 25:6-8

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Southern Baptists on Communion

4. Bread and Fruit of the Vine

- Grape Juice or wine?
 - As far as I can tell, it was not even a question before the 1800s of using wine in Communion
 - In 1869 a dentist name Thomas Welch developed the method of pasteurizing grape juice to prevent its fermentation
 - Many Protestant denominations began using grape juice in the late 19th century and early 20th century
 - The Prohibition Act of 1919 and the teetotal mindset of many Protestants cemented this new tradition

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Southern Baptists on Communion

5. Memorial

“The Lord’s Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.”

- “Do this in remembrance of me.” (Luke 22:19)
- Remembrance is not the idea of remembering something forgotten, but holding fast to the covenant of God
- “But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided.” – Genesis 8:1

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Southern Baptists on Communion

5. Memorial

- Think of going to a wedding with your spouse and hearing the vows of that covenant exchanged
- The Passover was a meal of remembrance that tied the Israelites back to the Passover event of their ancestors
- What do we remember?
 - We remember Christ's life, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension
 - We remember the covenant made in His blood
 - We remember the forgiveness of our sins

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Southern Baptists on Communion

6. Future Hope

“The Lord’s Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.”

- Not only is the Lord’s Supper a meal in which we look backward, but we also await His return
- “For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” – Luke 22:18
- We trust in Jesus’ promise here and anticipate drinking the cup with Him again in that great Marriage Supper of the Lamb as we celebrate the fulfillment of all God’s promises

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Summary of SBC Ordinances

Baptism

1. Believer's Baptism
2. Baptism by Immersion
3. An Act of Obedience
4. A Symbol of Our Unity with Christ
5. A Public Profession
6. A Prerequisite to Membership and the Lord's Supper
7. An Ordinance

The Lord's Supper

1. Symbolic
2. An Act of Obedience
3. Members Only
4. Bread and Fruit of the Vine
5. Memorial
6. Future Hope
7. An Ordinance

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Is there more to the ordinances?

- Start thinking about the ordinances as gifts of God instead of our works, rules, and barriers
- Understand that doctrine about the Lord's Supper and baptism are doctrines about worship

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Signs, Symbols, and Seals

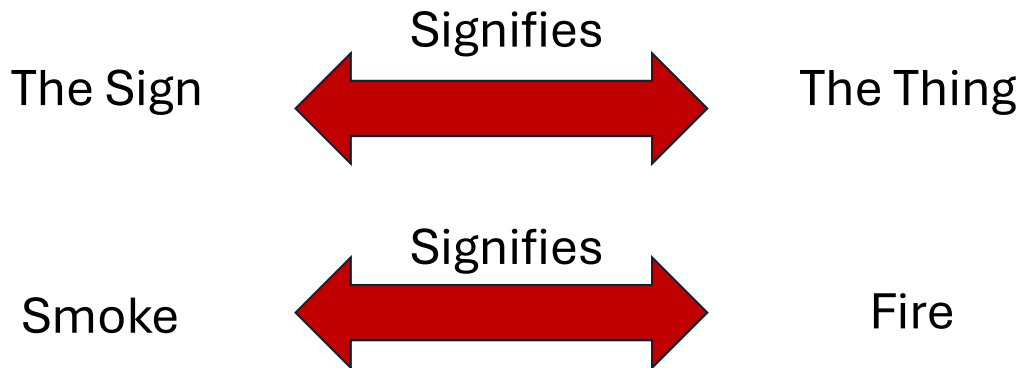
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On Signs and Symbols

- God has always given his grace through material means which we call signs and symbols
- The sign is so closely connected to the thing it signifies that they are indistinguishable to us
- “For a sign is a thing which, over and above the impression it makes on the senses, causes something else to come into the mind as a consequence of itself.” – Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, Book 2, Chapter 1.
- If you see smoke, what do you know is present?

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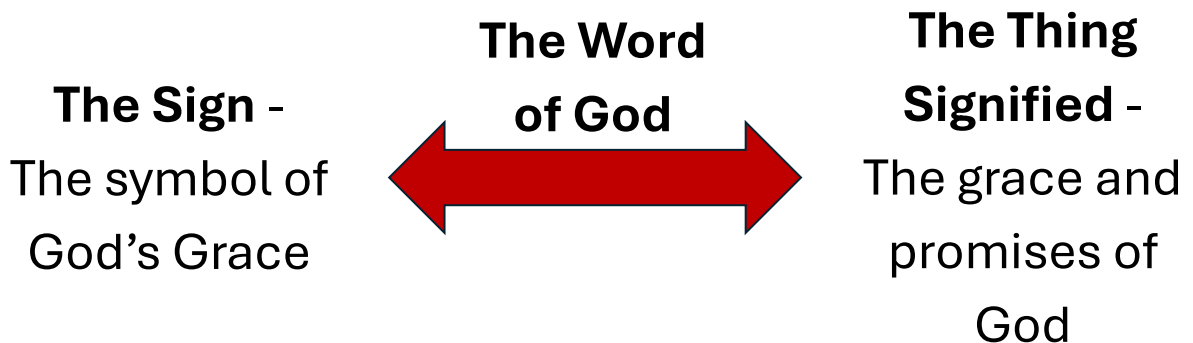
On Signs and Symbols



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On Signs and Symbols

What unites a sign to the thing it signifies?



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On Signs and Symbols

Tree of Life

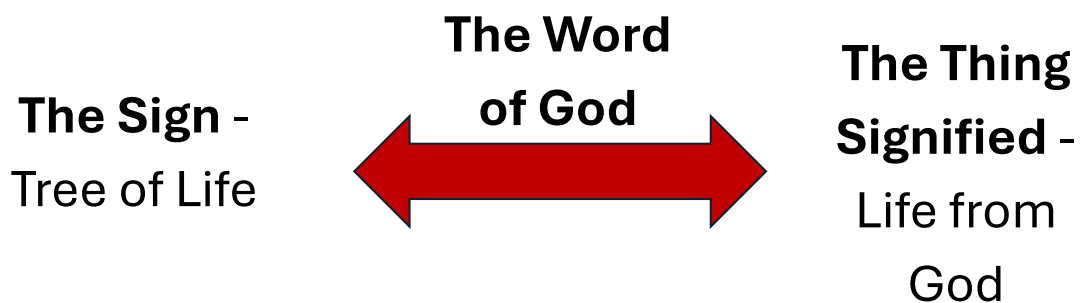
“And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” – Genesis 2:9

- What did they receive from the fruit of the tree of life?
 - “Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also the tree of life and eat, and live forever” – Genesis 3:22
- Does life come from the power of the tree itself?
- Why then does the tree give life?

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On Signs and Symbols

Tree of Life



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On Signs and Symbols

Tree of Knowledge

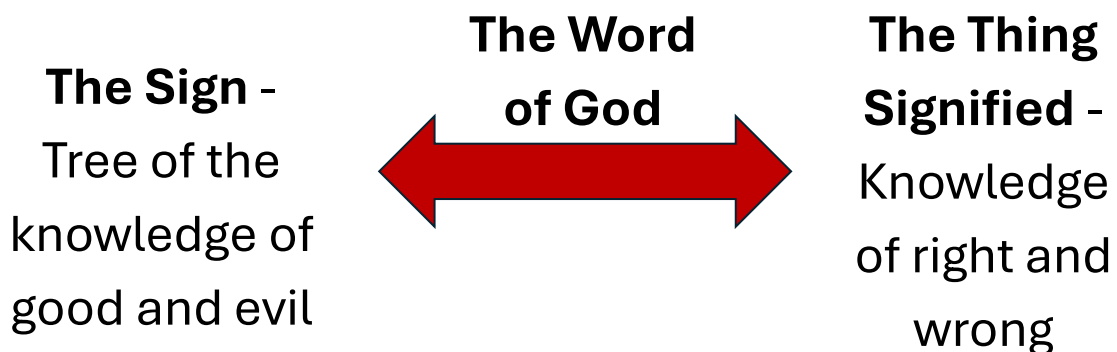
“And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” – Genesis 2:9

- What did they receive from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?
- Does this knowledge come from the power of the tree itself?
- Why then does the tree give this knowledge?

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On Signs and Symbols

Tree of Knowledge



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On Signs and Symbols

Bronze Serpent

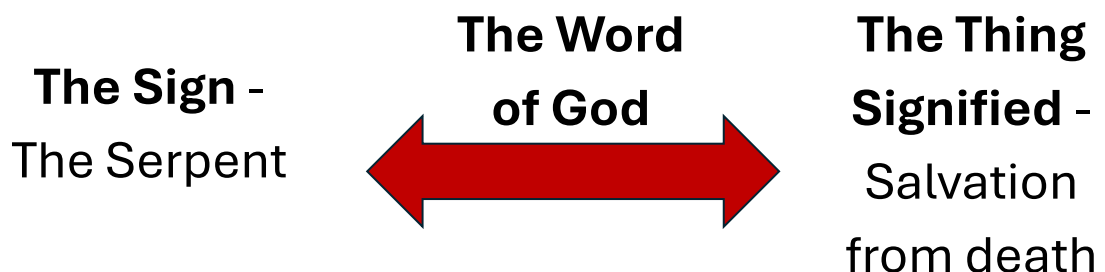
Numbers 21:5–9 (ESV)

⁵And the people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food.” ⁶Then the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. ⁷And the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.” ⁹So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

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On Signs and Symbols

Bronze Serpent



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On Signs and Symbols

Samson's Hair

Judges 13:2–5 (ESV)

²There was a certain man of Zorah, of the tribe of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. And his wife was barren and had no children. ³And the angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, “Behold, you are barren and have not borne children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. ⁴Therefore be careful and drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, ⁵for behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb, and he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines.”

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On Signs and Symbols

Samson's Hair

Judges 16:17–19 (ESV)

17 And he told her all his heart, and said to her, “A razor has never come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother’s womb. If my head is shaved, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak and be like any other man.” 18 When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, “Come up again, for he has told me all his heart.” Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hands. 19 She made him sleep on her knees. And she called a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him.

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On Signs and Symbols

Bronze Serpent

The Sign -
Samson's
Hair

**The Word
of God**



**The Thing
Signified -**
Strength
from God

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On Signs and Symbols

Jesus' Healing

John 9:6–7 (ESV)

⁶Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud ⁷and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

- Jesus heals using two material objects, the mud and the washing in the pool
- In other healing miracles Jesus doesn't use any means to heal, why do you think He uses these means?

64

On Signs and Symbols

Signs and Seals

- What reason does God give the signs?
- Let us consider the sign of circumcision

65

On Signs and Symbols

Signs and Seals

Genesis 17:9–14 (ESV)

⁹And God said to Abraham, “As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. ¹⁰This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. ¹¹You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. ¹²He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring, ¹³both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. ¹⁴Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”

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On Signs and Symbols

Signs and Seals

- Did circumcision make Abraham righteous?
- Was it circumcision itself that made the Israelite part of the covenant people of God?
- Were they considered a part of the covenant if they were not circumcised?
- The sign is so closely connected to the promise that it is indistinguishable

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On Signs and Symbols

Signs and Seals

Romans 4:9–12 (ESV)

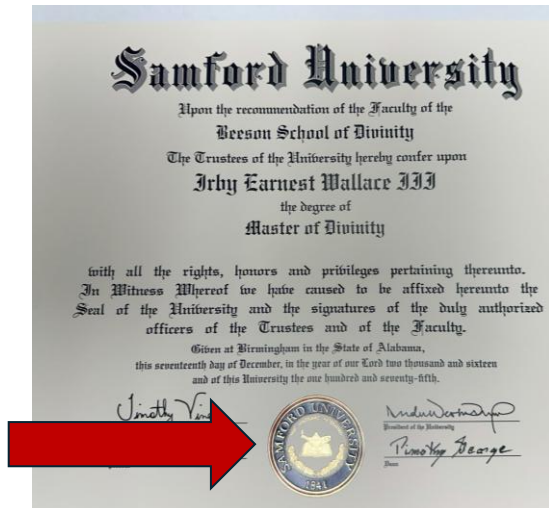
⁹ Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. ¹⁰ How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. ¹¹ He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, ¹² and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

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On Signs and Symbols

Signs and Seals

- The **sign** is the **seal** of the **promise**



69

On Signs and Symbols

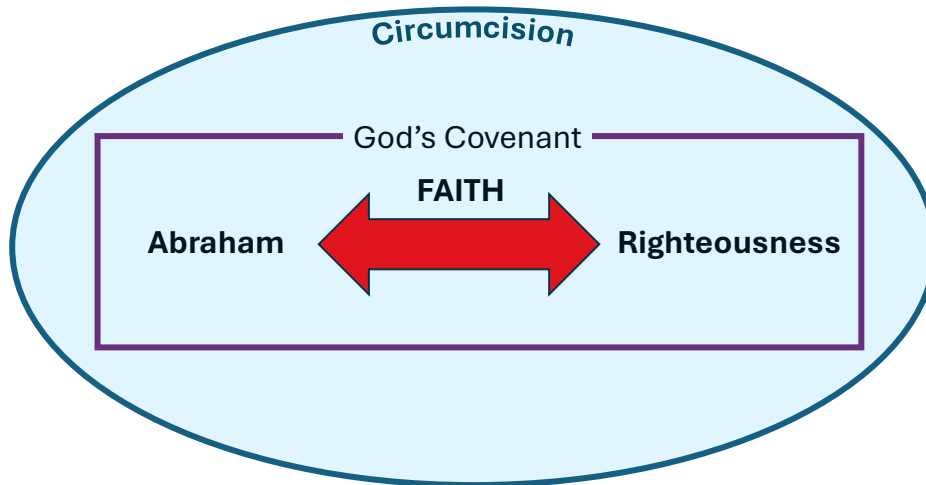
Signs and Seals

- Think about this in terms of circumcision
- The promise of God is the covenant that he gives Abraham
- The seal is the sign of circumcision which is God's promise to Abraham of the covenant

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On Signs and Symbols

Signs and Seals



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On Signs and Symbols

Signs and Seals

- “There Paul expressly argues that Abraham’s circumcision was not for his justification but for the seal of that covenant by faith in which he had already been justified. And what is there, I beg, to offend any man greatly if we teach that the promise is sealed by the sacraments, when it is clear from the promises themselves that each confirms the other?”

- John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book 4, Chapter 14, Section 5.

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On Signs and Symbols

Signs and Seals

- Abraham receives righteousness through his faith, not through circumcision
- The sign itself does not give righteousness
- God's promise is given through the covenant
- God gives Abraham the sign of circumcision as the sign/seal (the promise) that his covenant will be true
- The promise of the sign confirms the promise of the covenant
- Why does God give us so many promises?

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On Signs and Symbols

Signs and Seals

- “The sacraments, therefore, are exercises which make us more certain of the trustworthiness of God's Word. And because we are carnal, they are shown under carnal objects, to instruct us according to our dull capacity, and to lead us by the hand as tutors lead children. Augustine calls a sacrament “a visible word” for the reason that it represents God's promises as painted in a picture and sets them before our sight, portrayed graphically and in the manner of images.

-John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book 4, Chapter 14, Section 6.

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On Signs and Symbols

Signs and Seals

- The reason God gives us these signs is because we are weak. Praise God!
- These signs are visible words like real-life paintings which experience through all our senses
- God does not **need** to give us these signs, but he does so for our benefit which is his grace
- By giving Abraham the sign of circumcision, he and his wife would both be constantly reminded of the covenant and promises of God

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On Signs and Symbols

Summary

- God has always given his grace, promises, and salvation through physical means
- These physical means are signs that signify the work of God
- The **signs** make visible the working of God and point us toward God
- These signs do not give us righteousness in themselves
- These signs are given as **seals** which confirm the promises of God
- God gives us these signs to help us in our weakness

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Connection between Old and New

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Connection between Old and New

- The language of signs and seals is fine for circumcision, but what does that have to do with baptism and the Lord's Supper?
- I'm glad you asked.

78

Connection between Old and New

- Israel was given two ordinances just as we were: one that was initiatory and one that was a continuous reminder
 - Circumcision and the Passover
- We are given two ordinances: one initiatory and one that is a continuous reminder
 - Baptism and the Lord's Supper
- The Apostle Paul applies circumcision and the Passover to the Christian life and applies baptism and the Lord's Supper to Israel

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Connection between Old and New

1 Corinthians 5:6–8 (ESV)

⁶Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? ⁷Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

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Connection between Old and New

1 Corinthians 10:1–5 (ESV)

¹For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. ⁵Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

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Connection between Old and New

Colossians 2:9–15 (ESV)

⁹For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, ¹⁰and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. ¹¹In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹²having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

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Connection between Old and New

- Circumcision, Passover, Baptism, and Communion have many differences and similarities, but they are all given to us as signs of the covenants and seals of the promises and works of God
- The language of signs and seals found in Romans 4:11 gives us a way in which we can talk about these signs

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Scripture on Baptism: The Great Commission

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Scriptures on Baptism

Great Commission

- “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” Matthew 28:16
- We are commanded to make disciples by baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

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Scriptures on Baptism

Great Commission

Mark 16:14–16 (ESV)

14 Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen. 15 And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

- Mark 16:9-20 is called “the longer ending of Mark” and some of the earliest manuscripts of the Bible do not include this passage at all
- Some say it should be included, and some say it shouldn’t (depends on what helps or hurts your theology)

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Scripture on Baptism:

Conversion Accounts, The Altar Call, and The Sinner's Prayer

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Scriptures on Baptism

Conversion Accounts

- Acts 2:37-41, 8:12-24, 8:35-38, 9:17-18, 10:44-48, 16:14-15, 16:30-34, 18:5-8, 19:1-7, 22:12-16
- In each conversion account we see the same pattern:
 - The Word is preached
 - The Word is believed
 - The convert is baptized
 - The Holy Spirit is received
- While the order in which the Holy Spirit is received does vary in Acts, all four of these elements make up the conversion of a sinner into the faith

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Scriptures on Baptism

Conversion Accounts

Acts 8:34–39 (ESV)

³⁴ And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” ³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶ And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” ³⁸ And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. ³⁹ And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.

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Scriptures on Baptism

Conversion Accounts

Acts 16:14–15 (ESV)

¹⁴ One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. ¹⁵ And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us.

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Scriptures on Baptism

Conversion Accounts

Acts 22:12–16 (ESV)

¹²“And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there, ¹³came to me, and standing by me said to me, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight.’ And at that very hour I received my sight and saw him. ¹⁴And he said, ‘The God of our fathers appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from his mouth; ¹⁵for you will be a witness for him to everyone of what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.’

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Scriptures on Baptism

Conversion Accounts

- What is the pattern of Southern Baptist Churches in leading someone to salvation?
 - Preach the Word
 - Invitation and altar call
 - Sinner’s Prayer
 - Baptism
- Some would say that the Sinner’s Prayer is our repentance and profession of faith
 - The word we translate into repent is **Μετανοέω (metanoeu)** which means “to change one’s mind, feel remorse, be converted”
 - Repentance is not a prayer

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Scriptures on Baptism

Conversion Accounts

- Baptism was the initial confession of the new convert in their faith
- We have replaced the role of baptism with the altar call and sinner's prayer
- This process began in the Great Awakenings with the "anxious seat" or "mourner's bench" being used in "invitations to the altar" where individuals seeking salvation would sit up front for two purposes:
 - To bear down on the person and to get them to "break away from the chains of pride"
 - "To detect deception and delusion, and thus prevent false hopes"
 (From *Lectures on Revivals* by Charles Finney)

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Scriptures on Baptism

Conversion Accounts

- Though not the developer of the altar call, Charles Finney made it popular through his preaching and teaching in the early 19th century
- In the latter part of the 19th century, Dwight L. Moody would make this practice popular for mass evangelism
- While Charles Finney, D.L. Moody, and others created the framework for the sinner's prayer in their methodology, it would be Billy Graham and Bill Bright who would catapult the use of the sinner's prayer in the altar call in the twentieth century
- By the 1960s, the sinner's prayer and the altar call were the standard forms of evangelism
 - For more information, see this article: <https://www.9marks.org/review/the-origins-of-the-altar-call-and-the-sinners-prayer/>

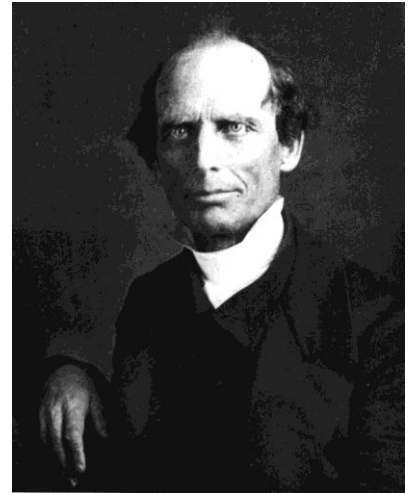
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Scriptures on Baptism

Conversion Accounts

“The church has always felt it necessary to have something of the kind to answer this very purpose. In the days of the apostles baptism answered this purpose. The Gospel was preached to the people, and then all those who were willing to be on the side of Christ were called on to be baptized. It held the precise place that the anxious seat does now, as a public manifestation of their determination to be Christians.”

- Finney, Charles, *Lectures on Revivals*, Lecture XIV



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Scriptures on Baptism

Conversion Accounts

- In no way am I intending to tear down the work those great preachers of the Gospel nor all the faithful men and women who have used this approach for the last 100-150 years
- Nor am I saying that a time for response to the preaching of the Word is wrong
- However, we need to think about the language we use in calling people to conversions and ask if it is biblical:
 - “Repeat this prayer and you will be saved”
 - “Ask Jesus into your heart”
 - “Jesus is knocking on your heart, will you let him in?”

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Scriptures on Baptism

Conversion Accounts

- Our current approach to evangelizing the sinner causes people to later ask, “Did I really mean it when I prayed the prayer or called on Jesus?”
 - Our approach to conversion causes people to doubt their conversion
 - Does your salvation have anything to do with how much emotion or sincerity you put into your prayer?
 - At any point in scripture are we told to pray Jesus into our hearts?
- In scripture what we see when someone wants to be saved is “repent and be baptized”
 - Conversion is about God opening our eyes to the truth and us responding in faith and repentance (See BFM, Article IV, Section A)
 - Baptism is our confession of faith and of repentance (which we will see in scripture later)

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Scriptures on Baptism

Conversion Accounts

- You may want to respond with:

Romans 10:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

- That confession is not the sinner’s prayer:

Romans 10:9 (ESV)

⁹ because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

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Scripture on Baptism:

Acts 2:38 Debate

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Scriptures on Baptism

Acts 2:38

Acts 2:36–41 (ESV)

³⁶“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

³⁷Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” ³⁸And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” ⁴⁰And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.” ⁴¹So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

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Scriptures on Baptism

Acts 2:38

- Acts 2:36-41 (1 Peter 3:21, also) poses a major challenge to the modern Baptist theology of baptism who want to say that Baptism has nothing to do with the forgiveness of sins
- In the past few years at the annual Southern Baptist Convention, there have been motions put forward to include the Nicene Creed in the BFM
- This has raised a major concern for man Southern Baptists as the Nicene Creed includes a phrase that says, “I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins”
 - For more on this, see <https://www.centerforbaptistrenewal.com/blog/2024/6/20/one-baptism-for-the-remission-of-sins-baptists-and-the-baptism-clause>

101

Scriptures on Baptism

Acts 2:38

- Acts 2:36-41 (1 Peter 3:21, also) poses a major challenge to the modern Baptist theology of baptism who want to say that Baptism has nothing to do with the forgiveness of sins
- Baptists read this verse like this, ³⁸And Peter said to them, “Repent [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- In the past few years at the annual Southern Baptist Convention, there have been motions put forward to include the Nicene Creed in the BFM
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Scriptures on Baptism

Acts 2:38

- Why do Southern Baptists have such a problem with this phrase from Acts 2:38 and from the Nicene Creed?
 - It seems to contradict other scripture on how our sins are forgiven
 - Ephesians 1:13 (ESV) - In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit
 - Romans 10:10 (ESV) - For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.
- For Southern Baptists then this verse cannot mean what it seems to mean if it contradicts scripture
 - Therefore, they typically go to the Greek to figure out what it really means

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Scriptures on Baptism

Causitive εἰς

- The Causitive εἰς (eis)
 - Acts 2:38 – And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ **for** the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
 - The Greek word translated “for” is “eis”
 - Eis is a preposition that has a wide variety of uses: to, unto, into, toward, so that, for, in order to, with respect to, against
 - All of these meanings are forward-looking
- Many today propose that eis also has a “causative meaning” or a backward-looking meaning
 - Acts 2:38 with a causative eis – “And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ **because of** the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

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Scriptures on Baptism

Causitive εἰς

- One passage they will often quote to prove this use of the eis is
 - Matthew 12:41 – “The men of Ninevah will rise up at the judgement with this generation and condemn it, for they repented **at** the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.”
- However, no one wants to change the meaning of eis in Matthew 26:28 and Luke 3:3
 - Matthew 26:28 - “for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many **for** the forgiveness of sins.”
 - Luke 24:47 – “and that repentance **for** the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.”

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Scriptures on Baptism

Causitive εἰς

- The earliest I can find of anyone reading Acts 2:38 with a causative eis is in 1923 from an article written by J.R. Mantey
 - That doesn’t mean there isn’t anyone before then, but I have yet to find it (if you do find something please let me know)
- I have also never seen a single English translation of the Bible which translates the verse with “because of”
 - “I’m very disappointed in many of our English translations which don’t bring this up.” – Andy Woods, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNil9nnZdW4> , 06:21.

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Scriptures on Baptism

Repunctuation

- A second argument often brought forward by Baptists is that the verse needs to be repunctuated to fit the grammar
- Greek manuscripts do not have punctuation and we have to supply the in our translations
- In Greek, sentences are not structured like English
 - Take this sentence as an example: “The black dog ran into the road.”
 - In Greek you could have, “Ran into the road dog black.”
 - The only way to know how the subjects, verbs, and prepositions go together is by their endings, cases, and gender

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Scriptures on Baptism

Repunctuation

In Southern:

2 nd Person	1 st Person
Plural	Singular
“Y’all repent”	“You be baptized”

- Acts 2:38 – And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in

2nd Person
Plural
“Y’all’s sins”

the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift

of the Holy Spirit.”

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Scriptures on Baptism

Repunctuation

- The verse would then read like this:
“Repent, and be baptized every one of you, for the forgiveness of your sins...”

OR

- “Repent (and be baptized every one of you) for the forgiveness of your sins...”

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Scriptures on Baptism

Repunctuation

- This reading of the text is very awkward, and it is awkward to think Peter would speak like this in his sermon
- The Church has not read the passage like this historically
- I have never seen an English translation punctuate this passage in this way

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Scripture on Baptism:

Acts 22:16

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Scriptures on Baptism

Acts 22:16

Acts 22:12–16 (ESV)

12 “And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there, 13 came to me, and standing by me said to me, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight.’ And at that very hour I received my sight and saw him. 14 And he said, ‘The God of our fathers appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from his mouth; 15 for you will be a witness for him to everyone of what you have seen and heard. 16 And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.’

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Scriptures on Baptism

Acts 22:16

- Southern Baptists argue that the aorist verb “calling” (ἐπικαλεσάμενος) connects to the verb “washing” (ἀπόλουσαι), thus the verse would read like:
 - “Rise and be baptized, having called on the name of the Lord, wash away your sins.”
 - “Rise and be baptized, having your sins forgiven, having called on the name of the Lord.”
- “Ananias wanted to hear Paul call on the name of the Lord for himself” – Andy Woods
 - For more information on this view see:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zD6c-UbWuo8&t=59s>

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Scripture on Baptism: 1 Peter 3:21

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Scriptures on Baptism

1 Peter 3:21

1 Peter 3:18–22 (ESV)

18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, 19 in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, 20 because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. 21 Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

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Scriptures on Baptism

1 Peter 3:21

- Many Southern Baptists say that Peter is talking about the baptism of the Holy Spirit and not water baptism
- Passages like the following cause Baptists to believe these water baptism passages are Spirit baptisms:
 - **Luke 3:15–17 (ESV)** - ¹⁵As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, ¹⁶John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."
 - **Isaiah 44:3 (ESV)** – ³For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.

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Scriptures on Baptism

1 Peter 3:21

- The context shows Peter is speaking about water baptism for 4 reasons:
 1. Peter directly relates baptism, the flood, and how Noah passed through the waters just as we pass through the waters
 - The flood was an antitype of our baptism.
 - “Which corresponds to this” - ἀντίτυπος (antitupos) – that which corresponds to something else
 2. Peter says, “not as a removal of dirt from the body.”
 - Peter says we are not saved because of the physical washing of baptism like how water washes dirt off our body
 - Water washes dirt off our bodies, not the Holy Spirit

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Scriptures on Baptism

1 Peter 3:21

3. Baptism is our “appeal to God for a good conscience”
 - When we are baptized by the Spirit, we have no part in that because God pours out His Spirit on us
 - Therefore, the baptism of the Spirit cannot be our “appeal” to God, and this only makes sense in the context of water baptism.
4. Peter says that our baptism is an “appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”
 - Our baptism is a sign of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ
 - The “baptism of the Spirit” is not a sign of the resurrection of Christ but is the process in which God seals us in his Spirit

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Scriptures on Baptism

1 Peter 3:21

Does baptism save us?

- “Baptism now saves you,” so yes...
 - To say, “Baptism does not save you,” is a direct contradiction of scripture
- In Acts 2:38, Peter is in the beginning of his ministry
- In 1 Peter 3:21, Peter is at the end of his ministry and life
- Many years have passed, and he doubles down on what he says in his sermon at Pentecost
- 1 Peter 3:21 can be seen as a helpful explanation of how baptism is connected to the forgiveness of our sins

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Scriptures on Baptism

1 Peter 3:21

How does baptism save then?

1 Peter 3:21 (ESV) – Baptism, **which corresponds to this**, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through **the resurrection of Jesus Christ**

- The flood was an antitype
 - God commanded Noah to build an ark in which his family was sealed inside as the rains came and flooded the earth
 - This ark kept them alive and protected them from the judgment of God
 - Christ is the ark in which we pass safely through the waters
 - What happened to all the people who were not in the ark?
 - In baptism, we are in Christ, joining him in his death and resurrection (see Romans 6:1-6)
 - One element of our baptism is that we are separated from the sinful world for baptism is our initiation into Christianity and into the Church

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Scriptures on Baptism

1 Peter 3:21

How does baptism save then?

1 Peter 3:21 (ESV) – Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, **not as a removal of dirt from the body** but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ

- It is not the physical washing which saves us
- We are not saved simply because we enter the water of baptism, for we are saved by faith in the Gospel

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Scriptures on Baptism

1 Peter 3:21

How does baptism save then?

1 Peter 3:21 (ESV) – Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body **but as an appeal to God for a good conscience**, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ

- It is our appeal to God for a good conscience
- Remember in Acts that the process of salvation was that the Word was preached, the Word was believed, and the convert was baptized
 - Baptism was the expression of the convert's faith in Christ and their initiation into the faith
- Peter also says that we are to "be baptized for the forgiveness of our sins" (Acts 2:38) and Ananias told Paul, "Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

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Scriptures on Baptism

1 Peter 3:21

How does baptism save then?

1 Peter 3:21 (ESV) – Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, **through the resurrection of Jesus Christ**

- Notice that this forgiveness that is given comes through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, not through the water itself
- Baptism is the sign of the death, burial, and resurrection, and the sign of the washing of our sins

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Scriptures on Baptism

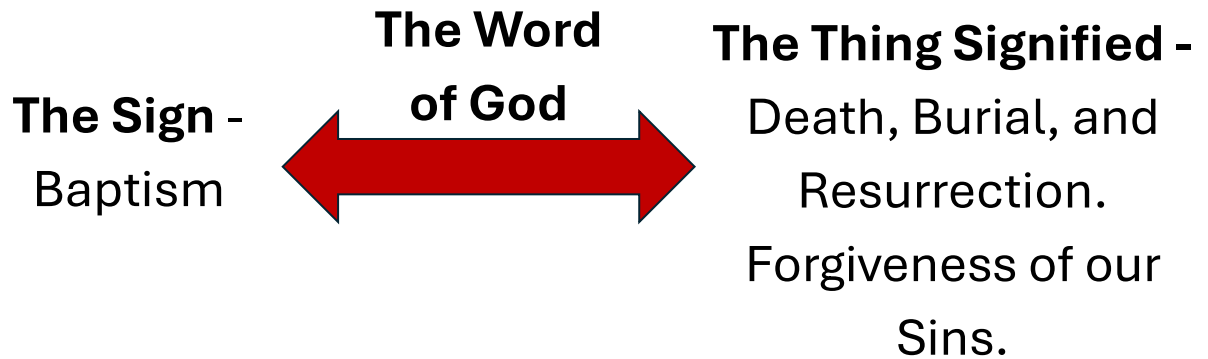
1 Peter 3:21

- The Holy Spirit regenerates us to understand and believe the Gospel (Acts 16:14; see also, BFM Article II A. and Article IV A.)
- In our faith, our sins are forgiven through the blood of Christ, and we are justified, which we receive when we believe (Leviticus 17:11; Matthew 26:28, Acts 10:43)
- We are also told to repent, or to have a change of mind, which is a fruit of our new faith through which our sins are forgiven (Luke 24:47; Acts 3:19; Acts 5:31; Acts 8:22)
- Baptism is our appeal to God to be washed and to be cleansed of our sins through which God gives us a clean conscience, sealing within us the forgiveness of our sins
- In every step of the conversion process, our sins are forgiven, but it is only in Baptism in which we receive a tangible promise of the forgiveness of our sins
- Through confession, God will continue to forgive your sins (1 John 1:9)

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On Signs and Symbols

Bronze Serpent



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Scriptures on Baptism

1 Peter 3:21

- Just as circumcision did not make Abraham righteous, baptism itself does not make us righteous (justify us)
- But it is the promise of God for the forgiveness of sins and our salvation
- Baptism does save us, but **it does not justify us**
- We often fail to understand the distinction between justification and sanctification
- Both justification and sanctification are equally part of our salvation

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Scriptures on Baptism

Marriage Analogy

- Many will struggle to understand how we can say our sins are forgiven in so many ways
- There are many events in life which involve a process and ceremony before a thing is considered final
- Marriage is a good example of this

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Scriptures on Baptism

Marriage Analogy

- When a man and a woman are getting married, what exact event makes them husband and wife in holy matrimony?
 - God unites the two together (Matthew 19:6)
 - The work of God uniting the man and woman is the central part of a wedding, but everything that follows is also necessary
 - The Ceremony:
 - The Church affirms the marriage
 - The vows are exchange
 - The symbols of the marriage are exchanged (the rings)
 - The two commit themselves to the covenant for life with “I do”
 - The two then kiss
 - The wedding night and the consummation of the marriage
- Every part of the process makes a marriage and if you lose any part of the process, you lose an essential piece of the marriage

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Scriptures on Baptism

1 Peter 3:21

- Baptists will typically respond with Paul's writings:

Romans 10:8–11 (ESV)

⁸ But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); ⁹ because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.”

1 Corinthians 1:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

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Scripture on Baptism:
The Apostle Paul

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Scriptures on Baptism

The Apostle Paul

- Many Baptists almost paint baptism as a secondary thought in Paul's epistles and theology
- The fact is that baptism played a central role in his theology as he speaks about baptism often
- Many Baptists will attempt to undermine Paul's theology in claiming that Paul's references to baptism are references to the baptism of the spirit
- Any who deny the saving efficacy of baptism must claim that Paul's references to baptism are Spirit baptisms because Paul's statements on baptism so strongly tie baptism to the benefits of our salvation

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Scriptures on Baptism

The Apostle Paul

- It is important for us to remember Acts 2:38 and Paul's own conversion (Acts 9:18-19; Acts 22:16; Acts 26:12-32)
- We should also consider the conversion of the Ephesians in Acts 19

Acts 19:1-7 (ESV)

¹And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. ²And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." ³And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." ⁴And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." ⁵On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. ⁷There were about twelve men in all.

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Scriptures on Baptism

The Apostle Paul

- In Paul's theology, water baptism and Spirit baptism are inseparable

“When we recall that in Paul's day virtually all were baptized immediately after putting their faith in Christ, we grasp that both Spirit baptism and water baptism were part and parcel of the complex of saving events that took place at conversion. When people are converted, they are baptized in water and the Spirit, and confess Jesus as Lord (Rom 10:9). Those who see a reference only to Spirit baptism and exclude water baptism put asunder what God meant to be joined together.”

Thomas R. Schreiner and Shawn D. Wright, *Believer's Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 75.

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Scriptures on Baptism

The Apostle Paul

- In the same line of thinking as Peter, Paul presents to us three roles baptism plays in our salvation:
 - In baptism, we are united to Christ
 - In baptism, we are united to the Church
 - In baptism, we have been cleansed and washed

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Scripture on Baptism:

Paul – United to Christ

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – United to Christ

Romans 6:1–11 (ESV)

¹What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ²By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – United to Christ

Colossians 2:11–12 (ESV)

¹¹In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹²having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – United to Christ

Galatians 3:23–29 (ESV)

²³Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. ²⁴So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, ²⁶for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. ²⁷For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – United to Christ

- In Baptism, we are united to Christ through his death and resurrection
 - Just as Peter says in 1 Peter 3:21 – “Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ”
- Paul closely connects faith, the freedom of sin, unity to Christ, and our new life in Christ to baptism
- The sign is so closely connected to the thing signified they are indistinguishable

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Scripture on Baptism:
Paul – United to the Church

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – United
to the Church

1 Corinthians 1:10–17 (ESV)

¹⁰I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. ¹¹For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. ¹²What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." ¹³Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name. ¹⁶(I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) ¹⁷For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – United
to the Church

- Paul says that God did not send him to baptize (17)
- The preaching of the Gospel was his primary goal, not to give people a special connection to them through baptism
 - This in no way diminishes the role of baptism as we see that all the people were still baptized (13)
 - He is also warning them that baptism must be placed in its proper place under the gospel because baptism means nothing apart from the gospel
- In this passage, Paul addresses the many divisions that have hurt the church at Corinth
- His appeal in verses 10-17 is that they remember they have all not been baptized into anyone but Christ
- He points to their baptism to so they will be united
- Baptism is central to this passage for two ways:
 - They have been united to Christ in their baptism
 - They have been united to each other in their baptism

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – United
to the Church

1 Corinthians 12:12–13 (ESV)

¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – United
to the Church

Ephesians 4:1–7 (ESV)

¹I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – United
to the Church

- Because we are all united to Christ in our baptism, we are all united to each other
- Paul consistently points Christians to their baptism for them to remember that they are one in Christ Jesus

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Scripture on Baptism:
Paul – Cleansed and Washed

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – Cleansed
and Washed

1 Corinthians 6:9–11 (ESV)

⁹Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – Cleansed
and Washed

Ephesians 5:25–28 (ESV)

²⁵Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. ²⁸In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – Cleansed
and Washed

Titus 3:4–7 (ESV)

⁴ But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – Cleansed
and Washed

- It seems that Paul's statements on washing and the Spirit are very similar to what Jesus says

John 3:2–8 (ESV)

² This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." ³ Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – Cleansed
and Washed

- These passages are fulfillments of Ezekiel 36

Ezekiel 36:23–28 (ESV)

²³ And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Lord GOD, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes. ²⁴ I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. ²⁵ I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. ²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. ²⁸ You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – Cleansed
and Washed

- If we take these passages about washing and cleansing out of context, it would be easy to come to a belief in which baptism does justify us
- We must read these in the context of the whole New Testament
- God does work to cleanse us in the water through the Holy Spirit
- Baptism in of itself does not regenerate us, justify us, or save us, but it is part of the process of salvation and the forgiveness of sins
- It is our appeal to God for a clean conscience

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – Cleansed and Washed

- Baptism is a washing
- Baptism is a cleansing
 - We are appealing for a new conscience
 - We are being united to Christ
- Baptism sanctifies us
 - Joins us to Christ
 - Joins us to the Church
 - Confirms the forgiveness of our sins
 - Paul constantly points to baptism as a reminder to the church which serves as an aid in sanctification of the flesh
- Baptism is a part of our being regenerated but is not the cause of our regeneration
 - Regeneration begins when the Spirit causes us to understand the Gospel (See the BFM Article IV)
 - Regeneration continues for the rest of our lives until we are glorified with Christ

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Scriptures on Baptism

Paul – Cleansed and Washed

- Because baptism is such a work in the heart of a believer, this is one of the reasons we do not believe in infant baptism
- The biblical mandate of baptism is that it is done in alongside faith and repentance

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