

## BAPTISM - BEAUTIFUL AND MEANINGFUL

This is the last in a series of sermons on the plan of salvation.

Why is it that friends and families will turn out to see a loved one baptized? Why in some churches when someone is baptized the congregation prefers to be quiet and appreciative while in other churches they may clap, cheer and even whistle?

John the Baptist baptized people, but this was before the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. It was a type of ceremonial cleansing and is not the baptism that is required for you and me today. In Acts 19 Paul met some believers in the city of Ephesus. They had been baptized by John the Baptist. Paul told them about a better baptism.

There will be false teachers who will come along and try to tell you that the baptism Peter speaks of in the Bible and the baptism that Paul speaks of are two different baptisms, but that is not true. Ephesians 4:5, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism."

For those who ask about the thief on the cross, when Jesus said, "Today you will be with me in paradise," we need to remember this happened before Jesus died. The thief still lived under the Old Testament.

Baptism is a new birth. John 3:3-7, "Jesus replied, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.' 'How can someone be born when they are old?' Nicodemus asked. 'Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!' Jesus answered, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.''"

Romans 6:3-4, "Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."

Acts 2:38, "Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'" Acts 22:16, "And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name."

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