



Cultivating Wholehearted Disciples of Jesus, who Bring the
Kingdom of God. Everywhere.

Baptism and our New Identity

Pastor Steve Holt

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Jesus modeled the power and purpose of baptism by opening up His public ministry, not with signs and wonders, not by casting out demons, not even by preaching the Kingdom, but rather by getting baptized. It was the first demonstration of His Kingdom ministry.

It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.¹¹ Then a voice came from heaven, “You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Mark 1:9)

- There is a lot here, and we will return to this passage, but my point is that Jesus started His Kingdom ministry through getting baptized.
- Jesus concluded His Kingdom ministry through commissioning us to make disciples of the Kingdom through the act and power of baptism.

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen. (Matthew 28:18-20)

- So, Jesus opens His Kingdom ministry with baptism and closes out His earthly ministry instructing all of us that the first step in discipleship is getting baptized.

- The early church followed this command, with each new believer getting immediately baptized after putting their faith in Christ.
- Through baptism, we are identifying with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.
- Jesus is giving His very last command to the coming church. This is step one in becoming a disciple of Jesus. Jesus is not concerned just about converts, but about disciples.
 - Jesus told us not just to convert people, but to build disciples.
 - Baptism is step one in becoming a committed disciple of Jesus.

In the book of Acts, the origins of the early church, we observe the continuance of baptism as the first step in obedient discipleship.

Peter, in his first evangelistic sermon at Pentecost, says,

“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38)

- For Peter and the early church, baptism was the first step in becoming a disciple of Jesus.
- Baptism is considered the first step in discipleship. My definition...

Water baptism is the first Step in being a disciple of Jesus. It is a Public act of obedience and faith signifying a believer's private identification with Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.

- Just think how much time it took to baptize over three thousand people on that first Pentecost. The rest of Acts and the Epistles speak of the importance of this public identification with Christ.
- We are identifying with the Jesus Way. Through baptism, we are identifying with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Why get Baptized?

- The whole act of baptism is the Gospel reenacted.
- It is going under the water into the death of the old man, the old life, the old Adam.
- Adam in the Garden of Eden in Genesis three, rebelled against God, and His spiritual bloodstream was poisoned by rebellion. Sin is like cancer. You may look good on the outside, but your blood is bad, and you're dying.

Our Spiritual Blood is Contaminated with Sin

Ex. I recently went into a doctor's office to get blood work done. They pulled out some of my blood and then looked at it. They could identify many things about my physical health by looking at my blood.

- Your blood cells tell how healthy or unhealthy you are.
- Our spiritual mitochondria (organelles within cells) have been contaminated by the sin of rebellion, pride, lust, and fear. Like cancer, if left untreated, sin grows and takes over our whole life.
 - Sin is a bitter root that keeps on growing in our heart—it cannot be managed, only eradicated.
 - Sin is missing the mark; it's imperfection. It's our rebellion against God, either proactively or passively. We've all sinned and missed God's perfection,

- Because of Eden, because of Adam and Eve, we were born with spiritual cancer, the genes of death coursing through our spiritual bloodstream.

Romans 6:3

Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

**Baptism is about identifying with the Death of Christ
(Romans 6:3)**

His death could eradicate our death and pour His life into us.

We are slowly dying through sin, but He took our place and died for us.

So what does baptism do? It is, first of all, identifying with our sinfulness. It is about the death that comes through sin. Sin separates us and kills us on the inside.

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death.

Wages means payment, and our payment is death—spiritual separation from a loving God.

- Why are so many people brokenhearted? The wages of sin.
- Why are so many people addicted to porn? The wages of sin.
- Why are so many people addicted to alcohol? The wages of sin.
- Why are so many people considering suicide? The wages of sin.

Because of the cancer of sin growing in our spiritual cells, we die. Our heart and soul die. The WAGES of sin are death.

We Need a Spiritual Blood Transfusion

- We don't need dialysis. Dialysis cleans your own blood. Your spiritual blood can never be cleaned out. You can't clean up your life!
- **You can never be good enough. You can never earn God's favor enough to be saved. Sin, the spiritual cancer we all carry, can only be forgiven through the blood of Jesus.**

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. ¹⁰ For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. (Romans 5:8)

- We need a blood transfusion! It can't come from someone else—a human being who also has contaminated blood. You know what I mean; they always ask you about your blood when you go to give blood. A person with AIDS or cancer can't give blood to another person.
 - Mohammed can't save us. Buddha can't save us. The Dalai Lama can't save us. Trying to live a good life can't save us. You can't save yourself!
 - Our own good life can't save us!

You have to have PURE BLOOD. It can only come from Jesus. We are all sinners. People can't save people! You can't get pure blood for the forgiveness of sins through another person.

- Jesus' blood is not contaminated.
- Jesus was never tainted by sin. He lived a perfect life.
- He was not born of a man. He was born of God.

- Buddha and Mohammed were men. Their blood was contaminated. They can't cleanse your blood.

You can't just live a good life and be a good person. Being a good person doesn't forgive sin.

You have to have PURE, UNCONTAMINATED BLOOD. It can only come from Jesus. We are all sinners. People can't save people.

Your old identity is: "I am a sinner; I can't change; I will always be enslaved to sin." "I am dead in my sin."

Romans 6:4

Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

**Old Identity: I am Dead in Sin
New Identity: I am Dead to Sin
(Romans 6:4)**

Your old identity is: you are dead inside; you are left to your own power to change. You are alone.

Your new identity: I am buried with Christ and raised with Christ.

Baptism is publicly saying, "I am being buried with Christ."

- You are being buried with Christ—a new identity with Christ. Christ is not a religion anymore but a relationship with your Savior, Friend, and Lord.
- You are turning your back on the old life. A new identity: not you but Christ.

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)

- Baptism is about Identity.
 1. You are dead to the old man; the spiritual cancer in your blood has received a blood transfusion with the pure, holy blood of Jesus!
 2. Your old heart is dead and gone. That's not you anymore.
 3. You are buried with Christ through death, and now you are resurrected to new life.
- It is all about intimacy and identity with Christ. You are IN Christ. You are being buried with Christ—a new identity with Christ. Christ is not a religion anymore but a relationship with your Savior, Friend, and Lord
- You are born again, given a new heart and a new spirit. Ezekiel says it best...

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. (Ezekiel 36:26)

- We have a good heart now! We are being “placed into” Christ—we have been grafted into Christ, the second Adam.
- Just like we were placed into Adam as sinners, we are now placed into the newness of the second Adam, and you now have a new life!
- You are turning your back on the old life. A new identity: not you but Christ.

Romans 6:5-7

⁵ For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of *His* resurrection,
⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin.

The New Identity: I am Resurrected with Christ (Romans 6:5-7)

Baptism is publicly saying: “I am raised up with Christ!”

You go down to the old man, old heart, old spirit, and you are raised a NEW MAN/WOMAN.

- You now identify with the resurrection of Christ in your life. You have new life in Christ!
- He is talking about being “placed into” Christ—Adam infected our nature, but now we have been grafted into Christ, the second Adam.
- We can rise from the dead in our life, in our marriage, in our relationships, in our singleness, in our addictions.
- God can supernaturally produce the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace...

New Identity: My History does not Define My Legacy

Romans 8:11

And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.

- The Holy Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead can enter your life and bring new life.

Believe in Christ and Get Baptized

God takes our old sinful heart and replaces it with a new heart through our faith in Him.

Just as Jesus rose from the grave, you also can have new life through His resurrection.

"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die." (John 11:25-26)

Eternal life is not after we die, but it begins now, today. Believe in Jesus. Believe in His resurrection, and you shall be set free to new life!

- Jesus came to die the death we could not die, to give us the life we've always longed for!
- Say yes to Jesus! Say, "Yes, I believe in you, Jesus. I want you to give me a new heart today."

Ephesians 2:8-9

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves; it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.