



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#132)

Baptism – union with Christ, and with other Christians (2).

1

IF BAPTISM IS A PICTURE OF SPIRITUAL REALITIES ...

⇒ THEN we need to find out WHAT it is a picture of!

We also need to remember that pictures do not cause the realities!



2

RELYING ON HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM ... AND NOT ON RELIGIOUS RITUALS AND TEACHINGS.

In COLOSSE:

- The church was hounded by false teachers who were promoting the "need" for all kinds of religious rituals and regulations, human traditions and teachings.

In GALATIA:

- False teachers were telling the people that following Old Testament rituals was necessary for spiritual growth.

In REALITY:

- NONE of these things save or cause spiritual growth. It's all in Christ, and Christ alone... and baptism is a picture of this truth.

We live in a day in which it's popular to pursue all kinds of substitutes in the pursuit of "spirituality." It would be good to take to heart what Scripture says about such matters.

3

What the book of COLOSSIANS teaches us about this.

The foundation on which our faith is built is JESUS!

His greatness and his ability to accomplish ALL that we need is contrasted to the deficiency of the false teachings and substitutes.

HOW ARE WE TO RESPOND TO THIS FACT?

- Receive Jesus as Lord (which they already did) and live in him. He is our source of strength, and our reason to be thankful!

Therefore, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and firm in your faith just as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

Colossians 2:6-7 (NET)

- Don't get trapped by the false teachings (v. 8) and rituals (v. 16+)!

4

IN CHRIST, WE HAVE ALL THAT WE CAN POSSIBLY HAVE!

(WHY pursue worthless substitutes?)

- The "fullness of deity" is in him... and if we are in him, we share this "fullness"!

For in him all the fullness of deity lives in bodily form, and you have been filled in him, who is the head over every ruler and authority.

Colossians 2:9-10 (NET)



KEY ISSUES:

- It's only "IN HIM" that we have this fullness. In ourselves, we don't have it.
- This does NOT mean that we *become* deity. [We *do* become members of God's family... but it's by adoption, not by nature.]

5

WHAT DID CHRIST DO TO ACCOMPLISH THIS?

(And what happened to us?)

Paul describes the spiritual reality that occurred, representing it by TWO physical pictures.

- OLD TESTAMENT CIRCUMCISION – a picture of the removal of the "flesh" (or "sinful nature").

(Here are 2 of the ways we can translate this concept of "flesh.")

In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. **Your whole self ruled by the flesh** was put off when you were circumcised by Christ, ...

Colossians 2:11 (NIV)

When you came to Christ, you were "circumcised," but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision—the cutting away of **your sinful nature**.

Colossians 2:11 (NLT)

6



② NEW TESTAMENT BAPTISM – a picture of our union with Christ in his burial (death) and resurrection.

(We saw this same concept last time, in Romans 6.)

Having been buried *with him* in **baptism**, you also have been raised *with him* through your faith in the power of God who raised him from the dead.

Colossians 2:12 (NET)

YOU WERE DEAD... HE MADE YOU ALIVE!

When this occurred, we *trusted* GOD to accomplish it. It wasn't *our* accomplishment; but was made possible only by our union with Christ! NEVER FORGET THIS!

And even though you were dead in your transgressions and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, he nevertheless made you alive *with him*, having forgiven all your transgressions.

Colossians 2:13 (NET); see also v. 14-15.



2 types of DEATH and 1 type of LIFE!

IN OURSELVES – We were DEAD *in* sin.

And you were **dead** *in* your trespasses and sins in which you previously walked according to the ways of this world ...

But God ... made us **alive** with Christ even though we were **dead** in trespasses.

Ephesians 2:1-2a; 4a, 5a (CSB)

IN CHRIST – We are DEAD *to* sin, buried, and made alive.

Since we have **died** *to* sin, ... For we **died** and were buried with Christ by **baptism**. And just as Christ was **raised from the dead** by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may **live new lives**.

Romans 6:2a, 4 (NLT)

➡ HOW SHOULD THESE FACTS AFFECT US?

Because of the spiritual realities that have occurred...

⇒ **Since we DIED (in Christ) ...** Don't cling to the commands, teachings, and rituals that people have invented (and are trying to get you to do). None of those things have any power!

☞ *the rest of chapter 2.*

⇒ **Since we are ALIVE (in Christ) ...** Focus on "things above," not on "earthly things."

☞ *the beginning of chapter 3.*

WHAT ARE THESE "THINGS"?

Paul doesn't leave us to guess! He lists some of them, beginning in v. 5. They are **moral things** – the "things we do." It's a matter of focusing on **godly** conduct, and not on **sinful** conduct.



➡ COLOSSIANS SUMMARY

(PERTAINING TO BAPTISM).



⇒ **The PICTURE of water baptism should remind us that, because of the Holy Spirit baptism ...**

- ✓ We have a salvation that no substitute can produce!
- ✓ Sin is NOT an option.




What the book of GALATIANS teaches us about this.

THE ISSUE:

- **Background:** The Old Testament rituals had a purpose under the **OLD** Covenant. *But we are under the **NEW** Covenant; so those rituals no longer apply.*
- **Problem:** False teachers were claiming that **Jesus saved...** but that **Old Testament rituals** were needed for **spiritual growth**.
- **Paul's response** to the Galatians:

How foolish can you be? After starting your new lives **in the Spirit**, why are you now trying to become perfect **by your own human effort**?

Galatians 3:3 (NLT)

"Human effort" – can also be translated as "flesh."

His emphasis: The Spirit we received when we were saved is the source of our perfection (spiritual maturity).

SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS – NOT FROM OLD TESTAMENT RITUALS!

- Our spiritual blessings are associated with **promises that God made** to Abraham **before** the Law's rituals came into existence! *They do not depend in any way on those rituals!*
- They are made available:
 - Through Abraham's descendent, **Jesus**.
 - To **all** who are willing to **trust** God the same way Abraham did.

So also Abraham "**believed** God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

Understand, then, that those who have **faith** are children of Abraham. Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by **faith**, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." So those who rely on **faith** are blessed along with Abraham, the man of **faith**.

Galatians 3:6-9 (NIV)



SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS – AVAILABLE THROUGH HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM!

- Those who are **united with Christ** receive the blessings promised to Abraham and his offspring!
- There are **no limits or restrictions**, based on race, social status, or gender!

So **in Christ Jesus** you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were **baptized into Christ** have clothed yourselves **with Christ**.

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one **in Christ Jesus**.

If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Galatians 3:26-29 (NIV)

★ >> AND << There's more! →



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MORE SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS (through Holy Spirit baptism)!

Those who are **united with Christ** ⇔ ↗

- They have become members of God's family.
 - Other passages show us that this was accomplished through **adoption**. (We do not become gods.)
- They are "clothed with Christ."
 - More about this on the next slide. }
- They are one with each other.
 - This implies both rights and responsibilities. More about this on a later slide. }

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"Clothing yourself" with Christ.

Also translated as "putting on" Christ.
The New Testament Greek word is often used for clothes. }

Taking off your old ways and putting on the new. If you are "in Christ," you now have a new identity, resulting in a new life and purpose.

Rather, **clothe yourselves** with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.

Romans 13:14 (NIV)

SOME OTHER THINGS TO BE "PUT ON":

- The "new self" (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10); the armor of God (Ephesians 6:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:8); godly character traits (Colossians 3:12).
- In the future, we will put on imperishable "resurrection bodies" (1 Corinthians 15:52-54; 2 Corinthians 5:1-3).

15

Because we are all "one in Christ"...

This unity is described in a variety of ways. For instance, we are also described as being the "**body of Christ**."

This unity means we have many privileges. *But it also means we have responsibilities.*
To ignore this is the same as denying this oneness. ✨

HERE ARE A FEW OF OUR RESPONSIBILITIES MENTIONED IN GALATIANS (from verses that have the phrase "one another" or "each other").

- **DO THIS:** Serve each other in love (5:13). Carry each other's burdens (6:2).
- **DON'T DO THIS:** Don't bite/devour/consume each other (5:15)! Don't provoke and envy each other (5:26).
- (Other responsibilities are mentioned throughout the New Testament.)

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⇒ **HOW SHOULD THESE FACTS AFFECT US?**

Because of the spiritual realities that have occurred...

THESE THINGS WILL EFFECT HOW WE LIVE!

Effects on our relationship to GOD – being "united with Christ."

- We have been made "**free in Christ**" (5:1+), so don't go back to the slavery of sin! (This is similar to what we saw in Romans 6.)
- This is accomplished by "**living in the Spirit**" (5:16+). We must "keep in step with the Spirit" (v. 25) and not try to go a different way!

Effects on our relationship to PEOPLE – being "one in Christ."

- Those who do this will have the "**fruit of the Spirit**" (v. 22-23a) in their lives, instead of the "works of the flesh" (v. 19-21).

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⇒ **GALATIANS SUMMARY**

(PERTAINING TO BAPTISM).



⇒ The **PICTURE** of **water** baptism should remind us that, **because of the Holy Spirit baptism ...**

- ✓ We can have a spiritual maturity that no substitute can produce!
- ✓ Each of us who is united with **Christ** is also one with **each other**.
- ✓ Sin is **NOT** an option.



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WATER BAPTISM – A PICTURE OF WHAT SPIRIT BAPTISM IS ALL ABOUT. IT SHOULD INFLUENCE HOW WE LIVE!!

BY THE SPIRIT → EACH OF US, BEING UNITED TO CHRIST.

IN ROMANS, COLOSSIANS, & GALATIANS.

IT IMPLIES → DYING to sin and LIVING to righteousness.

IT MEANS: → **We no longer have to sin, and should not consider it to be an option!**

IN COLOSSIANS, & GALATIANS.

IT IMPLIES → It's NOT accomplished by any human status or characteristic, merit or ritual (whether for salvation or for spiritual growth).

IT MEANS: → **Don't rely on any substitutes for something only GOD can do!**

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BY THE SPIRIT → ALL OF US, BEING ONE WITH EACH OTHER.

IN GALATIANS.

IT IMPLIES → We all belong to the same family of God.

IT MEANS: → **We must treat each other as family!**

} **ALL BECAUSE OF HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM (PICTURED IN WATER BAPTISM).**

BEING UNITED TO CHRIST & BEING ONE WITH EACH OTHER.

And All of the recipients of these blessings receive them 100%, regardless of race, social status, or gender!

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YOUR MISSION: APPLY TO YOUR LIFE WHAT BAPTISM TEACHES!

- ✓ **HOLY SPIRIT:** Rely on the Holy Spirit for both salvation and spiritual growth... DON'T rely on the fakes and counterfeits that people have invented... or even on the Old Covenant rituals that no longer apply.
- ✓ **SIN:** Consider sin to be "NOT an option."
- ✓ **FOLLOWERS OF JESUS:** Treat each follower of Jesus as being *equally* a part of the "body of Christ."

BEING FULLY AWARE THAT WATER BAPTISM IS ONLY A PICTURE OF THESE THINGS!

The actual changes occur in the heart, by the Holy Spirit.

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Credits (1)

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