

Doctrine of the Church – The Necessity of Baptism I Pet. 3:18-4:3

Thesis: To give us a better understanding of baptism in salvation.

Introduction:

- A. There are many religious people in this world who do not think that baptism is important.
 - 1. Some say that baptism is completely useless.
 - 2. Others say that baptism is to show that one is saved.
- B. Today, we will notice the purpose of baptism from I Pet. 3:21.

I. Peter reminds us of the example of Noah and the flood (3:18-20).

A. Remember the story of Noah (Gen. 6-9).

- 1. The world was evil.
 - a. **Gen. 6:5-7** - Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. {6} And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. {7} So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them."
 - b. **Gen. 6:11-12** - The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. {12} So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.
- 2. God desired to save Noah because he was faithful to God.
 - a. **Gen. 6:8-9** - But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. {9} This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.
 - b. Even in the midst of a wicked world, Noah was faithful to God.
- 3. God gave Noah specific instructions to follow.
 - a. **Gen. 6:14** – It was to be made of gopherwood.
 - b. **Gen. 6:15** – 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, 30 cubits tall.
 - c. **Gen. 6:19** – Two each of every unclean animal were to be on the ark.
 - d. **Gen. 7:2-3** – Seven each of every clean animal were to be on the ark.
 - e. **Gen. 6:22** - Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.

B. The New Testament tells us that there are several things that saved Noah.

- 1. Noah was saved by faith.

- a. **Heb. 11:7** - By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.
 - b. Noah believed in the things that God told him.
 - c. He knew that God was going to destroy the world by the flood.
2. Any time we read of faith in the Bible, we also read of works.
- a. James reminds us of the importance of showing our faith by our works.
 - 1) **Js. 2:17-18** - Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. {18} But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.
 - 2) **Js. 2:26** - For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.
 - b. This is not to say that Noah earned his salvation.
 - 1) **Gen. 6:8** - But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.
 - 2) It was only by the grace of God that Noah had the opportunity to be saved.
 - c. It is to say that Noah did what God commanded him to do in order to be saved.
 - 1) **Heb. 11:7** - By faith Noah...prepared an ark for the saving of his household,
 - 2) Noah built the ark according to the specific dimensions that God gave him.
 - 3) He used the kind of wood that God told him to use.
 - 4) He only allowed those approved by God to board the ark.
 - 5) **Gen. 6:22** - Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.
 - c. Part of the idea of faith is that we do what God tells us to do.
3. Peter says that Noah was saved by "Divine longsuffering."
- a. God was patient with Noah and gave him time to complete the ark.
 - b. Noah was 500 years old when he had Shem, Ham, and Japheth (**Gen. 5:32**).
 - c. He was 600 years old when the flood came (**Gen. 7:6**).
 - d. **II Pet. 3:9** (Today, God is patient with us) - The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

C. Peter makes it very clear that Noah and his family "were saved through water" (3:20).

1. Notice some interesting facts about this water.
 - a. It was the water that lifted the ark above the face of the earth.
 - b. It was the water that protected them from the destruction that was on the earth.

- c. The same water that saved Noah and his family destroyed all other life on the earth.
2. It is also important to note that the power that saved Noah was not the water, but rather the power to save Noah and his family was God.
 - a. It was through their obedience to God that they were saved.
 - b. The water was simply the means of salvation.
 - c. The power was (and still is) in God.
 - d. Noah and his family were saved because they were obedient to God.

II. Just as Noah was saved through water, we can be saved through water.

A. Peter says that it is baptism that saves us (3:21).

1. Notice what baptism is not.
 - a. Baptism is “not the removal of the filth of the flesh.”
 - b. It is not a physical cleansing from sin.
 - c. It is not done in order to remove the earthly consequences of the sins that we committed.
2. Baptism is “the answer of a good conscience toward God.”
 - a. It is comfort in the fact that we are doing the will of God.
 - b. It is the act by which we come into contact with the blood of Christ.
 - c. It is knowing that we have done what God wants us to do; and therefore can be called a child of God.
3. Just as Noah was saved through water during the flood, today we are saved through water in baptism.
 - a. Again, it is not that there is miraculous power in the water; the power is in God.
 - b. Rather, it is the fact that we are obedient to God; and through that obedience, we are saved in baptism.

B. The New Testament is full of passages that speak to the importance and necessity of baptism.

1. **Mt. 28:19** - 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,
2. **Mk. 16:16** - He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.
3. **Acts 2:38** - Then Peter said to them, “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.”
4. **Acts 22:16** (Ananias speaking to Paul) - And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.
5. **Rom. 6:3-4** - Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? {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.

6. **I Cor. 12:13** - For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-- whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free-- and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.
7. **Gal. 3:27** - For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
8. **Eph. 4:5** - one Lord, one faith, one baptism;
9. **Col. 2:11-12** - In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, {12} buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.
10. In fact, the book of Acts refers to baptism at least 27 times.

III. This salvation that we have in baptism comes “through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (3:21-4:3).

A. It is Jesus who rose from the dead and has now “gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God” (3:21-22).

1. Because of His death and resurrection, “angels and authorities and powers [have] been made subject to Him” (3:22).
 - a. It is Jesus who has authority in all things, including salvation and baptism.
 - b. It is through this authority that we are baptized into Christ.
2. It is His authority, and His only, that we should follow.
 - a. No man has the right to tell us what we must do in order to obtain salvation.
 - b. This authority comes only from Christ, and He has told us to be baptized in order to be saved.

B. It is through this death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus that we can be changed (4:1-3).

1. Through this process, we stop living for the world.
 - a. Notice what Peter says (4:1-3).
 - b. The time for living in sin has ceased.
2. Instead of living for the world, we begin to live for God (4:2).
 - a. **Gal. 2:20** - 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.
 - b. **Rom. 6:5-7** - 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.

3. It is through Christ and our obedience to His authority that this change occurs.

Conclusion:

- A. It is not up to us to decide what is necessary for salvation.
 1. Man cannot change the means of salvation.
 2. God clearly says that we must be baptized in order to be saved.
- B. Today, have you been baptized into Christ for the remission of sins.