

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: Start Right: Believer's Baptism

SERMON REFERENCE: Acts 8:35-39

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1736

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) How we end up has a lot to do with the way we begin.
 - i) Today's message will show us how to start right.
- b) Many Christians have not started right because they have not obeyed what the Bible teaches about believer's baptism.
- c) Acts 8:26-34
 - i) God had taken Philip (His deacon, evangelist and preacher) from Samaria where a Bible crusade was going on and sent him to Gaza.
 - (1) God had a special assignment for Philip.
 - ii) Philip saw a man riding in a chariot.
 - (1) This man was a man of great authority.
 - (a) He was a treasurer for Queen Candace of Ethiopia.
 - (2) This man was reading the prophet Isaiah from the Word of God.
 - (a) He had been to Jerusalem to worship, but he still had not found the Lord.
 - (i) The wells of religion were dry in Jerusalem.
 - iii) This man was reading Isaiah 53, which is the gospel according to Isaiah.
 - iv) The Lord told Philip to go and witness to him.
 - d) Acts 8:35-39
 - i) Philip preached unto him Jesus.
 - (1) He didn't preach to him denomination, race relations, economics or politics.
 - ii) When the man believed on Jesus, as soon as possible, Philip baptized him.
 - e) There are two grave mistakes that are made about baptism:
 - i) Some think that since baptism does not save us, it's not important.
 - ii) Some believe that if you don't get baptized, then you can't go to Heaven.
 - (1) Neither of these are true.
 - (a) While baptism is not necessary to salvation, it is necessary to obedience.
 - (i) Obedience is necessary to joy, growth and fruitfulness in the Christian life.
 - (ii) We as believers dare not minimize what the Bible has so emphasized.
 - f) Jesus began His public ministry by being baptized.
 - i) Matthew 3:13-17
 - ii) He identified Himself with us.
 - (1) In our baptism, we identify ourselves with the Lord Jesus.
 - g) Jesus concluded His public ministry by commanding baptism.
 - i) Matthew 28:18-20
 - h) The message today will focus not on what a denomination believes about baptism, but on what the Bible teaches about baptism.

2) THE BIBLICAL METHOD OF BAPTISM (ACTS 8:36-39)

- a) Acts 8:36

- i) It takes water.
 - ii) The word for “baptized” here means “immersed.”
 - b) Acts 8:38
 - i) Both Philip and the eunuch went down to the water.
 - ii) Philip immersed him.
 - c) The Bible method of baptism is by immersion, placing a person under the water and bringing them out of the water.
 - i) The scripture says that they both went down to the water.
 - ii) It was the same way with the baptism of the Lord Jesus.
 - (1) This was not an incidental or optional way.
 - (2) Mark 1:9-10
 - (a) The Jordan is a river.
 - (b) The Scripture doesn't say that He was baptized “near” Jordan or “with” Jordan, but “in” Jordan.
 - (i) The Greek preposition “in” literally means “into” Jordan.
 - (c) If He came up straightway out of the water, then He was down in the water.
 - (3) Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River, and He was baptized by immersion.
- d) Jesus was not baptized by immersion because it was convenient for Him.
 - i) Actually, it was inconvenient.
 - (1) It was approximately a sixty-mile trip one way that Jesus took to be baptized by John.
 - (2) He went to the Jordan River because there was a lot of water there.
 - (a) John 3:23
 - (i) John could have baptized everyone in Jerusalem if it were by sprinkling or pouring.
 - (b) It takes a lot of water to baptize someone.
 - (i) You cannot baptize someone the Biblical way with only a few drops of water.
- e) The Greek word for “baptize” (baptizo) literally means “to immerse.”
 - i) There is a different Greek word that is used for “sprinkle.”
 - ii) The word “baptizo” is an ordinary word, not necessarily a religious word.
 - (1) Two little children who would be out swimming might say, “I’m going to dunk you.”
 - (a) If he were speaking in Greek, he would use the word “baptize.”
- f) Early Christians practiced immersion.
- g) The method of baptism is important because it is wrapped up in the meaning of baptism.
 - i) The method and the meaning are inextricably interwoven.
 - ii) You cannot change the method without destroying the meaning.
- 3) THE MEANING OF BAPTISM
- a) Baptism speaks about what God did for us when He saved us.

- b) Romans 6:1-5
 - i) When we are saved, we die to sin.
 - (1) Being saved is dying to the old way.
 - ii) This passage contains our biography:
 - (1) It speaks of our past.
 - (a) Romans 6:4
 - (b) When we are baptized, it portrays that the old person we used to be has died.
 - (i) The old version of us didn't actually die the day we were saved, but he or she died over 2,000 years ago when Jesus died on the cross.
 - 1. His death had our names on it.
 - (ii) He took our sins to the cross and hung there for us.
 - (iii) He suffered, bled and died in agony for us.
 - (iv) He paid our sin debt, and He paid it in full.
 - (v) When He died, because of faith in Him, we died with Him.
 - 1. Our old man is crucified with Him.
 - 2. Romans 6:6
 - (c) When we are baptized, they put us beneath the water.
 - (i) This represents our funeral.
 - (ii) We are buried with Him by baptism.
 - 1. Our sin is buried in the grave of God's forgetfulness.
 - a. Our sin is gone.
 - b. We don't have to be haunted by the ghost of guilt.
 - (d) Baptism is a picture of our burial.
 - (i) Just as Jesus Christ was put in the grave, we were put in a liquid tomb.
 - (2) It speaks of our present.
 - (a) Romans 6:4
 - (i) Jesus didn't stay in the grave, and we don't stay under the water.
 - (b) We don't believe in submersion but immersion.
 - (i) When you submerge something, it may stay there.
 - (c) We come up out of the water, and that pictures our new life in the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (i) We should walk in newness of life.
 - (ii) We have a brand-new life.
 - (iii) Christians are not just nice people; we are new creatures.
 - 1. Baptism portrays that.
 - (d) When we come up out of the water, we are saying that we have come out of the grave of the old life and have been risen to walk with the Lord Jesus because we have been born again.
 - (3) It speaks of our future.
 - (a) Romans 6:5
 - (b) One day, we will physically die.

- (i) The grave could not hold the Lord Jesus, and it won't be able to hold us.
 - (ii) We will be in the likeness of His resurrection.
 - (iii) The God who raised Jesus from the grave is the God who will raise us up.
 - 1. Therefore, we need not fear death.
 - c) Baptism pictures the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus for us.
 - i) It pictures our death, burial and resurrection with Him.
 - d) The devil wants to take this message of baptism out of the church.
 - i) The Gospel is that Christ died for our sins, was buried and was raised again the third day.
 - (1) 1 Corinthians 15:1-4
 - e) The Bible commands that we be baptized because God wants to constantly make real to us what happens when we get saved.
 - i) We die with Christ, are buried with Christ, rise with Christ and live with Christ.
 - (1) We're going home to be with Christ.
 - (a) Baptism is a graphic illustration of this.
 - f) Baptism is in the likeness of His death and in the likeness of His resurrection.
 - i) That is symbolized.
 - (1) The emblem of that is immersion.
- 4) THE MOTIVE FOR BAPTISM
- a) There are three reasons why we should be baptized.
 - b) It proclaims our commitment to Jesus.
 - i) Romans 6:4
 - ii) Baptism says that we are identifying with Jesus openly and publicly.
 - iii) Baptism does not make us Christians; it shows that we are Christians.
 - (1) Just as a wedding ring is meant to show that we love our spouse, belong to our spouse and am not ashamed to let everyone know that we are married.
 - iv) When we are baptized, we are saying that we belong to Jesus.
 - v) When He was baptized, He identified Himself with us; and when we get baptized, we identify ourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - c) It is a conversion to portray.
 - i) It is a way of testifying that when Jesus died, we died; and that we have been saved.
 - ii) We are portraying that we belong to Jesus and what Jesus has done for us.
 - d) It is a command to obey.
 - i) Baptism is not a suggestion; it is a command.
 - ii) Matthew 28:19-20
 - iii) Acts 10:46-48
 - (1) Verse 47 tells us that we can receive the Holy Spirit before we're baptized, which means that we are saved before we're baptized.

- iv) Obedience brings joy and fruitfulness.
 - (1) Many Christians are lacking joy because they've not been obedient.
 - (2) Acts 8:39
 - (a) He went on his way rejoicing.
 - (3) Acts 16:33-34
- v) Many Christians plead with God to help them understand the Bible.
 - (1) Have you already obeyed what you already know?
 - (2) Why should God give more light until we've lived up to the light that we do have?
 - (3) Why should God give joy and fruitfulness if we haven't started right with baptism?
- vi) While baptism is not necessary to salvation, it is necessary to obedience.
- vii) Being baptized doesn't make anyone a Christian any more than wearing a ring makes someone married.
 - (1) But it shows that we belong to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
 - (2) It is a symbol; don't ever let the symbol take the place of the reality.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) Baptism is only a picture.
 - i) Don't ever fail to focus on Jesus.
- b) Baptism can never save anyone.
- c) We are saved by trusting Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord.
 - i) Have you done that?
 - ii) Have you given your heart to Jesus?
- d) You can receive Jesus today.
- e) Pray to Him now, and ask Him to come into your life.
- f) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16