

Ancient Practices - Baptism

Icebreaker: Please share about a ceremony that was very meaningful to you. Why?

Introduction: Ancient Practices help us close the gap between the person I am and the person that I want to be. Practices to help us grow, flourish and become more who we desire to be in Christ. In this study, we're looking at the Ancient Practice of Baptism.

Leviticus 16:3-4 3 *"This is how Aaron is to enter the Most Holy Place: He must first bring a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. 4 He is to put on the sacred linen tunic, with linen undergarments next to his body; he is to tie the linen sash around him and put on the linen turban. These are sacred garments; so, he must bathe himself with water before he puts them on.*

1. What were the preparation instructions required of Aaron the High Priest before he could enter into the Most Holy Place?

2. What might be the significance of bathing in water before putting on the sacred tunic?

Baptism Re-Purposed

Mark 1:4-11 *And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. 6 John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7 And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. 8 I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." 9 At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. 11 And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."*

3. By the time of John the Baptist, the water bathing ritual had a Greek name, *baptízō*. How did John re-purpose the ancient Jewish practice of bathing in water?

4. Why, after Jesus' resurrection, would baptism not be necessary for forgiveness of sin as it was in John the Baptist's baptism? What is necessary for the baptism offered in the Name of Jesus? (Acts 19:3-5)

Acts 19:3-5 *So Paul asked, “Then what baptism did you receive?” “John’s baptism,” they replied. 4 Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” 5 On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.*

Romans 6:1-14 *What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? 3 Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 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. 5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—7 because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. 10 The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. 11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. 13 Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. 14 For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.*

5. What question (Romans 6:1) did Paul want believers to learn in Romans 6:1-10? What was Paul’s answer to that question?

6. What is the significance of tying the two sides of death and life to baptism? (Romans 6:8)

7. What new identity is formed through baptism? (Romans 6:3-4, Colossians 3:1-3)

Colossians 3:1-3 *Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.*

8. How have you put on this new identity?

Baptism Practiced

When we are baptized, we affirm two statements: 1. Do you believe in Jesus Christ? 2. Do you commit to follow Jesus the rest of your life? Romans 6:1-11 provides the Biblical

support for the first question and Romans 6:12-14 is the answer for the second question.

9. Given the first question, what should a person consider if they were baptized without the true commitment of faith to Jesus?

10. Why is it important to be baptized if you have not? How can your Circle group help you to take the step of baptism?

Pastor Brian: Our baptism reminds us to Daily Declare our Commitment to Jesus, Daily Reject Sin, Daily Claim Our Identity.

11. For those who have been baptized, how are you doing?