

## You Asked For It...Reaffirm Your Baptism!

Romans 6:1-8

August 25, 2019

How many of you remember your baptism?

If you can remember your baptism it means you were not baptized as an infant.

Who here was baptized as an infant?

Your family brought you to the baptism font in the church and you were sprinkled in a church service.

You may even have pictures of you in some white flowing baptism outfit that has been handed down from one generation to the next?

Your parents spoke on your behalf regarding the vows of baptism that were made for you.

If you do remember your baptism then you were most likely elementary age or older.

How many of you remember being baptized in a church?

How many of you were immersed or dunked in the ocean, lake, river or a pool?

Do you remember the baptism covenant that you made that day?

Sprinkle, pour or immerse are the modes of baptism.

The common element used is water. Some feel extra blessed, for some reason, if the water that was used for their baptism was from the Jordan River...after all that's where Jesus was baptized.

Remembering your baptism!

It doesn't matter whether you can remember it or not.

It doesn't matter what mode of baptism was used.

It doesn't matter what water was used.

When you hear the word "baptism" what one word or phrase comes to your mind? (get responses)

New life, grace, rebirth, cleansing, forgiveness, family, body of Christ...

How about death?

In our bible reading we have the Apostle Paul describing what baptism is about.

There were the words of water, grace, resurrection life.

There were also the words of a sin-miserable life, death, nailed to the cross!

DEATH! Not quite the image that comes to mind when we remember our baptism!

Paul also mentioned in his letter to the Galatians that he has been crucified with Christ and that it is no longer he who lives but Christ who lives in him. (Galatians 2:19-20)

The theme of dying in baptism was prominent in the Early Christian church. Messages preached on baptism often used the Red Sea story as an example of baptism. Moses led the people through the Red Sea, away from a life of bondage to a new life of the promised land. Early Church baptism fonts often had a tomb-like quality to them.

The connection between death and baptism remains muddled in much of the church today. This sacrament of grace often centers around family and relatives gathering around a fancy baptism font with an infant in great-grandma's baptism outfit, with pictures and video cameras recording this cute moment.

There are those who persist that baptism is a fire insurance policy or some magical protection from the hellish afterlife or struggles here on earth. Baptism is not salvation. Jesus' death on the cross for our sins and his being raised up from the tomb is salvation. Baptism is that outward and visible sign of God's grace freely given to all who receive it.

Baptism is not some holy vaccination against evil mishaps in our lives. After Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist He no sooner dried off that He immediately encountered the devil in the wilderness. (Mark 1:9-13) His baptism didn't protect him but it did give him the spiritual wherewithal to resist Satan's evil and to confront it with God's word.

Dying with Christ in baptism suggests a powerful truth: *"Nothing can get us because God's already got us."* ---Frank Honeycutt

We leave the old country of sin and enter a new life of grace... resurrection life! We are buried to self and rise up a new person in Christ. The old life is past and the new begins. (II Corinthians 5:17)

We reject the power of sin over us and claim our aliveness in Jesus.

Jesus told his disciples to lose their life and you'll find true life. (Luke 9:24)

How many of you know your birth date?

How many of you know your death date?

Baptism is both? The day we die to self and the day we begin life, our new life, in Jesus.

For those of us who have shared in Christ's death through baptism we now have to ask ourselves, **"What kind of risky resurrection life is He calling us to live?"**

If, in our baptism, we have already died, then how shall we live this new covenant of resurrection life we share with Jesus?

*Remembering* our baptism is much easier than *reaffirming* our baptism.

When a person is baptized they are connected to the body of faith. They profess their faith in Jesus as their personal Savior. They also accept and affirm the covenant they are making with the body of Christ and to Christ himself.

It is this covenant of our baptism that we are to not just remember but reaffirm.

Let me share this covenant with you because I would imagine most of us, rather we were baptized as an infant or as an adult, really don't remember what we promised.

### The Baptism Covenant

1. To renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of their sins.
2. To accept the freedom and power God gives them to resist evil, injustice, and oppression.
3. To confess Jesus Christ as Savior, put their whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as their Lord.
4. To remain faithful members of Christ's holy church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world.
5. To be loyal to the United Methodist Church and do all in their power to strengthen its ministries.
6. To faithfully participate in its ministries by their prayers, their presence, their gifts and their service.
7. To receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

Anyone remember that part of your baptism?

Baptism is God's gift of grace.

Baptism gives us the spiritual strength to resist and confront evil in our lives and in the culture we live.

Baptism calls us to journey with Jesus living the truths and promises of His Word.

Baptism connects us to the community of faith of believers.

The disciple Peter was asked by the people, after he shared a message about Jesus resurrection, *"What shall we do...how shall we live?"*

Peter's answer for them, and for us:

***"Change your life. (Repent) Turn to God and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, so your sins are forgiven."*** (Acts 2:38 Message)

How should we who have been baptized live?

We are called to reaffirm our baptism.

We are to reaffirm and live daily our covenant of baptism.

We are to die to self and live all out for Jesus.

This we affirm in our baptism.

How are you doing in living out your baptism covenant?

Is it time to reaffirm and renew your commitment to live it out for Jesus?

We are going to reaffirm our baptism covenant through a reading, and then coming forward and receiving the sign of the cross on your fore head from the water of the baptism font.

You will then receive a blue stone to take to be a reminder for you of this day you reaffirmed your baptism life in Christ.

Don't just remember your baptism...reaffirm your covenant today and each new day you journey with Jesus!

