TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Daniel Balch / Opening Prayer by: Robert Ward
Morning Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#548 The Lily of the Valley
#543 Wonderful Words of Life

Scripture Reading by: Braylen Butler
#381 Years I Spent in Vanity

Communion Devotional by: Don Taylor
Lord's Supper and Contribution

#549 There Is Sunshine In My Soul
Sermon: "The Chosen: Nathanael Bartholomew "
John 1:45-49

#948 I Am Resolved
#711 Blest Be the Tie That Binds
Closing Prayer by: Brooks McKelroy IV

Robert Ward's small groups meets today
at 5:00 p.m. at the building.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

Apr. 27, 2025

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

All Spiritual Blessings in Jesus

In the last article here, we began discussing some of the spiritual blessings associated with the risen Jesus that are bestowed in baptism. The most prominent of those is the gift of the Holy Spirit, which we noted last week. But that is not exhaustive—there are others.

Jesus and the Church
…that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. **(Eph 1:20-23)**

Paul teaches here that when Christ was seated at the right hand of God, he was made head over the church, his body. In other words, Christ's resurrection and ascension began his reign as King. The invitation to enter his kingdom began soon after the ascension, on Pentecost. Since then, humanity has been offered the opportunity to join Christ's body, trusting Him to save them and to lead them.

How then do we become part of this kingdom? Jesus told Nicodemus, *Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God* **(Jn 3:5).** No one can be part of God's kingdom until he is born of water and the Spirit. What is he talking about? In context of **John 1-4,** it can only be baptism. Both John the Baptizer and Jesus are continually teaching and practicing it. Later, Paul would add that baptism makes us part of Christ's people, *For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body* **(1 Cor 12:13).**

Baptism puts us into the one body of Christ, His kingdom, His church, His chosen people. No matter our background, language, race, class, or anything else—it doesn't matter. Baptism unites us as a special people of God, separate from the world. The risen Christ becomes our leader, guiding us through this world, until he finally hands over his kingdom to the Father at the end of time **(1 Cor 15:24).** Then, the kingdom of God will be complete, and God will reign in his eternal kingdom. Until then, however, the kingdom of God in this world is the church. When we are baptized, we become part of that kingdom. It was established through the power and guidance of the risen Jesus.

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Steve Lunceford has cancer and not doing well.

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Steve Ward, Caitlin Smith, Virginia Cole, Ken Coleman, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Donna Wilson, Jo Ella McKewen, Oscar Cantu, Jennifer Stelly, Steve Ward, Geri Cryer, Gloria McKelroy, Scott Overton, Rickey Lucas, Debbie Lynn, Kim Berka

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique , Rod Kyle in the South Pacific, Mani Pagidopali in India

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister meeting Monday, Apr. 28th at 5:30 p.m.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Tuesday, May 6th at 8:00 a.m.

Ladies Day is Saturday, May 10th. See Pat Hobbs for more information.

Senior Sunday

Sunday, May 4th will be Senior Sunday. We will have a potluck dinner after morning service. Our 2 graduating seniors are Parker Balch and Rock Cary. Be sure and turn in your senior picture and bio's my Monday, April 28th to the office.

Food Bank

We served 159 families on Thursday, Apr. 17th at our food bank. That equals to 511 individuals. We had 20 volunteers.

Elders	Deacons	Minister
Bobby Rader	Daniel Balch	Bryant Perkins
Don Taylor	Danny Balch	
Robert Ward	Walden David	
	Gus Tristan	

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"
is the weekly bulletin of the Liberty Church of Christ 3201 North Main, Liberty Texas 77575
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Jesus and Eternal Life

Jesus suffered more than we could ever imagine in his crucifixion. It seemed in the moment like sin and death had won. But in his resurrection, he conquered both. His death appeared to be his final defeat, but his resurrection brought eternal victory.

Peter wrote years later to encourage Christians to endure in the face of persecution. He reminded them of Noah, who was surrounded by a disobedient world, but was brought safely by God through the waters of the flood. With that picture of Noah's deliverance in mind as a type, Peter wrote one of the clearest statements in Scripture about baptism: *Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him*. **(1 Pet 2:21-22)**

Peter reminded his audience that even if they suffered or died, baptism saved them. Many Christians would be persecuted, suffer, and die; how would they be saved? Their baptism saved them from sin and its punishment. They would be raised to eternal life. How was this possible? Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christians are joined with the power of Christ's resurrection in baptism; because of it, we are saved at baptism, receiving the gift of eternal life.

Conclusion

Ephesians 1:3 says God has given us *every spiritual blessing* in Christ. That is such a broad statement that we cannot fully comprehend it. But we do a disservice to it when we emphasize forgiveness as if it is THE blessing. Through his resurrection, Jesus became king, sent the Holy Spirit, and conquered death. In baptism, we unite ourselves with those resurrection blessings. We receive the Holy Spirit and become temples of God. We become citizens of the kingdom. We have the promise of eternal life.

Bryant Perkins