TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

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

#414 Anywhere with Jesus
#574 Oh, How I Love Jesus

Scripture Reading by: Braylen Butler
#2 We Praise Thee, O God

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

#145 All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name
Sermon: "This is My Father's World"
Psalm 148:1-6

#786 Precious Lord, Take My Hand
#538 My Hope is Built on Nothing Less
Closing Prayer by: Kelly McCain

We will start the Chosen series
tonight at 5:00 p.m.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

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

June 15, 2025

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

The Case Against Rebaptism

We have been winding up this series of articles on baptism by considering if there is any scenario where someone should be rebaptized. We began to answer that last week with the story of the Ephesian Disciples in **Acts 19.** To briefly reiterate, there was a very eloquent and knowledgeable preacher in Ephesus, Apollos, but he only knew John's baptism. Thus, he taught about Jesus, but it was incomplete; Aquilla and Priscilla instructed him more accurately, and he went on to a successful ministry in Corinth.

Against this background, Paul encounters some in Ephesus who seem to be disciples of Jesus, but had only been baptized into John's baptism. Paul tells them, *John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus*. **(v. 4)** He explained to them that their faith and allegiance were supposed to be in Jesus—he was the one John had said was to come after So, when they heard about this, *they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus* **(v. 5).**

This is the only place in Scripture that talks directly about what is sometimes called rebaptism. These had been baptized once into John's baptism, almost certainly through the preaching of Apollos. But when Paul talked with them, he told them they needed to be baptized again. Why? And what about us?

Why Were They Rebaptized?
At first glance, this rebaptism might not make any sense: they had been taught about Jesus; they were living according to his teachings; Paul even thought they looked like "disciples" outwardly. And they had actually been baptized: the baptism of John looked the same as the baptism of Jesus, a full immersion in water; further, just like the baptism of Jesus, John's was of repentance for forgiveness of sins

But this was <u>not</u> the baptism of Jesus. What was the difference? Two things, mainly. For one, Christian baptism is in the name of Jesus—that is, by his authority, in order to become a follower of him. The second is that John's baptism was not associated with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

What does this story have to teach us? Among other things, that the purpose of baptism is important to God. Both of these were the same in mode: immersion. Both were an attempt at obedience to God. Both resulted in trying to live godly lives after. But one thing was lacking: it was not in the name of, by the authority of Jesus. These men had submitted to baptism, but it was not the one baptism of Christ. And Paul's response is telling: he did not say, "Oh, don't worry about it" or, "You were trying to please God, I'm sure he will honor it." He said, "You need to do it God's way, with the one baptism of Jesus."

These men were baptized, then, because they had never received Christian baptism! It was not really a "rebaptism" at all—it was "baptism."

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Steve Lunceford has cancer and not doing well.

Anthony Semien, Lori David and Lisa Orebo's brother, had stroke. He is in Memorial Hermann MICU.

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, June 16th at 5:30 p.m..

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Thursday, June 19th at 8:00 a.m.

VBS work day on Friday, June 27th starting at 8:00 a.m. Don't forget money for VBS t-shirts on due today, Sunday, June 15th.

VBS is Saturday, June 28th from 9-2 p.m.

Children's Summer Movie Series

The youth will be watching Kings of Kings in the family life center while adults attend Wednesday night services. There will be a discussion, memory work, and food will be provided. This will be part of a 4 night series. So make sure you don't miss a night! Contact Emily Nance for more information.

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

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Improper Baptisms

Is it possible for someone to be baptized improperly in a similar way today? Yes, of course. Baptism in the name of Jesus is more than just going under water—otherwise, everyone who has jumped into the deep end of a pool is immersed! Baptism is also more than going through any act involving water and calling it baptism. Baptism in the name of Jesus means one has penitent faith and submits to him as Lord.

There are any number of wrong reasons for being baptized. Some are baptized when they go to a new congregation; they submit to it in order to join a church, whether a congregation or denomination. Some are baptized because some of their friends are being baptized; their purpose was to fit in. Some are baptized because a family member wanted them to be; their purpose was to make someone else happy.

None of these fits the NT description of baptism; as we have seen, its purpose is uniting with Jesus and his blessings. What should we tell people, then, who have been baptized for a wrong reason? We should do what Paul did. They need to be baptized—not rebaptized—in the one baptism of Jesus. If **Acts 19** shows us anything, it is that baptism in Jesus' name matters!

A Caution

But let's close with a very, very important word of caution: if someone has been baptized for a biblical reason, they do NOT need to be baptized again. Occasionally, I have encountered people who were baptized into Christ long ago, but at some point, they fell back into a sinful lifestyle. In desiring a new start, they ask to be rebaptzied. I appreciate their hearts and desire to get right with God, but they don't need it! Once you've been immersed in the name of Jesus, you get a fresh start through repentance! We should discourage this, and instead encourage a better understanding of faith, penitence, and baptism.

Others may desire to be rebaptized because they have learned so much more about living a Christian life since they were baptized into Christ. They worry that they didn't fully understand what they were doing, and it was thus invalid. But we ALL learn a lot after baptism; I didn't even understand everything about baptism at baptism! Remember a couple of weeks ago, when we discussed what you need to know before baptism: if we knew about Jesus and had faith in him, if we knew we were making a lifetime commitment, and if we knew baptism was in obedience to his will and united us with him, that's sufficient; we knew exactly what those on Pentecost knew!

Finally, what about someone baptized outside of the churches of Christ? If they had that understanding—faith, commitment, obedience—that was sufficient. Any other criteria we attach is to go beyond Scripture. Some think you have to understand that baptism is for forgiveness of sins. While it is true that God grants forgiveness in baptism, this is a blessing, not a command. It is a promise of God; you cannot obey a promise. The command is to be baptized; the promise is forgiveness. Further, this is not the only blessing associated with baptism; there is the gift of the Holy Spirit, being added to the church, eternal life.

We said above that requiring someone to be baptized again just to join a church is not biblical. That is true even if it is the "church of Christ." That is a denominational baptism, not the one baptism of Scripture.

No, God grants us all the blessings of baptism even if we do not understand them all at the time. Baptism is valid as long as we are immersed in submissive faith in Jesus. If not, then and only then do we need baptism—not rebaptism.

Bryant Perkins