

# Baptized into Christ

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 29 March 2015

Preacher: Chris Trousdale

[ 0 : 00 ] If you have a copy of the scriptures, then I'd like you to open up to Romans chapter 6.

If you didn't bring your Bible, we have some Bibles that are in the chairs that you're welcome to use. If you're using those Bibles, we're on page 942, going on to page 943 in those Bibles. If you don't know where Romans is, it's easy to find in some of those Bibles.

Romans chapter 6, we're going to read the same verses that we covered last week, but narrow our focus as we begin to talk. So I'd like you guys to stand as we begin in verse 1 and read down to verse 11.

The Apostle Paul writes, What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

[ 1 : 16 ] For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His. We know that our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

For the one who has died has been set free from sin. Now, if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again.

Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death He died, He died to sin once for all. But the life He lives, He lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin, and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Father, we give You thanks for this Word, and pray that You would open our eyes to see the beauty in it. We pray this in Jesus' name.

Amen. You guys take a seat. Well, I suppose that with the announcement of the first official candidate for the presidency for this next run of elections, you could say that, in a sense, election season has begun.

[ 2 : 29 ] I don't know how many of you pay attention to the news, but Ted Cruz announced that he was running. Everybody knew that already, and there will be more to follow him. But what I find so interesting about the election years, and even the years leading up to an election year, it's just the way that politicians, the way that they tend to talk, the things that they tend to say.

Because early on, when they're trying to win the nomination of their party, they just got to appeal to people who are more like them, right? And so they have to appeal to what's often called the base.

So Republican candidates want to win over all the Republicans, Democratic candidates want to win over all the Democrats. And of course, there are other parties, but it usually boils down to just those two. And so what they end up doing is they end up, they really begin to say the things that they believe, and sometimes they begin to really push things to the more either conservative or the more liberal wing of their party.

And they begin to say things that to the broader populace often sound like radical statements. They say things that when they come to the general election, to when they've got to face off against someone in another party, and they've got to obtain more votes than just people that are like them, they begin to sort of, oh, I don't know, stifle some of their earlier comments many times.

A lot of times they'll distance themselves from the more radical things that they said early on in their campaign, because now they need to appeal to the middle ground. Now they need to try to win people who maybe aren't quite as far right or as far left as they are.

[ 3 : 58 ] And so they begin to sort of alter or maybe water down the more radical things that they said earlier in their campaign. And I'm grateful that as we come to the Bible, we don't see that at play.

That the Apostle Paul, so far in Romans, has said things that are, by all accounts, radical statements. He has said that we are all sinners, that there's no one righteous, not even one, that there's no one who does good.

And he has said that the only means by which we can get right with God, the only way that we can become acceptable in God's presence is through faith and through faith alone.

In fact, if you look in Romans 3, verse 28, he says it very, very clearly. He says, we hold that when it's justified, that is, declared righteous by God, by faith apart from works of the law.

So he makes this radical statement in chapter 3, where he cancels out all attempts to earn righteousness before God. It's by faith alone apart from works of the law.

[ 5 : 07 ] To which some people might say, oh, the law. You mean the Old Testament law, the law of Moses. So Paul is saying that we're not righteous before God simply because we obey the law of Moses.

Maybe Paul is then saying that it's not the law of Moses, but it's a more general kind of goodness, that we need to do good in general and not just sort of tick off the things in the Mosaic law.

But Paul won't allow that. He doesn't leave any room for that. So if you move down a few verses into chapter 4, verse 5, he broadens out and he says, now to the one who does not work, but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteous.

So now it's broader. Now it's to the one who doesn't work. The one who doesn't attempt in any sort of way to earn a right standing before God. For that person, faith is counted as righteousness.

And that's a radical position to take. If you were a Jew living in Paul's day, you would view that, you would see that, you would hear that as a really radical statement. What about the law, Paul?

[ 6 : 12 ] What about our performance of things? Why, if we get right with God on the basis of faith alone, why would anyone ever attempt to do anything good?

In fact, Paul says such radical things. He even says that the law itself, given by God, was not given in order to provide a way by which people might become right with God.

But the law, in fact, makes sin worse, not better, so that the grace of God could be shown to be bigger and stronger and greater than it would if sin were small and light and easy.

Those are radical statements. And you would expect someone to respond to those statements by saying, well then, Paul, if the law only makes sin worse so that grace gets to be greater and God gets to have more glory, why not just continue to sin, let grace grow bigger, let grace conquer more, God will get more glory, and then we don't have to reform our lives in any sort of way whatsoever.

We can just believe in the things you say to believe in and then continue to live our lives in the same way that we've been living it. Why not do that? And that's exactly the kind of issue that Paul addresses in Romans chapter 6 and that he will continue to address in Romans chapter 7 and even to a certain extent in Romans chapter 8.

[ 7 : 32 ] Paul has said radical things and he does not temper those radical things. He does not back off of those radical statements in chapter 6. But what he does is, is he begins to answer criticism of what he has said.

He begins to point out some false inferences that you might draw from the radical things that he has said. But make no mistake, he does not back off from the things that he has been teaching so far in Romans.

And of course, last week we began to look at Paul's first answer to this question, then why not just go on sinning? Notice there in chapter 6 verse 1.

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? There's the question. Paul doesn't hide from it. He doesn't run from it. He doesn't pretend that no one's asking it or no one might ask it.

He asks the question out front and his answer is, by no means. We should not continue in sin. And then he gives a clear reason by way of a question. How can we who died to sin still live in it?

[ 8 : 38 ] That's Paul's answer. Paul says that more happens to you the moment you trust in Christ than justification. Now I know we keep using these words.

Justification. We'll talk about sanctification. Later we'll talk about adoption throughout the book of Romans. We'll have to talk about these large words. And I keep bringing them up.

And I know that there's a tendency among some to say, couldn't we temper that a little bit? Couldn't we update the language maybe a bit and stop using all of these long words that all seem to end in ION?

Couldn't we change that a bit? Stop talking about justification? Don't talk about sanctification. What does that mean? Why do you bring in adoption? All of these big words. I know we have a tendency to want to move away from those.

But Paul never moves away from that sort of language. And I don't want us to move away from that kind of language because it's the only language we have to accurately describe the things that Paul's talking about in this letter.

[ 9 : 35 ] Imagine for a moment if someone said to you, hey, I would really love it if you'd give me the recipe to your cookies. They're the best chocolate chip cookies I've ever eaten in my life.

I'd really like for you to give me the recipe. So you begin to give them the recipe. Well, you're going to need some flour. You're going to need some sugar. You need some eggs and some other ingredients. They say, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. What's this sugar stuff?

Why do you have to use baker's language? What's this flour? Come up with something else. Well, you're going to want to use a natural sweetener. I don't know what else to say. The word is sugar. That's the word.

Look it up in a dictionary. Learn the language and then you'll understand the recipe. Well, that's sort of what we're doing as we go through Romans. We're learning the language of salvation. We're learning the language of Christianity. And so we talk about justification.

And now we begin to talk about sanctification, which is similar but different. Justification is the moment that we are declared righteous on the basis of faith.

[ 10 : 30 ] And sanctification now is the process throughout our lives in which God actually makes us righteous. And that process begins the moment that we trust in Jesus.

You see, trusting in Christ, putting your faith in Jesus and in all that He has done for you, earns for you, first of all, the righteousness of Christ. You are united to Jesus and His righteousness is counted as yours and your sin is counted as His and punished on the cross.

And we call that justification. But more happens at the moment of your union with Jesus, at the moment that you believe, than justification. Paul says, for instance here, that when we are united to Christ, we die to sin, which I take to be the beginning of sanctification.

We die to sin. And I said last week that that means that we die to the power of sin. That before we come to Christ, sin exercises a power over us that we cannot break.

We cannot overcome it. That's why Paul was able to say that there's no one righteous, no one who does good. What he means is, apart from Christ, apart from the Holy Spirit at work within you and the grace of Christ transforming you from the inside out, no one does good.

[ 11 : 54 ] It's not possible. But what of those who've trusted in Jesus? What of those who've been united to Jesus by faith? One of the first things he says that happens is that the power of sin over your life and heart and mind is broken in that time.

It's no longer exercised in the same way over you. But of course, as we saw last week, our experience of freedom from bondage to sin ebbs and flows throughout our life.

Freedom from sin is won by union with Jesus through faith. But your actual experience of freedom from sin occurs as you have increased communion with Christ throughout your life.

We saw that last week because Paul boldly declares that we have died to sin in the verses that we've already seen. But then when you come down to the end of our passage, he says in verse 11, so you must consider yourselves dead to sin.

In other words, there's something that we do to experience our deadness to the power of sin. And that is we change our thinking. We consider or we count ourselves to be dead to sin so that we begin to increasingly experience the victory that Christ has won, not only over the condemning power of sin, but over the power of sin to enslave us to its ways throughout our lives.

[ 13 : 23 ] Now, Paul illustrates this idea of a death to sin in a vivid way in this passage that we did not look at in any detail last week.

In fact, as I went back and listened to the recording of last week's sermon, which I do frequently, I went back and listened to the recording of last week's sermon, I realized that I breezed really quickly over verses that are really important in this passage.

Because Paul, in the midst of describing and helping us to understand what it means to be dead to sin, draws upon the experience of our own baptism to illustrate deadness to sin.

Notice exactly what he says here in chapter 6. He says in verse 3, Paul sees baptism is so important and so pivotal that he uses it to help us to understand his overall teaching of what it means to be dead to sin and alive to God.

And so I think it's important that just this morning we dwell for a few minutes on why Paul chooses this particular experience in the life of a Christian to illustrate this reality of deadness to sin.

[ 14 : 52 ] Why choose this? Why even bother with any sort of experience in our lives to communicate this truth? Why not just state the truth and move on? And so what I want us to do this morning is to notice three things about baptism from this passage that will help us, I think, to better understand and to better experience the freedom from sin that we have by union with Jesus.

So three things that I want us to consider about baptism from this passage. First of all, I want us to talk about the meaning of baptism as it's laid out here in this passage. Secondly, I want us to talk about the means or the mode of baptism as it's pictured here in this passage.

And then lastly, the universality of baptism. It's universal here in this passage. So those three things, follow with me. We're going to talk about baptism a bit this morning as you would expect in a Baptist church when you're dealing with a passage that covers baptism.

All right? So first of all, the meaning of baptism. It's not difficult to discern the parallels that Paul draws between salvation and baptism in this verse.

He says that the death that we die to sin is pictured, it's signified by our dying with Christ in baptism and then the life that we experience through faith in Jesus as the Holy Spirit comes to live within us is experienced and pictured in baptism as a rising with Christ to new life.

[ 16 : 16 ] But simply the fact that I'm using the language of symbol and sign and pictured shows my theology and shows how I'm interpreting this passage.

Because there are many people throughout Christian history and even many people today who would argue that baptism is not merely a sign of what has happened inside of you.

It's not merely a sign and symbol of the death to sin that you have experienced. Nor is it merely a sign and symbol of the spiritual life that you experience in Christ.

No. They would say that baptism is the means by which those things are granted or communicated to us. In other words, they would say that our salvation depends both upon our faith and our baptism which expresses that faith.

That's what many people would say. So that in many churches today you will be taught that baptism is necessary in order for you to experience salvation. Or put in Paul's language, baptism they would say would be necessary to experience the benefits of justification and freedom from sin.

[ 17 : 26 ] To which I say, I do not think that that fits with Paul's teaching elsewhere, nor do I think it's a necessary view to be drawn from this passage. But you do have to admit that on a surface, if you just take these two verses out of the context of Romans and read them by themselves, it does sound as if Paul is saying that this death to sin happens to us by means of baptism.

Notice specifically the language that he uses in verse 4. We were buried therefore with him, he says, by or through baptism into death.

So it does sound as if baptism is the instrument, baptism is the means by which we experience death to sin. It sounds as if that's what he's saying.

But if for Paul, baptism is the means by which we are saved, the means by which we are made right with God, the means by which we experience freedom from the power of sin, if that's what these verses mean, then these verses are found to be contradicting almost everything that Paul has said up to this point in the book of Romans.

So the first reason why I reject that interpretation of these verses is because it simply does not fit with what we've seen throughout this book. We've already read that Paul has said in Romans chapter 3 verse 28 that we believe that people are justified by faith alone apart from works of the law.

[ 19 : 00 ] Or in Romans 4-5 that not by any deeds that we do, not by any good works that we do are we justified, but by faith alone. We have seen that.

That's Paul's argument throughout the first five chapters of this book. That it's faith and faith alone that unifies you to Jesus and gains you access to all the benefits of being united to Christ, namely justification and now here freedom from bondage to sin.

faith and faith alone obtain those things for us. And if he adds baptism here at the beginning of chapter 6, he has just contradicted everything he said in the first five chapters.

So simply because I don't believe that Paul is an incoherent writer who's forgotten his main argument from the first five chapters, I cannot accept the interpretation that says that Paul says baptism is the means by which we are saved in Romans 6.

So that's the first reason why I would reject that interpretation of this particular passage. But there are other reasons as well. For instance, elsewhere when the apostle Paul deals with the connection between baptism and faith, he makes the means by which we are saved to be faith and not baptism.

[ 20 : 17 ] Let me show you two places. I want you to turn in your Bibles over to Galatians. Turn to Galatians if you would real quickly. We won't be there for a long time. Galatians chapter 3 where Paul, again, in the book of Galatians, lays out the doctrine of justification by faith alone.

He's clear on that in this book as well. And then in chapter 3, verse 26, he mentions baptism. He says, In Christ Jesus, you are all sons of God through faith.

So how are we adopted into God's family? How do we experience the benefits of union with Jesus? Through faith, he says. That's the instrument. That's the means of our salvation, of our becoming sons of God.

And then he mentions baptism. As many of you who were baptized into Christ Jesus have put on Christ. In other words, baptism is not here laid out as the means by which we are made sons of God, but baptism here comes alongside faith.

Baptism points to the reality that faith creates. Faith creates the reality. Union with Jesus, adoption into his family, righteousness in the sight of God now.

[ 21 : 30 ] Faith gives us all those things. What does baptism do? Baptism follows up to be a sign and a symbol of us having put on Christ, of us having been united to Jesus.

It's through faith, though, that these things happen. One other place, turn over to Colossians, just a few pages in your Bible, to Colossians chapter 2, where we see the mention of baptism and faith again.

Paul says in verse 12 of Colossians chapter 2, that you have been buried with him in baptism, the same, very similar language to Romans chapter 6, buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith.

So how were we raised? How do we experience spiritual life? Through faith. Not through faith and baptism, but through faith. So what's the role of baptism?

Baptism symbolizes, baptism pictures, the reality that faith brings about. Faith creates a connection with Christ. Faith gets us justified by God, declared righteous by God.

[ 22 : 36 ] Faith unites us to Jesus so that we experience freedom from sin. baptism symbolizes all that is accomplished by faith. Baptism is not the means by which you are saved.

So because of Paul's argument throughout the first five chapters of Romans, because of what he says in a couple of other places about the connection between faith and baptism, but also because for Paul, as you find elsewhere in his writings, baptism was not automatically connected with the proclamation of the gospel of salvation.

Let me say that again so that you can understand that. That baptism for Paul is not automatically connected with the proclamation of the gospel of salvation.

We see that portrayed clearly for us just in the fact that Paul doesn't mention baptism very often in his letters. He's constantly talking about the gospel and yet he very rarely mentions baptism.

He's waited all the way until Romans chapter 6 to even make a mention of baptism when he's been laying out the gospel for five whole chapters and telling us how to get right with God.

[ 23 : 50 ] It's not integral for Paul. It's important, but it's not a part of the basic gospel proclamation for Paul. Let me show you that though in a clear text, I think.

1 Corinthians, if you would turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 1. The words will be on the screen, but you might want to look yourself. In 1 Corinthians, Paul is dealing with a number of divisions in the church at Corinth and there are some people who are saying, well, I'm a follower of Paul or some are saying I'm a follower of Peter or Cephas.

Some are saying I'm a follower of Apollos. And so there are these factions within the church based on who their favorite leader happens to be. And Paul is addressing that in a very harsh way in 1 Corinthians.

He can't believe that these sort of divisions have arisen among them. And then he says in verse 14, I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name.

Now I did baptize the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else. What a strange thing for Paul the Apostle, the planter of churches, the one who began the church in Corinth, who came and proclaimed the gospel to them.

[ 25 : 00 ] What a strange thing for him to say, I didn't really baptize very many of you. I can think of two guys and one household. That's it. I didn't baptize. But Paul, you started the church. But Paul, you went to the synagogue and proclaimed the gospel to the Jews and then outside the synagogue to the Gentiles.

You formed the church in Corinth. How could you have not baptized them? If baptism is the means by which we are saved, then Paul failed to finish proclaiming the gospel by failing to baptize these people.

More than that though, notice what he says in verse 17. For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel.

It's quite a statement. If baptism is a necessary part of salvation, if baptism is the capstone on the proclamation of the gospel, then Paul missed the boat completely.

Because for Paul, he was not sent to baptize. He was sent to preach the gospel. It's not to say that baptism wasn't important for Paul. If it weren't important, he would never mention it in his letters and he wouldn't use it as a great illustration of dying to sin and rising with Christ.

[ 26 : 14 ] But for Paul, baptism is not the means by which we are saved. Therefore, not the means by which we get right with God. Therefore, not the means by which we experience freedom from the power of sin.

It is just not. It is a sign and a symbol of what we experience by faith in Jesus. But then you do have to ask the question, then why this sort of language, Paul?

Why use this language of by baptism or through baptism? Let me see if this illustration will help to understand this sort of language because I think that we talk this way more often than we realize and when we see it in print, we don't recognize it as a common way of speaking.

I'm going to borrow this illustration from John Piper because he says sometimes we talk this way at wedding ceremonies and we talk this way when we talk about marriage. He says, imagine someone saying this. Imagine someone saying, all of us who have put on the ring of marriage have, by putting on this ring, forsaken all others to cleave only to our wives.

Therefore, by this ring, I am united to my wife alone and dead to all others. I think if I said that to you guys or if you heard someone say that, you would understand perfectly clear what they meant.

[ 27 : 36 ] You would not think, oh, aha, it's the ring that makes you married. The ring united you to your wife. That's what happened. I don't think anyone would think that. Everyone would understand that the ring, though it is said to be the means by which you're united to your wife, I think we would all understand that's not the literal meaning.

What we mean is the ring is a sign and a symbol of your union with your wife and so long as you wear this ring, you're letting the world know, I'm united to my wife and dead to all others.

That's the point of the wedding band. And in much the same way, that's the point of baptism. And that's why the use of this kind of language. Baptism is not the means by which we obtain salvation, but it is a means by which we proclaim to the world that we have experienced death with Jesus by faith and life now in Christ by faith.

That's the meaning of baptism here in Romans chapter 6. And we could end the sermon there because I think that's probably enough information for you to deal with and for you to handle, but I want to pack all this baptism stuff into one sermon before we get to Easter next week.

So, also, not only the means, but I think there are clear pointers to the method or the mode of baptism. Take a look at how he words this. He says, we were buried with Christ by baptism into death in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

[ 29 : 07 ] When we baptize people, as we are a Baptist church, and so when we baptize people, we bring in this big movable pool that we filled with very cold water just to mess with people.

But when we do baptism, we do our best. Sometimes I fail, but I do my best to get people all the way under the water, right? Every once in a while I don't get the front of their hair wet or something like that, and then get them all the way out of the water.

We put them all the way in. Why? Why do we do that? Because it symbolizes them being buried with Christ, and we bring them up out of the water to symbolize them rising with Christ.

I think that we do that not to be inventive, but because we're doing that to reflect the words of Romans chapter 6. The word baptizo in Greek actually means to dip or to immerse.

It's used many times in ancient Greek literature. It's used to describe the sinking of a ship. It's used to describe dyeing of fabric because you dip the fabric all the way down into the dye. It's used to describe the cleaning of utensils and instruments because you would immerse them in the water and scrub them in the water and then bring them out.

[ 30 : 14 ] It's used in all those sorts of ways. So the word itself could tell us that the mode of baptism ought to be full immersion of the body. But I think Romans chapter 6 depends upon full immersion to picture what baptism means.

What baptism is showing us and signifying for us. It's signifying for us that we are buried just as Christ was buried and we are raised just as Christ was raised.

Now some will say, but wasn't Jesus put into a tomb, like a cave? Nobody dug a hole, right? So isn't this imagery of burial sort of inappropriate to describe being united to Christ in death since he wasn't actually buried in a tomb?



I don't think so. Because the entombing of people was often still described in the ancient world as them being buried. Even in the New Testament, Christ is described as going down into the grave.

So that even though technically he was put into a tomb above ground, still the imagery of burial after death applies. Christ was buried, we are told, over and over in scripture, even though technically his burial was above ground.

[ 31 : 26 ] So I don't think that in any way takes away from, I think, what is the right natural mode of baptism pictured here in Romans chapter 6 of going all the way down into the water, coming all the way back up, immersion.

Do I look down up on those who do baptism in other ways? Certainly not. Absolutely not. Some of the great heroes of the faith that I know didn't practice and don't today practice full immersion.

But I think in order for us to fully understand this passage, that's the image of baptism that we need to have in our minds. We need to have in our minds the image of people in the first century going out to mainly rivers and creeks and streams and lakes to be fully immersed in the water and then brought up out of those places to show in a vivid, vivid way that they've died with Jesus.

And now they experience his resurrection life. Now in the present by walking in newness of life, by considering themselves dead to sin but alive to God and fully in the future when they are raised from the dead to experience the full glory of Jesus.

Baptism is a beautiful picture of what we have experienced, what we are experiencing now and what we can expect to experience in eternity. But only if we rightly understand it.

[ 32 : 49 ] So the meaning of baptism is that it's a symbol and sign of what's happened to us in Christ. The means by which it symbolizes that or the mode is by full immersion and then coming out of the water. And then finally the last thing that I want to point out to you that I think we could miss very easily in this text just by reading too quickly and not paying close attention.

But though we might say that for Paul baptism was not part of the proclamation of the gospel, Paul did expect baptism to be a universal practice among the churches of Christ.

He expected that. Notice his language. Notice just how he brings up the subject of baptism. Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ were baptized in his death?

He assumes that all of us who name Christ have experienced this sign and symbol of the reality that's taken place inside. All of us who were baptized into Christ. All of us.

And then think about that language. Do you not know? In other words, you know this, right? He's writing to a church that he's never visited, the church in Rome. He's met very few of the believers of the church in Rome.

[ 34 : 00 ] He names a few at the end of the letter that he knows personally. But he's not writing to a church that he himself founded. He's not writing to a church in which he knows the vast majority of people in that church. And yet he's able to assume that they have all experienced the reality of baptism.

It's universal for Paul. Not a part of the basic proclamation, but universal in the experience of all Christians and all followers of Christ. Which leads me to a point of application for us this morning.

I'm even waiting for this, right? I'm just going to apply this to me. It's a simple point of application. application. Have you been baptized? Have you followed your faith in Jesus with the sign of that faith?

Have you joined in the universal experience of the believers of the New Testament church? Have you joined with them in experiencing baptism?

Jesus says that we're going to go and make disciples baptizing them. Why? Because baptism is a clear sign, a proclamation of our faith in Jesus. Have you, through the means that the Bible supplies, publicly proclaimed your faith in Jesus?

[ 35 : 16 ] I have been asked a handful of times in the last three years, why don't you guys have, well, why don't y'all have an invitation at the end of your sermon?

You know, where the preacher stands up front and we play the songs for a longer time than we typically play them until we can hopefully get two or three people to come up and pray with me and do something.

People will say, why don't you do that? And I give them various reasons, we'll go into those now. But then a follow-up question is often, but how are they going to publicly proclaim their faith in Jesus if they don't get to come up in front of the church?

How are they going to do that? To which I normally respond, I don't know, baptism? The means that Jesus and the apostles have given to us for doing that.

So let me ask you the question again. Have you been obedient to Jesus and have you publicly proclaimed your faith in him through baptism?

[ 36 : 16 ] But then far more importantly than just that, do you have a reason to come for baptism? Have you trusted in the work of Christ upon the cross?

Have you believed, really trusted and believed that he died for sin and that he rose again to give you the hope of eternal life? Have your sins been dealt with on the cross and do you have as a sure foundation for eternal hope the knowledge that his righteousness counts as yours before God because you've trusted in him?

I encourage you, don't leave. Don't go anywhere else. Don't do anything else without trusting in Jesus. And if you've trusted in Jesus, then let the world know by the means that he has provided.

Follow it up in baptism. Let's pray. You