

SUBMERGED IN CHRIST

Scripture Reading: **Luke 3:15-22**

Introduction: As we read this morning about the baptism of Jesus and we look behind us to the waters located behind me. I think it's interesting that our Savior was baptized just as many of us were. There is a connection there between Christ's baptism and our baptism.

- ❖ Paul, like the gospel writers, affirms that there's a connection between them. Look with me in...
 - **Galatians 3:26-27**, "**For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.**"
 - We are baptized into Christ
 - We take on the character of Christ
 - One are that I would like to look at later in this lesson is what it means to be baptized into Christ.
 - **Colossians 2:11-14**, "**In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.**"
 - We are unified with Christ in death and resurrection.
 - It's described by Paul as a circumcision by Christ.
 - He initiated a New Covenant with us
 - When God makes us alive with Christ (again note the unity with Christ) He forgives us of all our sins.
 - We begin a new phase of our existence on this earth.
 - **Romans 6:5**, "**For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,**"
 - It has been stated, "He became what we are that He might makes us what He is."

IN HIS BAPTISM, JESUS IDENTIFIES WITH US...

1. IN OUR HUMANITY

- ❖ What is so appealing about baptism in an age where nothing seems important?
- ❖ The post-modern culture may be more receptive to baptism than the modern rational culture was.
 - ❖ God wants to baptize minds, but He demands more than that.
 - ❖ God is interested in baptizing more than just feelings—Baptism is a total experience
- ❖ Our culture is desperate for real and total experience/
 - Why the rise of tattoos and body piercing's?
 - Because it's real, bodily, and symbolic
 - It's event based—it's a marker of something significant
 - Why the popularity of extreme sports?
 - Extreme sports may be so popular because in an age of meaninglessness it's assumed that we only feel alive is to risk dying.

- ❖ We live in an age where nothing seems to matter very much at all.
 - And that which does matter—doesn't for very long
 - Nothing seems permanent and this includes human life.
 - There are so many today who question the meaning of their existence
 - They're confused about their worth, their value, and their identity.
- ❖ My generation has not witnessed the global turmoil that previous generations have.
 - We didn't live through wars and depressions
 - We are not the greatest generation and therein lay our problem.
 - We were not faced with monumental decisions or titanic struggles that demanded the greatest of sacrifices.
 - Our greatest struggle is the question of our existence
 - We are the first generation to know that our parents could've legally chosen to abort us.
 - We are the first generation commonly raised by institutions as much as families
 - We are the first generation born without God as a significant part of our culture

How this generation longs for a faith that has flesh—WE FIND THAT IN CHRIST AND IN HIS BAPTISM.

2. HE IDENTIFIES WITH US IN OUR HUMANITY

- ❖ German composer Felix Mendelssohn's grandfather, Moses Mendelssohn, was not a handsome man.
 - i. In addition to his short stature, he also had a hunched back.
 - ii. When he met the woman of his dreams, Moses fell deeply in love, but she was repulsed by his appearance.
 - iii. Finally getting the courage to talk to her, Moses asked, "Do you believe marriages are made in heaven?"
 - A. When she said yes, Moses said, "In heaven at the birth of each boy, the Lord announces which girl he will marry. When I was born, my future bride was pointed out to me."
 - B. "Then the Lord said, 'But your wife will be humpbacked.' Right then and there I called out, 'Oh Lord, a humpbacked woman would be a tragedy. Please Lord, give me the hump and let her be beautiful.'"
 - C. She reached out and gave Mendelssohn her hand and later became his devoted wife.
- **II Corinthians 5:21**, "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."
 - Jesus became that sin so each of us could become righteous in the sight of God.

3. HE IDENTIFIES WITH US IN OUR HOPE FOR A NEW BEGINNING

- Most of us have been at the same place in our lives at one time or another.
 - We've felt the need to pray but didn't do it.
 - We've been in bad relationships
 - We've felt unloved by parents or friends
 - We all feared whether our lives would be successful or just a meaningless life
 - We've...

- Lacked purpose
- Lacked identity
- Lacked direction

- Let me ask you a question: How do you feel about baptism?
 - I want to share a set of scriptures with you that answer all your questions.
 - **Matthew 11: 28-30**, “**Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.**”

- Only the language of a new birth, anew beginning can be found here in the words of Jesus.
 - This event, this baptism into Christ, points toward that new life only found in Him.
 - A moment in time when the angels in heaven are rejoicing over one sinner who has given their life over to the Creator of all this is and ever will be.

Have you experienced that new beginning that can only be found IN CHRIST?

IN OUR BAPTISM—WE IDENTIFY WITH CHRIST

1. IN HIS DIVINITY

- a. **II Peter 1:3-4**, “as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust.”
 - i. You see, we’ve been equipped
 - ii. We have a new value.

- b. There is a baseball card called the “Baltimore Orioles Future Stars” and at one time it was valued at over 100.00 dollars.
 - i. The three players on this card were:
 1. Jeff Schneider who played one year of pro baseball and pitched in 11 games.
 2. Bobby Bonner who played 4 years but only appeared in 61 total games and never hit a homerun.
 3. The third is a name you might recognize.
 - a. He played 21 years and appeared in 3,001 pro games.
 - b. He came to bat 11, 551 times
 - c. Collected 3,184 hits
 - d. Had 431 homeruns and 1,695 RBI’s.
 - e. His name is Cal Ripken, Jr.
 - ii. Bobby Bonner and Jeff Schneider’s baseball card is worth 100 dollars, not because of their name and stats, but because of what someone else has done.

- c. Once we are IN Christ through baptism and we have given our everything to God through Him.
 - i. We share in that righteousness
 - ii. All because Christ hung on that cross and gave His life as a ransom for ours.

2. IN OUR BAPTISM, WE IDENTIFY WITH CHRIST IN HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

- a. **Matthew 3:13-15**, “Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. 14 And John *tried to* prevent Him, saying, “I need to be baptized by You, and are You

coming to me?”

15 But Jesus answered and said to him, “Permit *it to be so* now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he allowed Him.”

b. Baptism is God making a statement

- i. He claims the one who is baptized—God alone justifies and sanctifies
- ii. Jesus was not baptized simply to follow orders or to set an example
 1. He was baptized so that we might meet Him through baptism and take up His righteousness.
 2. Look to the scripture—“... **for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.**”

3. IN OUR BAPTISM WE IDENTIFY IN HIS RESURRECTION NOW AND TO COME.—

ROMANS 6. (READ).

- a. We are buried in Baptism—We die with Jesus and put off the body of flesh.
 - i. This is some graphic language and not used to scare you but to enlighten you.
 - ii. It’s not a small cutting away of a small amount of flesh
 - iii. It’s a death
 - iv. Baptism looks back to Jesus, who dies and leaves behind His mortal existence before being raised in a spiritual body and an immortal existence.
- b. We are raised by faith in the power of God to give new life.
 - i. Our life after baptism is described as a new birth
 - ii. It’s more than erasing a few mistakes or working on a few faults—IT’S A TOTAL RENEWAL.
 - iii. Not a new leaf but a new life
- c. Our baptism points us to the future—to the second coming of Christ.
 - i. If we have died with Christ, then we will live with Him.
 - ii. Why do we believe this?
 1. Look to **Romans 6:9**, “**knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.**”
 2. Christ was raised and death no longer rules Him.

In Closing:

- Our baptism binds us together.
 - We are so different.
 - We make distinctions
 - We judge
 - But the rebirth of baptism is God’s gracious way of giving us a new birthright.
- We are children of God
 - We are born into His house
 - And that makes us brothers and sisters
 - And the one baptism that we’re all to be baptized into makes unity.
 - No more distinctions, no more political, racial, and religious tension.

- When we put on Christ, the things we base our identity on change.
 - There is no longer black and white.
 - There is no longer Hispanic or Anglo
 - Your income doesn't matter, your education doesn't matter,
 - Your past history of sins doesn't matter.
 - BY THE GRACE THAT IS GOD—YOU ARE GIVEN A NEW LIFE

- Because of this we don't get to make excuses.
 - You can tell me about your past and I'll listen because that explains who you are
 - But once you've been born again, you don't have to make excuses

- But Joe you don't understand
 - "I was born on the wrong side of the tracks"
 - No, you can be baptized and born in God's house
 - "I've led a horrible life!"
 - That life will be gone.
 - You'll have a new life—you'll be baptized into Christ
 - "Nobody cares about me."
 - You will be adopted by God
 - "My family will turn against me."
 - You will be baptized into His body
 - You will never be alone again.

YOU SEE BAPTISM DOESN'T PUT A CLAIM ON GOD. IT PUTS A CLAIM ON US!

BAPTISM IS THE PLACE WHERE YOU CAN AND WILL ENCOUNTER JESUS.

Have you been washed in the Blood of the Lamb?

If not please come as we stand and sing.