

The Power of Baptism

All of us stand in awe at the miracle of life. Consider the miracle of a living human being: from the union of two cells, without consciousness, resulting first in a laughing baby, then in an innocent child beholding the world in wonder. The child matures, is educated, becomes independent, develops a character, good or bad. He or she experiences the triumphs, the joys and the sorrows of life.

Yes, life is a miracle. But in the ultimate sense, life is a tragedy, in the sense that it is imperfect, and the wisdom and perspective of old age is marred by disease, pain, suffering, and ultimately death. These are depressing thoughts until we recognize that God who created life is capable of creating a truly miraculous, perfect, unending life.

New Life

Paul explains in Galatians 3:26–29:

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Baptism is connected directly to the principle of resurrection and to a new life. Paul explains in Romans:

Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we

were buried with him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of his death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of his resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin (Romans 6:3–7).

Jesus Christ was born, lived, died and was raised to a new and perfect life, all seen by eyewitnesses. God has promised that He will do this for us. But He makes some simple conditions: we must have faith that He will do what He has promised, and we must be baptised. Baptism is a humbling act; by it we acknowledge we are powerless to help ourselves, that we need God to help us.

There is a deeper symbolism here. We become related to Christ. We become the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For by being baptized into Christ, we have put on Christ. Thus by baptism we symbolically 'die' with Christ, and on coming out of the water we are 'raised' with him, becoming a 'new creation'. Baptism is a foretelling in symbol of what will happen to baptized believers: raised again to everlasting life when Jesus returns.

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