

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

The Implications of Christian Baptism

Colossians 2:20-3:11

1 When one of my sons began to realize the implications of Christian Baptism he asked me to baptize him again. I had performed his baptism when he was a pre teen.

He understood when he was baptized that he was making a commitment to the Lord. He just didn't believe that he understood before what that meant.

After hearing this message as an adult, however, he decided to be baptized again as a sign to himself and others of his rededication to Jesus' lordship of his life. Even though I felt it was unnecessary, I went ahead and baptized him again. He appreciated it.

So, let's look at this scripture in Colossians, chapter 2, verse 20 through chapter 3, verse 11, to learn what some of these implications are. 2

Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? These are all destined to perish with

use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.¹ ₃

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.² ₄

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger,

¹ Colossians 2:20-23.

² Colossians 3:1-4.

rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ³ ₅

Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all. ⁴

Christian Baptism is the total immersion of your body in water and raising of your body out of the water. Part of the symbolism of this ceremony is explained in this scripture passage. ₆

³ Colossians 3:5-8.

⁴ Colossians 3:9-11.

I. Being Buried with Christ Means Shifting Focus from Your Old Worldly

Life – 2:20-23 & 3:5-11

Being buried with Christ means shifting focus from your old worldly life. ⁷

It involves death to the Law of Moses, the first covenant God had with His human creation. ⁸

The first reason is that these Old Testament regulations never really penetrated the surface, our intellect, to get to our hearts. ⁵ ⁹ It never gave us power in our lives to overcome. ⁶ ¹⁰ The Apostle Paul described his life under the Old Testament Law this way, **We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I**

⁵ Colossians 2:21-22 - “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”? These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings.

⁶ Colossians 2:23 - Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

hate I do. and if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ⁷ The power to overcome the worldly life just wasn't there! ¹¹

It involves death to the world; its influence in our lives. ¹² We do this by getting rid of the world's wrong attitudes. ⁸ Notice the list of ungodly attitudes here. ¹³

Sexual immorality: ⁹ the American Standard Version translates this word "fornication". It means sexual intercourse apart from the marriage relationship. We get our English words "fornicate" and "pornography" from this word.

The Apostle Paul's New Testament letters have seven sin lists. Fornication is found in five of them!

The context of this scripture suggests this is more a mental state than the actual practice of it. ¹⁴ However,

⁷ Romans 7:14-17.

⁸ Colossians 3:5 - Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

⁹ πορνεία.

remember Lord Jesus said, **You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.** ¹⁰ ₁₅

Impurity: ¹¹ means “uncleanness”. This word implies all those things forbidden by God in the Old Testament for human contact. I believe this infers to your mind always being in the trash can, always thinking about the unclean. ₁₆

Lust: ¹² is that which falls on you; a passion. The King James Version calls this word an “inordinate affection”. Two of the three New Testament passages this word is found in imply homosexuality! ₁₇

Evil desires: ¹³ “bad desires” or “passionate longings”. The King James Version calls this “evil concupiscence” (I’m sure you know what that means).

¹⁰ Matthew 5:27-28.

¹¹ ἀκαθαρσία.

¹² πάθος.

¹³ ἐπιθυμίαν κακήν.

It means a strong sexual desire; a longing for the forbidden sexually. ¹⁸

Greed: ¹⁴ “covetousness”, the desire to always want more. Greed is probably the closest thing we have today to biblical idolatry. ¹⁹

The next part of dealing with the world’s influence in our lives is getting rid of the wrong actions. Notice the list of ungodly actions here. ¹⁵ ²⁰

Anger: ¹⁶ “impulsive wrath”. We get our word “orgy” from this word. You may say, “I have a quick temper. I blow up. But it’s over quickly.” The answer to that is, “So was the attack at the World Trade Center; but look at the damage it did!” ²¹

Rage: ¹⁷ “passion”; literally, you get so worked up you are breathing hard. It’s like the cartoon of the bull in the arena, head bent down, hooves scraping the

¹⁴ πλεονεξία.

¹⁵ Colossians 3:8-9 - But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ...

¹⁶ ὄργή.

¹⁷ θυμός.

ground and breathing hard just before he charges the bull fighter. ²²

Malice: ¹⁸ simply means “wickedness”. ²³

Slander: ¹⁹ literally “blasphemy”. It means to speak with the idea of injuring; showing contempt or lack of respect. The Lord was accused of this when He healed the paralytic man who was carried by his four friends. ²⁰ The Lord said that the unforgivable sin is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. ²¹ ²⁴

Filthy language: ²² is swearing, noise pollution, mouth in the trash can language. The American Standard Version calls it “shameful speech”. ²⁵

This is a picture of the old worldly life. But, how do you die to the old life? How do you get rid of the old habits described here? ²⁶

¹⁸ κακία.

¹⁹ βλασφημία.

²⁰ Matthew 9:1-8.

²¹ Matthew 12:22-31.

²² αίσχρολογία.

II. Being Raised with Christ Means Focusing In on the Life of Christ – 3:1-4

Being raised with Christ means focusing in on the life of Christ.

It was very stormy at the airport as we were boarding our flight. Lightning was flashing and thunder was roaring. The airplane took off and we began to gain altitude. In a few minutes we broke out of the cloud area into what appeared to be a calm bright sunny day. No storm! The whole atmosphere changed. Everyone sighed relief as our fearful attitudes changed dramatically.

Being raised with Christ in baptism symbolically helps us to refocus from the old world's way to the life of Christ; His way. ²⁷

Now, chapter 3, verse 1, Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. This

part of our scripture has us **focus on the Lord** and His authority over us.

The right hand mentioned here was the second in command to the king. He was the chief advisor. Hyman was appointed the chief advisor to the king in the Book of Esther. The executive officer in a military command is often the next highest authority. ²⁸

Next is chapter 3, verses 2 and 4, Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things . . . When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. The next part of our scripture has us **focus on heaven** as the motivation in your life. ²⁹

Concentrate on having resurrection bodies someday.

First John, chapter 3, verse 2, **Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.** ³⁰ Again, in Philippians, chapter 3, verse 21, . . . **who, by the power that enables him to bring**

everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body. ³¹

Concentrate on receiving a crown someday. First Peter, chapter 5, verse 4, **And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.** ³²

Concentrate on being honored by God someday. Lord Jesus said, **It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them.** ²³

33

Concentrate on being raptured when the Lord returns someday. “Raptured” is a theological term meaning to be raised to be with the Lord in the air. This event is described in First Thessalonians, chapter 4, verses 15 through 17, **According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those**

²³ Luke 12:37.

who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ³⁴

Finally is chapter 3, verse 3, **For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God**. This part of our scripture today has us **focus on our relationship**, the status in your life. ³⁵

That means the Holy Spirit is in your life. ²⁴ ³⁶ That also means that Christ is in you! ²⁵ ³⁷ So, you are hidden with Christ in God! ²⁶ ³⁸

²⁴ Acts 2:38 - Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

²⁵ Colossians 1:27 - To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

²⁶ Colossians 3:3-4 - For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

So, verse 4, **When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.** ³⁹

Christ is in your life! What does that mean? ⁴⁰ The fruit of the Spirit are actually characteristics of the Lord's life! ²⁷ His life becomes your life as the Holy Spirit is made known in it. That's what the Bible means when it says to be filled with the Spirit. ²⁸ Let God's Holy Spirit have more control of your life as He develops His fruit.

41

The next time you see a baptism, or experience your own baptism, remember the implications! When you are buried and raised, you are to die to your old life.

Christian Baptism is the door you symbolically go through from the old life to the new one.

Be sure to close the door!

<http://biblelifemessages.org/>

²⁷ Galatians 5:22-23 - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

²⁸ Ephesians 5:18 - Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.