

Acts 2:22–41

Declaration Day: Baptism

The Summit Church, All Call Baptisms

MPT: At Pentecost, Luke is showing how the messianic kingdom of David was now being offered again to Israel. Those who accept King Jesus and his kingdom become the seed for the early church...and the early church was comprised of those who repented and were baptized.

MPS: Once you have the inward revelation of Jesus as Lord and Savior then your next step of obedience should be the outward declaration of that faith through baptism.

Let's go! Man, how awesome. Y'all, God is moving in our SEE Campus. And I know he won't like this, but that is in large part because of the **shepherding, discipleship, and dedication** of Pastor Raudel and his wife Abby. Pastor Bryan mentioned it's Pastor Appreciation Month; can we just take a moment and would you show your appreciation for all of our campus pastors?

Well, in the same way our Español campus celebrated baptisms at the lake, that's exactly what we'll be celebrating this weekend across the Triangle. I figured Pastor Bryan's been preaching on Jonah, so: Jonah→whale→water→baptism. I mean, it's *kinda* on brand, right?

Easily one of my favorite things we do here at The Summit Church is **celebrate life change displayed in baptism**. In fact, I got this email the other day that about had me hollerin': in the past year our church plants have seen over 1,000 people be baptized. Our *church plants*.

- When we talk about being a church who exists to create a movement of disciple-making disciples, that's what we're talking about!

This weekend I don't just wanna **give you the opportunity** to be baptized, I wanna **make sure we all know exactly what baptism is and what it means**. So turn to **Acts 2**...

- And, listen, *for those of you who have already been saved and you were baptized as a declaration of that salvation—don't tune out. I think this sermon will still **make a splash** in your life. Lame? I promise not to **immerse you** in bad jokes today.*

CONTEXT

Acts 2 is what is commonly referred to as Pentecost. Peter is about to preach the paint off the walls, so let's take a look:

ACTS 2:22–41

²²“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—²³this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

³²This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. . .

³⁶Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

³⁷Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” ³⁸And Peter said to them, “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. ³⁹For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” ⁴⁰And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.” ⁴¹So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

Summit Church, that right there is how the early church was born. Us here today are an extension of *that* moment right there.

- 3k people woke up that morning thinking it was gonna be a normal day.
- 3k people who had no idea their lives were about to change ... but they were cut to the heart by the message of the gospel and they would never be the same.

PRAY

Father, I pray for that same surprise today. Spirit, descend upon The Summit Church this weekend and blow through our congregation. Save and sanctify this weekend, in Jesus' name.

INTRODUCTION

I heard a story about a **student who wanted to get baptized**. The family was celebrating the decision but also going through great care to ensure the student truly realized what they were committing to. So they spent a couple weeks talking about it as a family, explaining what baptism was, making sure their student truly understood the significance of taking that step of faith and obedience.

- Come the day of the baptism the whole family attends church. They've got the **flowers**, the **cameras**, the **cards**, they've **rented out Cracker Barrel** for after ... the **whole nine**.
- So the student gets baptized ... the family is shouting, celebrating, rejoicing.

- But all of a sudden the student's four-year-old little brother starts crying. The dad scooped up his son and said, "Buddy, what's wrong?" Through tears the four-year-old boy said, "*I wanna be alphabetized with my brother!*"

In particular, there's three groups of people this message is for today:

1. You're gonna meet Jesus today

- a. The hounds of heaven have been on your heels and today is the day you will finally surrender.

2. You've met Jesus, but you haven't been baptized

- a. Could be for any number of reasons:
 - i. Didn't know you were supposed to
 - ii. Haven't had the opportunity
 - iii. Been putting it off
 - iv. Whatever the reason, it hasn't happened yet and it needs to. Today's the day.

3. You *have* been baptized, but it was before you actually met Jesus

- a. See this a lot with students ... emotions.
- b. Or maybe you come from a background where you got baptized because you "thought it was the right thing to do."
 - i. *That was my story...*

The pattern we see in Acts is that someone believes, *then* they get baptized. And most of these people woke up that day without any idea they were gonna get baptized:

- **Acts 2:22–41**, 3k people decide in a moment to get saved.
- **Acts 8:12**, **But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.**
- **Acts 8:36**, Ethiopian eunuch gets saved, **And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?"**
- **Acts 9:18–19**, Saul gets knocked off his horse and meets Jesus, **And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized; and taking food, he was strengthened.**
 - Baptism took precedence even over lunch!
- **Acts 16:14–15** (NLT), Lydia, **the Lord opened her heart, and she accepted what Paul was saying. She and her household were baptized...**
- **Acts 18:8**, **Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue** (Crispus always sounds like the name of a bad white rapper to me), **believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.**

Belief→Baptism. Over and over and over again that's the pattern in the New Testament.

Let's look back at Acts 2 and I wanna show you a few observations from this first baptism—I want you to see what **revelation** caused all these people to **respond** like they did.

In response to this sermon at Pentecost, this crowd has a **revelation**.

REVELATION

1) They realized they'd been wrong about Jesus.

Peter's talking specifically here to **Jews**. In the Old Testament it was the Jews who were **God's chosen people** who possessed the **promises** and **blessing** of God. The problem was that by the time we get to Acts these Jews had been brought up believing it was their **ethnicity** and **religion** itself that saved them ... so to them this crucified Jesus was a **disgrace** and a **deceiver**. See, there were a lot of theories going around about who this Jesus of Nazareth really was:

- Some thought he was a **failed prophet**. I mean, if you come making claims about being God and a kingdom to come but then you get crucified—dying a sinner's death—surely he couldn't be a prophet, much less the Messiah.
- But there were some who had really hoped he'd be the coming Messiah ... but the Messiah they wanted was a **political Messiah** who would deliver them from Roman oppression.

But Jesus wouldn't conform to any of these boxes they were trying to put him in ... and he won't conform to any of the ones we try to put him in either. Jesus can't be just our **moral compass** or our **religious teacher**. We can't take the parts about him we like while discarding the rest. **Jesus didn't come just to improve our lives; he came that we might have entirely new lives.**

- We can't treat Jesus like a **froyo place** (what happened to them anyways?). *Ooo I like this flavor. Don't like that one. Oh yeah, add that ... gross, don't want that.*

That's how **many of us** treat Jesus. That's how **they** were treating Jesus—and Peter ain't having none of it ... look at v. 36: **Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.**

Who is Jesus? Prophet? Political Messiah? Moral compass? Religious teacher? No, Peter says, he is Lord and Christ.

- **Lord**: Lord means "God." Not another god or religious prophet ... but **Creator of the universe**. The one who gets to call all the shots. What he says is the standard.
- **Christ**: Messiah. Savior. The one who fulfilled all the promises about salvation. The one who came to save you from your sin.

This Jesus, Peter says in v. 22, was **attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst!** He's reminding them:

- You saw the **blind** be given sight!
- You saw the **lame** begin to walk!
- You saw the **lepers** who were made clean!
- You saw him **feed 5k** with nothing but Hebrew Happy Meal!
- You saw him **heal!**
- You saw him **raise Lazarus from the dead**. You saw *him* rise from the dead!
- He points backward to prophecies of **Joel** and **King David**—which these Jews would've known by heart!--and says, *"See! Don't miss him! You've been waiting for the coming Messiah to change your life and he's here, he's come, he wants to ... but he only comes as **Lord and Christ**. He can either be Lord of all in your life or he won't be Lord at all."*

You may have been claiming Jesus with your lips, but what does your life say? Or maybe you've been seeking out the truth and you want to keep denying it but you're realizing, just perhaps, you've been wrong about Jesus this whole time. Is today the day you'll be intellectually honest and say, *"You know what, I think I've been wrong about Jesus"?*

That was their first revelation, here's the other one: **³⁷Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart...**

2) They realized it was their sin that put him on the cross.

My first time cut to the heart: Been doing Fred's HW. Played MK with blood on. Watched Poltergeist.

I'd love to say that was the day I began following Jesus and it's all been smooth sailing since then, but that'd be a lie. The reality is I went on to live a life of sin and selfishness until my junior year in college. It was only then I realized that my sin wasn't just **breaking God's laws** but it was **breaking his heart**.

It wasn't until I realized the **depth** and **weight** of my sin that I began to understand the **beauty** of the gospel. See, you won't be cut to the heart until you realize it's your sin that put Jesus on the cross:

- It's your **pride** in thinking you know better than God.
- It's your **rebellion against God and his commands**.
- It's your propensity to **lie and gossip** to always make yourself look better.

- It's your **lusting** after the things of this earth you think will satisfy. It's your **sexual sin**.
- It's your **lack of gratitude** for the blessings God has given you.
- It's your **constant griping** about "what you don't have."
- It's the way you **use people solely for what they can do for you**.
- It's your **arrogant belief** that if God would do things the way you would do them, in the timeframe in which you would do them, *then* life would be good.

In the same way Peter looked at them, the Holy Spirit is looking at some of you right now and saying: "This Jesus whom you crucified."

- Church, this is the **hard** and **humbling** news of Christianity: He was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our sins. For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

Have you ever been cut like this? Friend, that **uneasiness** in your heart right now ... that feeling of **anxiety** ... that's the Holy Spirit! What better description of that feeling right now than you are being "cut to the heart"?! Has that ever happened to you? Is that happening to you right now?

- Don't ignore it. Don't deny it. **Let God do his surgery on your heart**. Let him take out that **heart of stone** and replace it with a **heart of flesh** that is indwelt with the Holy Spirit.
- Yes, all have sinned—including you—and the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. That's the gospel!
- God **substitutes** himself for you ... God **puts himself** where you deserve to be on the cross ... God **sacrifices** himself for you ... God **accepts your penalties**, but only if you've been cut and responded like they did.
- And how did they **respond** to this **revelation**? Look at v. 37...

RESPONSE

³⁷Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" ³⁸And Peter said to them, (Clean your life up. Start giving to the church. Make sure your good outweighs your bad. Feel the appropriate amount of guilt. No ... it's simple:) **"Repent and be baptized..."**

First, **REPENT**: Pastor Bryan talked a lot about this last week...

- He showed us how repentance begins with **seeing the seriousness of your sin**—he could've just as easily used the phrase being "cut to the heart" by your sin.
- He talked about how repentance is **coming off the throne of your life**. How it's a **daily decision** to submit to Jesus as Lord.
- Then he talked about how repentance is **taking off our old identity** ... it's making a **radical and complete change of your heart and life**.

Their response was to **repent ...** and be (what, church?) **baptized**.

See, baptism is supposed to represent a person's **first public act of confession, repentance, and faith** in Jesus Christ as Lord.

- If you have been “cut to the heart” and had this revelation of Jesus as Lord and Savior in your life, then **your response should be the exact same as the 3k people at Pentecost: get baptized ... TODAY.**

Baptism says at least two things:

1) Baptism says, “I submit to Jesus”

First and foremost, baptism is a **public declaration** of an **inward transformation** in your life. It's an **outward sign** of an **inward change**.

By stepping into those waters you are saying to God, “*I have submitted to Jesus as both Lord and Savior of my life.*” That's exactly what the **two questions we ask every person** are about:

- *Do you believe Jesus has done everything necessary to save you?* That's about him as SAVIOR.
- *Are you willing to go wherever he sends you and do whatever he calls you to do?* That's about him as LORD.

And as Lord, Jesus' first command to his disciples is to get baptized. **Matthew 28:** **Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...**

- In other words: *As you make disciples, those disciples—those followers—should be baptized.* Period.
- If you call yourself a Christian, to not be baptized is to live in disobedience to the very Jesus you claim is Lord of your life. And to not obey that command is to be in sin ... that's how strongly the New Testament talks about it.
 - I'm not trying to **guilt** you, I'm trying to **guide** you using the Scriptures.

It's about **signifying your repentance** by being **obedient to the command**. You don't wait until you clean yourself up and *then* come get baptized. Again, every single baptism in Acts is both **unplanned** and **immediate**. The person hears about Jesus, is cut to the heart by the message about Jesus, repents of their sin, places their faith in Christ, and then they get baptized. Every single one of them.

- Therefore, if you have repented you should get baptized as soon as you have the opportunity to do so.

Just as Jesus' baptism was him identifying with us ... our baptism says to the world...

2) Baptism says, “I identify with Jesus”

Baptism is a **public declaration** of an **inward transformation** ... but it's also a **public declaration** of a **new association**.¹ It's saying, "I'm with Jesus now!"

I've shared before about how my wife and I met...

- **March 6, 2009** I stood at an altar ... I took a ring and put it on her finger, she took a ring and put it on my finger, and we **publicly declared** that we belong to each other and love each other.
- **Was our love created that day?** No ... our love for each other is what **led us to that day**. Love wasn't created that day, but rather the love in our hearts for one another was **declared that day** to everyone in such a way that said, *"From this point forward whenever you see me I'll have this ring on my finger which signifies I belong to her—and whenever you see her she'll have that ring on her finger (hopefully!) which means she belongs to me."*
 - Now, if I take my ring off am I any less married? No.
 - If you put my ring on, are you married to her? You wish. No way.
- Wearing a wedding ring doesn't make me legally married ... but it is evidence of the covenant relationship I'm in with my wife.
- (SIDE NOTE: **Why two rings? Baptism day ... I'm married!**)

Just like my wedding ring, baptism is evidence of my salvation. It doesn't *make me saved* ... but it's one of the things that shows the world that I am saved. It's not a precondition of my salvation, but it is tangible evidence of that salvation.

Brothers and sisters, if God has changed your heart, transformed you, cleansed you, delivered you from sin ... **why would you not want to identify with him?** Be baptized.

- It's not just about "doing what's right"... **if you're saved and you don't want to be baptized, what's going on there?**
- If I got married but then insisted that I never wanted to wear the ring ... wouldn't that be a sign that something was probably wrong?

Think about it like this: **NFL Draft**. Call name. Gives jersey. Could you imagine someone saying, *"Nah, I don't wanna wear that. Oh, I still wanna be on the team ... I just don't wanna wear the jersey. I don't wanna participate in any of the team activities. None of that. But definitely give me the benefits from being on the team."* So many people listening to me right now, that's exactly what you're doing. You've been saying to Jesus, "Yeah, I want the title of Christian but no uniform for me." In essence, what you're saying is, "I believe in Jesus, but I don't want to be identified with him."

- NO! The jersey communicates, "I'm with them. I'm wearing something different because I'm on a different team and I want everyone to know."

¹ [Why Water Baptism? \(I'm Bout That Action\) // Grace Like A Flood \(Part 5\)](#)

You know what team you're on now? **TEAM JESUS**. Look at **Romans 6:3–4**, **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.** We are identified with him in his death, burial, and resurrection. That's why Scripture says we are baptized in his name:

- Acts 2:38, "Repent and be baptized every one of you **in the name of Jesus Christ.**"
- Acts 10:48, "And he commanded them to be baptized **in the name of Jesus Christ.**"
- Acts 19:4–5, "On hearing this, they were baptized **in the name of the Lord Jesus.**"
- Galatians 3:27, "or as many of you as were **baptized into Christ** have put on Christ."

Here's why this is important: Publicly identifying with Jesus isn't just about **personal obedience**, it's also about **playing spiritual offense**. I need you to fully grasp what it means to be baptized **in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ**. That moment of baptism stands not just as a witness to the **world**, but also as a witness to **ourselves**, and as a witness to our **Enemy** that I belong to Christ. So in moments of spiritual weakness, baptism is something we can point back to and remember what has been declared over us in Christ in our baptism—that in Christ...

- I am a new creation
- I am forgiven
- I am blessed
- I am free from condemnation
- I am more than a conqueror
- I am dead to sin
- I am alive with Christ
- ...and just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of God the Father, I too can walk in **newness of life** because he is in me and I am in him.
- Your baptism is a **weapon of worship** because you are identifying with the One who is **over** all, **through** all, and **in** all. Baptism says to the world, "I identify with Jesus ... the one who **rules** and **reigns** and **wills** and **works** his power in me!"

Are you ready? As we prepare to give you the opportunity to follow Jesus in baptism, let me address some of the most common reservations I hear as a pastor.

COMMON RESERVATIONS

I was baptized after conversion, but not by immersion. In fact, why do I have to go all the way under anyways?

- This isn't a Baptist thing, this is a Bible thing. Actually the word for baptism in the Bible is *baptizo*. It wasn't even a spiritual word, it was a cultural word. *Baptizo's* literal meaning is to dip, dunk, immerse, submerge.
- In fact, 200 years before Jesus was born there was a dude named Nicander who wrote a cookbook and he talked about how you **make a pickle**.² He wrote that in order to make a pickle, you take a cucumber and you "leave it fully immersed in a vinegar solution"—you leave it in the vinegar. The Greek word he used for this was *baptizo*—you take a cucumber and *baptizo* it in vinegar. (Not saying, "Take a cucumber, sprinkle vinegar on it, and when it dies it goes to heaven.") When the cucumber eventually comes out of being *baptizo'd*, while it leaves the vinegar jar, the vinegar never leaves the pickle.
 - In the same way: You come up out of the waters of baptism, but what they signify never leaves you.

You wanna know: *How long will you hold me under?* We ask your wife ... jk

I was baptized after salvation, but I'm way more solid now and I think I should do it again.

- If you had truly repented and were baptized after that, you're good. However, only you know if it was a true repentance. Did your life show that repentance or was it just your lips?
- Just know that baptism isn't like a cellphone contract you need to re-up every two years.

I don't think I'm ready.

- Let me be clear: When you walk forward today what's going to happen is that **you're going to chat with a counselor who will help determine if you're ready**. Stepping out doesn't mean you have all your questions answered ... but it means you're ready to have the conversation ... and there are people at every campus ready to help you make that determination.
- But would you say Jesus is your Lord and Savior and you've repented of your sin? Then you're ready. The Ethiopian eunuch said, "I wanna get saved." He gets saved. Then he says, "There's water, let's get baptized." Boom. That's it.
- Today's the day ... come be baptized.

I don't need to be baptized to love Jesus and follow him.

- Again, baptism isn't a condition of salvation; but it is evidence of it. I don't *need* to wear a ring to be married. To say you love Jesus but not follow his command of baptism is either to live in **unbelief** or **disobedience**.
- Today's the day ... come be baptized.

² [What a Jar of Pickle Teaches Us About Baptism - The Gospel Coalition | India](#)

I was baptized as a kid. // I don't want to shame my parents.

- It's not shaming your parents, it's ratifying their decision of faith. When they baptized you as a kid it was them saying, "I hope this child grows up to follow Christ." Today you're just ratifying what they desired so many years ago!
- Today's the day ... come be baptized.

I don't want to become a Baptist.

- Guess what? We baptize you **in the name of Jesus**; not in the name of **Baptist**.
- However, I will tell you that when Charles Spurgeon got saved his mom said, "I prayed you would become a Christian, but I never prayed you'd become a Baptist." Spurgeon responded, "Isn't it just like the Lord to do far more than we could ever ask or think?!" So who knows...

I don't have any clothes.

- We have clothes for you. Shirts, shorts, bras, drawers, hair products, blow dryers ... you name it, I promise we've got it. Today's the day ... come be baptized.

I rode with people.

- They'll wait for you. Actually, let me let you in on a little secret: This is why they brought you ... they were hoping for this!
- Today's the day ... come be baptized.

CONCLUSION

Two years ago was one of the greatest days in our family's life: Avi's baptism. Before she was baptized she wrote something that she read to our campus:

- *I decided to follow Jesus because I love God.*
- *I love God because he is the best God, and he died for me because he did not want us to die. The gospel is good news because Jesus rose again, and that means we will get to see him in heaven forever.*
- *I am getting baptized today because I want to show I love God to everyone.*
- (Then she shouted:) **MAKE SURE YOU ARE WATCHING!**

The theology of an 8-year-old: *He died for me because he did not want us to die.*

Imagine Jesus walking through our church right now—up and down your aisle. Imagine every one of us had a nametag on that read “sinner,” while Jesus has the only name tag that says “righteous.”

- As Jesus walks up and down the aisles he goes through every row ... he comes to your row—he comes to *your seat*—he takes *your* nametag off (the one that says “sinner”) and he puts it on himself. Then he takes his nametag—“righteous” —and puts it on you.
 - That’s exactly why we wear these shirts when we baptize: **Jesus In My Place**
 - He took your nametag of **sin** so you could wear his nametag of **righteousness**.

Today is declaration day: will you declare through baptism, “I submit to and I identify with Jesus”? If so, then repent and be baptized.

- Not: *Repent and consider baptism ... pray about baptism ... think about baptism ... ponder baptism*. Repent and **be baptized**.

Categories of people who need to come:

- Never been baptized
- Never by immersion
- Wasn’t actually surrendered to Jesus when you got baptized the first time

If you were baptized here at The Summit Church would you stand up?