

**FOUNDATION**  
**Instruction About Baptisms – Water Baptism**  
**Romans 6:3-11**

**Romans 6:3-11**~<sup>3</sup> Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> 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. <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> For one who has died has been set free from sin. <sup>8</sup> Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. <sup>9</sup> We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. <sup>10</sup> For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. <sup>11</sup> So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

I. Introduction

Good morning, Brothers and Sisters. I am so grateful to be here with you this morning, having the opportunity to open the Word of God and anticipating the teaching from the Holy Spirit. Please turn with me to Hebrews 6, and we will be reading our theme verse for this series on FOUNDATION ... Hebrews chapter 6 and verses 1 to 3.

**Hebrews 6:1-3**~

<sup>1</sup> Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation  
of <sup>[1]</sup> repentance from dead works and  
of <sup>[2]</sup> faith toward God, <sup>2</sup> and  
of instruction about  
<sup>[3]</sup> washings, the  
<sup>[4]</sup> laying on of hands, the  
<sup>[5]</sup> resurrection of the dead, and  
<sup>[6]</sup> eternal judgment.  
<sup>3</sup> And this we will do if God permits.

According to Hebrews 6, there are six elementary doctrines of Christ (doctrines just means “teachings”). So there are six doctrines or teachings of Christ that are the foundation of our:

1. entrance into the Christian faith and
2. the grounding by which we can build our Christian faith.

Recall that these six teachings are evenly divided into three couplets:

1. The First Couplet is our Conversion Life with “Repentance From Dead Works” and “Faith Toward God”.

2. The Second Couplet is our Corporate Life with “Instruction on Washings” and “Instruction on the Laying on of Hands”.
3. The Third Couplet is our Committed Life with “Instruction on Resurrection of the Dead” and “Instruction on Eternal.

Today, we are moving to our second couplet ... our Corporate Life ... our journey that we have with each other. We start our Corporate Life with Instruction about Baptism.

Baptism is the ordinance that allows us to enter into the Church so that we can have fellowship with each other. I am talking about entrance into the local church and not entrance into the Universal Church. We become a part of the Universal Church by repentance and faith in Jesus. However, the earlier believers would not allow people to enter into the local church without them being baptized with water.

There are at least two reasons:

1. First, remember that Christians were being persecuted at this time, and so they wanted to make sure that a person was a believer before coming into the local church. Right? I mean, you got to protect your flock.
2. Second, unlike the thinking of our modern day Christianity, the Church is the fellowship of believers where we who believe can fellowship with one another, take care of each other, and receive instruction and exhortation to remain faithful to the Faith. That is the Church.

The Church is not a place for unbelievers. And if there are people in the Church who claim to be brothers but do not live in obedience to Christ, the believers are to kick these so-called brothers out of the Church. The Apostle Paul commands the Corinthians Church to “deliver such a one to Satan (1 Corinthians 5:5) ... that is to “remove the wicked man from among yourselves” (1 Corinthians 5:13). Kick them out of the Church.

You see, the Church is a place for believers who live in obedience to Jesus to gather. And the Church is where these believers take care of one another. So people want to be in the Church.

The early Christians wanted to make sure that those who entered into fellowship with them were believers. And how could they tell if a person believed? Well, if they obey Jesus, right? And that first command that Jesus gave to all believers is to be baptized with water. Therefore, one enters into the Christian Community of the Committed by water baptism.

For some reason, this foundation, namely baptisms, seems to have a lot of questions and confusion about it. I personally do not understand why? Well, I think I know why but I am not certain. There are just so many questions and controversy about baptism:

- Do I have to get baptize to be a part of the Church?

- Do I have to get baptize to be saved?
- Do I need to be baptized again if I was baptized as an infant?

I really like the way one student of Scriptures responds to such questions with another question, “Why do you ask?” Is it enough that Jesus commands us to be baptized? You see, a person who loves Jesus will want to obey Jesus. Like the brothers and sisters in Acts 2 when hearing the gospel message and were convicted, they asked, “What must we do?” (Acts 2:37). They did not ask, “Do I have to do that?” Or “What is the bare minimum I need to do?” No. They wanted to know what Jesus wanted them to do. They wanted to obey the Jesus’ teaching.

But I am getting ahead of myself.

## II. Baptisms

Let’s get back to Hebrews 6 and note some introductory remarks.

1. First, the word “washings” can be translated as Baptism.

The version of the Bible that we use, the ESV, translates the Greek word, *baptismos*, as “washings”.

**Hebrews 6:1-2**~ <sup>1</sup>Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation ... <sup>2</sup> of instruction about washings ...

That is a legitimate translation. But the Greek word, *baptismos*, can also be translated as baptism as the translators of the New King James version did.

**Hebrews 6:1-2**~ <sup>1</sup>Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary *principles* of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation ... <sup>2</sup> of the doctrine of baptisms ... (NKJV)

The reason why some translators choose to translate *baptismos* as “washing” or “baptism” is beyond the scope of today’s message.<sup>1</sup> We just need to know that the word

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<sup>1</sup> The Greek word, *baptismos*, can be translated as either “washings” or “baptisms”. The translators’ choice of which translation to use is based on the translators’ interpretation of what elementary principles that the author of Hebrews had in mind. If the author of Hebrews was referring to the elementary teaching of Moses found in the Old Testament, than they would use the word “washings” for the ceremonial washings that are found in the Law. This is seen in Hebrews 9:10 where all translators translated the Greek word, *baptismos*, as “washings”.

**Hebrews 9:9-10**~ <sup>9</sup>... According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, <sup>10</sup> but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.

But if the translators think that the elementary principle of Christ is referring to the teaching of Christ for the Church, than they would choose the word “baptisms”.

It is this author’s opinion that the author of Hebrews is talking about the basic teaching of Christ since the author of Hebrews states that he is talking about the “elementary doctrine of Christ” and not the “elementary doctrine of

can be translated as “washings” or “baptism”. For today’s purpose, I believe it should be translated as “baptism” because we are talking about the elementary teaching of Christ (Hebrews 6:1). We are not talking about the elementary teaching of Moses or the Law. The Law is about washings. The New Covenant has to do more with baptism.

2. Second, baptism means “to Dip” or “to Immerse.”

The word “baptism” is not a religious word. It is a common every day word that were used by every day common people. It just means to dip or to immerse. The idea is that this dipping or immersion takes on the characteristic of that which it is immersed into. It is used of a cloth that is dipped or immerse into a color dye. Once the cloth comes out of the dye, the cloth takes on the color of that dye.

So in water baptism, when we baptized in Jesus’ name, we are immersed into his authority. We come out identifying with Jesus.

3. Third, there are Many baptisms.

Some people think that there is only one baptism. They get it from Ephesians 4.

**Ephesians 4:4-5**~ <sup>4</sup>There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— <sup>5</sup>one Lord, one faith, one baptism, <sup>6</sup>one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

That is not what the passage in Ephesians means. It is not saying that there is one and only one baptism in the Christian faith. Paul is talking about unity. Christians are to be united ... to be one. There is only one body, one Church, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. That is to say, we are all baptized in Christ ... one Lord. We are not baptized into Paul or baptized into Peter or baptized into Apollos. We are all baptized into Christ. One Baptism.

But in the Christian faith, there are many baptisms. In Matthew 3:10-12, there are three baptisms that are mentioned.

**Matthew 3:10-12**~ <sup>10</sup>Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>11</sup>“I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”

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Moses.” Furthermore, the lists of elementary teachings are more in line with the teaching of the Church than of the Old Testament.

It is this author’s belief that the author of Hebrews is referring to the foundation teaching of the Church since the author of Hebrews states that this is the “elementary doctrine of Christ” and not the “elementary doctrine of Moses”

- a. One: there is a baptism of Water.
- b. Two: there is a baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- c. Three: there is a baptism of Fire.

There is a fourth baptism mentioned in the Gospel of Mark.

- d. Four: there is a baptism of Suffering.

**Mark 10:38-39**~ <sup>38</sup> Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” <sup>39</sup> And they said to him, “We are able.” And Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized,

The cup, of course, is the cup of suffering that Jesus will face at the cross. A few chapters later in Mark 14, Jesus is at Gethsemane, praying earnestly because the hour of his suffering and death is upon him.

**Mark 14:35-36**~ <sup>35</sup> And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. <sup>36</sup> And he said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove ~~this cup~~ from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”

Jesus then prays that the Father will remove this “cup”, referring to the dark hour of his suffering for the world.

So, the fourth baptism is the baptism of suffering that every believer will drink and will be baptized.

**John 16:33**~ <sup>33</sup> [Jesus says,] I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

**2 Timothy 3:12**~ <sup>12</sup> Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

- e. Five: there is a baptism for the Dead.

There is this obscure reference to the baptism of the dead in 1 Corinthians 15.

**1 Corinthians 15:29**~ <sup>29</sup> Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf?

There are so many views on what this baptism of the dead could mean. I have an idea of what Paul means. But really, no one can fully know what it means

because Paul does not explain to us what this baptism from the dead mean. He just mentions it in passing. Now, the Corinthians understood him. They were there. But we do really know.

And if time permits in this series, I would like to look at some, if not all, of these baptisms. They are very important in our foundation to understand. But today, I want to focus on baptism by water.

### III. The Important of Water Baptism

Is water baptism important? Yes. It is very important. Let me give you some reasons why it is important.

1. First, we are Commanded to be baptized.

The Bible is replete with commands to be baptized, both by Jesus and by the Apostles. In the Great Commission, Jesus commands us to ...

**Matthew 28:19-20**~<sup>19</sup> 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, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you ...

Our commission as a Church of the Lord Jesus is to make disciples. And how are we to do that? Three ways: 1) we are to go, 2) we are to baptize, and 3) we are to teach. It is amazing that some believers are never taught that they need to be baptized. But that is one of three parts to making disciples.

The Apostles pick up the command of the Commission, and they too instruct that people need to be baptized.

**Acts 2:37-38**~<sup>37</sup> Now 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?”<sup>38</sup> And 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.

There is never a case in the Sacred Scriptures of people believing in Jesus and not being baptized. That is unheard of. Believing and Baptism go together.

Are we then saved by baptism? No ... But baptism demonstrates something. Baptism shows our obedience. And if we love the Lord Jesus, than we will keep his command. And if Jesus says that we need to be baptized, then we should.

This brings me to the second important reason for baptism.

2. Second, it is essential for Obedience.

As one teacher notes, “Baptism is not essential for salvation, but baptism is essential for obedience.” We are NOT saved by baptism. We are saved by faith.

**Ephesians 2:8~<sup>8</sup>** For by grace you have been saved through faith.

**Romans 10:13~<sup>13</sup>** For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

We are cleansed NOT by baptism but by the blood of Christ.

**Hebrews 9:14~<sup>14</sup>** how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (NASB)

**1 John 1:7~<sup>7</sup>** but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. (NASB)

So it is crystal clear that we are saved by faith and by faith alone. We are not saved by works or by observing rituals. But the faith that saves us is the faith that transforms us so that we want to obey. We are not saved by works. We are saved by faith. But the faith that saves is the faith that works.

Remember, first, it is repentance from dead works. Then it is faith toward God. The faith that moves us toward God is obedience. It is the faith that acknowledges Jesus is King ... he is our King.

So if we do not want to obey, it is a good indication that we do not have that kind of faith that saves. And if we do not want to be baptized when our Lord instructs us to be baptized, it is a good indication that we have not submitted to Jesus' lordship.

3. Third, baptism is a part of the Gospel message.

Included in our good news message about Jesus who is the King (the Messiah) is a message about obedience to that King through baptism.

In Acts 8, Philip comes across an Ethiopian Eunuch who is reading the book of Isaiah. And the Spirit of God tells Philip to go and talk to the Eunuch. So the Eunuch asks Philip the meaning of the passage he is reading in Isaiah. In verse 35 of Acts 8, the Sacred Text says that ...

**Acts 8:35~<sup>35</sup>** Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.

That is, Philip is preaching to the Eunuch the Gospel of Jesus. That is all the Bible says. Philip tells him the good news about Jesus. Look at the next verse.

**Acts 8:36-38**~ <sup>36</sup> 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?”  
<sup>38</sup> And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.

Somewhere in Philip’s message concerning the “good news about Jesus” is the teaching about the need to be baptized. How else would the Eunuch know that he needs to be baptized when he sees the body of water? The Bible says that the Eunuch sees a body of water and wants to be baptized. You see, belief and baptism go hand in hand.

**Mark 16:16**~ <sup>16</sup> Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

It is inconceivable for a person to believe and not be baptized. Only in our modern day does that happen because we think that we can believe and not obey.

4. Fourth, baptism is to be done Immediately.

We just read the story of Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch. Once the Eunuch believes, he is baptized immediately. The same thing happens with Paul.

In Acts 22, Paul is retelling his conversion story of how Jesus blinded him and sent him to Ananias. And notice what Ananias told to Paul.

**Acts 22:16**~ <sup>16</sup> And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.’

There is no waiting to be baptized. It is immediately. There is no waiting where we have to go through a course on baptism and Christian faith before we baptize. A person is saved so we baptized him or her right there and then.

There is a reason why there is now a delay in baptism. The early Church did not wait to baptize a believer. Once a person believed, he was baptized and entered into the community of the Church where he received the protection and provision of the Church. At one point in time in history, sever persecution broke out that tested the belief of the Believers. There were some Christians who refused to deny Christ. As such, they were either martyred or tortured. They were burned at the stake or they were tortured until they denied Jesus. There were others, however, who were fearful of the persecution and denied Christ to save their own skin.

Well, when the persecution was over, people started to go back to the Church. Now there was problem. Should the Church welcome back those who denied Christ to escape persecution? Where these deniers even Christians? They were baptized, but where they Christians? There was a sense of injustice. There were believers who suffered for the Faith sitting next to people who denied the Faith. And yet, are they to share in the same benefits the Church had to offer?

Remember that baptism was entrance into the local church. So to make sure that new converts would not flip flopped in their belief, the believers decided to delay baptism until the new believers were educated about the baptism of suffering before they baptized them with water. That was why they delayed baptism.

Now, in our time, we delay baptism for different reason. We delay baptism because it costs money to fill up the baptismal pool. We want to wait until we get enough people wanting to be baptized before we fill up that pool and baptized them all at once.

#### IV. Conclusion

There is so much more to say. There is the question of the mode of baptism – whether we should sprinkle, pour, or immerse. There is a question of believer’s baptism or infant baptism. And then there are other baptisms that we have listed previously. We will try to tackle these questions quickly next time.

So if you have never been baptized, it is time for you to be baptized. If you were baptized as an infant and have never been baptized when you believe, it is time for you to be baptized.

#### V. The Blessing

**Presider:** May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. May the love of our Lord Jesus Christ be unto you.

**Congregation:** And also to you.