**Baptism and Faith (Colossians 2:8-13a)**

Baptism and faith are foundational for spiritual life. The letter to the Colossians speaks to us about a number of foundational faith-related issues. In it we find the basis of faith, especially pertaining to Jesus’ saving work. It seems that the believers were already surrounded in that time period (in the first century) by various philosophies and were in need of encouragement and spiritual support. The Apostle Paul was cautioning them regarding wrong teachings, since these were being presented to the church in Colossae in a deceptive manner. Today, therefore, since we have the honor of participating in a baptism, which is very connected to our faith and spiritual life, we are going to speak about those important foundations of the faith, because of which people would get baptized, along with their whole family, beginning in the third century AD. Once again, baptism and faith are foundational for spiritual life.

Live out your faith on the foundation of your baptism. In the Old Testament, the idea of baptism had not appeared in the way we know it until the healing of Naaman the Syrian in the days of Elisha the Prophet. In the course of time, however, the custom of baptism began to take hold, especially around Jesus’ time period. Non-Jews who turned in faith to the True God (before the existence of the Christian Church) would get baptized after they were circumcised. By the time John the Baptist shows up on the scene, baptism is an acceptable ritual as a sign of repentance. Even the idea of going from death to life began to appear in some Jewish writings around then…

The Apostle Paul wants to remind the Colossian believers that baptism symbolized their whole life as believers. Jesus contained in himself the fullness of the Godhead. The believer is completed through Jesus. Jesus is the head of every principality and authority. It is with Jesus that the believer receives a spiritual circumcision. The believer is buried with Jesus when they are baptized in the water. It is with Jesus that the believer rises from the dead, as he or she rises out of the water. That resurrection happened in the believer’s life because of God’s activity who does the raising. It is through Jesus that believers have received a new life from their previous spiritual dead state, full of transgressions and fleshly sins. In other words, when believers got baptized, the entire symbol of their faith was on display (during that ritual), because the faith walk of a Jesus-follower is the living-out of the truth of their baptism. They come from death to life, they are filled with the Holy Spirit, and they live under His guidance.

This is akin to a building that has a blueprint. If that building is going to remain stable and be used for its purposes, it ought to be built based on the blueprint. Similarly, baptism is a moment that united us, through a ritual, to the blueprint of Jesus’ life of Salvation.

If you are going to live out your faith, live out your baptism. Your baptism shows you what your entire faith is for you, your family, and your community. If you are baptized, then you believe in Christ’s salvation. You believe that there is no other means to the forgiveness of your sins. You believe that He rose from the dead and that you have received life by believing in Him. You believe that just as He received the Holy Spirit after being baptized in the Jordan and the believers received the Holy Spirit in the Upper Room after the Resurrection, you also receive and continually express your faith-life through the (Holy) Spirit.

Baptism is a beginning, the meaning of which guides your entire life. Therefore, do not forget the meaning of your baptism, because in it you will find the core of your faith. If we’re going to live as true friends and disciples of Jesus Christ, then we are called to express our lives that have been sealed by baptism. Live out your faith on the foundation of your baptism. Baptism and faith are foundational for spiritual life.