

Message Three

The Likeness of the Death and Resurrection of Christ

Scripture Reading: Rom. 6:3-5; 5:17; Gal. 3:27

I. “All of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death”—Rom. 6:3:

- A. Baptism is not a form or a ritual; it signifies our identification with Christ—v. 3.
- B. Through baptism we are immersed into Christ, taking Him as our realm, that we may be united with Him as one in His death and resurrection.
- C. We were born in the sphere of Adam, the first man (1 Cor. 15:45, 47), but through baptism we have been transferred into the sphere of Christ (1:30; Gal. 3:27), the second man (1 Cor. 15:47).
- D. When we are baptized into Christ, we are baptized into His death—Rom. 6:3.
- E. His death has separated us from the world and the satanic power of darkness and has terminated our natural life, our old nature, our self, our flesh, and even our entire history.

II. “We have been buried therefore with Him through baptism into His death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life”—v. 4:

- A. Our old man has been crucified with Christ (v. 6), and it has been buried with Him through baptism into death.
- B. In the natural realm, a person first dies and then is buried, but Paul’s word indicates that in the spiritual realm, we are first buried and then die.
- C. We do not die directly; we enter into Christ’s death through baptism.
- D. Christ and His death are one.
- E. Apart from Christ we could never be baptized into His death, for the element of His effective death is found only in Him, the resurrected, all-inclusive One—cf. John 5:29; 11:24-25; Acts 1:22; 2:31.
- F. *The glory of the Father* in Romans 6:4 refers to the manifestation of divinity.
- G. After baptism we become a new person in resurrection—Phil. 3:10.
- H. Resurrection is not only a future state; it is also a present process.
 - I. To walk in newness of life means to live today in the realm of resurrection and to reign in life—Rom. 6:4; 5:17.
 - J. This kind of living deals with all that is of Adam in us until we are fully transformed and conformed to the image of Christ—12:2; 8:29.

III. “If we have grown together with Him in the likeness of His death, indeed we will also be in the likeness of His resurrection”—6:5:

- A. *Grown together with Him* denotes an organic union in which growth takes place, so that one partakes of the life and characteristics of the other—v. 5a.
- B. In the organic union with Christ, whatever Christ passed through has become our history.
- C. His death and resurrection are now ours because we are in Him and are organically joined to Him; this is grafting—11:24.

- D. Such a grafting discharges all our negative elements, resurrects our God-created faculties, uplifts our faculties, enriches our faculties, and saturates our entire being to transform us.
- E. The likeness of Christ's death is the baptism mentioned in Romans 6:4; the likeness of Christ's resurrection is the newness of life mentioned in verse 4.
- F. *In the likeness of His resurrection* (v. 5) does not refer to a future, objective resurrection but to the present process of growth.
- G. When we were baptized, we grew together with Christ in the likeness of His death; now, through His death we are growing into His resurrection.
- H. Just as the element of Christ's death is found only in Him, so the element of Christ's resurrection is found only in Christ Himself; He Himself is resurrection—John 11:25.
 - I. After experiencing a proper baptism, we continue to grow in and with Christ in the likeness of His resurrection, that is, to walk in newness of life—Rom. 6:4.

IV. “Many...were baptized into Christ”—Gal. 3:27:

- A. There are four aspects of baptism: baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit (Matt. 28:19), baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:27), baptized into the death of Christ (Rom. 6:3), and baptized into the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13).
- B. Baptism brings the repentant people out of their old state into a new one by terminating their old life and germinating them with the new life of Christ and in Christ—Rom. 8:2, 10.
- C. Baptism has two aspects—the visible aspect and the invisible aspect:
 - 1. The visible aspect is by water, and the invisible aspect is by the Holy Spirit—Acts 2:38, 41; 10:44-48.
 - 2. Without the invisible aspect by the Spirit, the visible aspect by water is vain, and without the visible aspect by water, the invisible aspect by the Spirit is abstract and impractical; both are needed.
- D. To be baptized into the Triune God is to be baptized into Christ—Gal. 3:27:
 - 1. We are sons of God because we are in Christ, and we are in Christ because we have been baptized into Christ—Rom. 8:10, 14; Gal. 3:26; 4:7.
 - 2. To be baptized into Christ is the way to be in Christ—3:27.
 - 3. Because we have been baptized into Christ, we now enjoy an organic union with Him, which is able to transform our whole being—Rom. 12:2.
 - 4. It is significant that at the end of chapter 3 of Galatians Paul concludes with a word about being baptized into Christ and putting on Christ—v. 27.
 - 5. The fact that Paul concludes with a word about baptism indicates that what is covered in this chapter can be experienced only if we have been baptized into Christ and have put on Christ—v. 27.
 - 6. As many as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ—v. 27.
 - 7. We have been baptized into Christ, and now we have Christ covering us.
 - 8. On the one hand, in baptism we are immersed into Christ; on the other hand, in baptism we put on Christ.
 - 9. Many of us can testify strongly that we have been baptized into Christ and that we are wearing Him as our clothing, our covering—v. 27.