

Lesson 8 — Baptism

The Wheel of Faith

Big Idea

Baptism is the public confession of union with Christ—declaring that His death, burial, and resurrection now define the believer’s life. Baptism must never be separated from union with Christ. This lesson guards against two distortions:

- Baptism as saving act.
- Baptism as empty ritual.

Scripture presents it as confession of what we already believe by faith.

Why This Study Matters

Scripture presents baptism as a visible confession that salvation has already been received through faith in Christ. If that faith is genuine then baptism becomes the outward expression of that faith

1. The first meaning of Baptism.

Read: Romans 6:3

Discussion Questions

- According to Paul, what does baptism connect us to?
- What does it mean to be identified with Christ’s death?

Theological guardrail

By union with Christ, baptism signifies not only new life in Him, but that we are reckoned dead in His death—so sin’s claim is answered, the law’s demand satisfied, and the old life is no longer our master.

2. Baptism as Union, Not Initiation

Read: Acts 8:36–37

Discussion Questions

- Why does he confess first his faith or a request to be baptized?
- How does this protect baptism from becoming just a ceremony?

Theological Guardrail

Faith comes first as a profession that we have been united to Christ; baptism is the external confession of that union.

3. Baptism and Resurrection Life

Read: Romans 6:4

Discussion Questions

- How is living from resurrection life different from self-improvement?
- What changes when obedience flows from union with Christ?

Theological Guardrail: In union with Christ, baptism signifies that we rise in His resurrection life, and obedience now flows from identity in Him rather than self-effort.

4. Baptism and Freedom from Sin

Read: Romans 6:6

Discussion Questions

- Why does Paul connect freedom from sin to identity rather than willpower?
- How does this change the way we view temptation?

Theological Guardrail: By union with Christ, baptism signifies that sin no longer holds rightful dominion, and freedom is found not through stronger willpower but through belonging to a new Master.

5. Baptism as Necessary Response, Not Optional Ritual

Read: John 3:5 and Matthew 28:19–20

Discussion Questions

- What does Jesus' command about baptism teach us about the relationship between **faith and obedience**?

Theological Guardrail:

Though baptism does not create union with Christ, the faith that receives Christ does not refuse His command; baptism is not the cause of salvation, but the ordained response of saving faith

6. Reflection — Baptism as Confession

Companion Reading — Faith that I live by. Page 146

“Baptism is a most solemn renunciation of the world. Self is by profession dead to a life of sin. The waters cover the candidate, and in the presence of the whole heavenly universe the mutual pledge is made. In the name of the Father, and Son, and the Holy Spirit, man is laid in his watery grave, buried with Christ in baptism, and raised from the water to live the new life of loyalty to God. The three great powers in heaven are witnesses; they are invisible but present.—We have died to the world.... We have been buried in the likeness of Christ's death and raised in the likeness of His resurrection, and we are to live a new life. Our life is to be bound up with the life of Christ.

Discussion Questions

- How does public confession strengthen faith?

Theological Guardrail: In baptism, renunciation is not mere rejection of the old life but a transfer of allegiance to Christ, and public confession strengthens faith by clarifying identity, breaking secrecy, and deepening conscious union with Him.

II. Experiential Reality — Baptism

A 7-Day Journey of Living From Union

Baptism is not merely an event remembered once. It is a reality lived daily. Romans 6 invites believers not simply to recall baptism, but to live from the union it proclaims.

This seven-day journey is designed to help us experience baptism not as a past ceremony, but as a present identity.

Day 1 — Count the Death as Finished

Read: Romans 6:3, Romans 6:3, John 3:5

Reflection:

First, consider what it means that Christ's death counts as your own.

Why is it necessary that you are not just forgiven—but counted as having died in Him?

Second, Paul says to “reckon yourselves dead indeed unto sin.”

What does it look like to consciously count that death as true in your daily life?

Is there anything you are still holding onto that belongs to the old life Christ has already put to death?

If you have not been baptized ask yourself what is preventing you from going through?

Prayer Time:

Ask God to help you see your old life as crucified with Christ.

Bring before Him anything that does not belong to your new identity, and thank Him that in Jesus, that life has already been put to death. Ask God to reveal to you if it is time for you to make the choice to be baptized.

Day 2 — Union with Christ

Scripture:

Romans 6:5

Gospel of John 15:4–5

Reflection

Take a few moments today to slow down and consciously acknowledge your union with Christ.

- Read John 15:4–5 slowly and personally.
- Replace “abide in Me” with your name (e.g., “Damon, abide in Me”).
- Identify one situation today (temptation, stress, conversation) where you would normally rely on your own strength.

When that moment comes, pause and consciously say:

“Christ is my life in this moment—I will depend on Him.”

Notice what changes when you stop striving and instead choose to depend.

Prayer Time:

Ask Jesus to make your union with Him real in your daily experience.

Invite Him into one specific area of your life where you usually rely on yourself, and ask Him to live His life through you there today.

Day 3 — Receive Resurrection Life

Scripture:

Romans 6:4

Colossians 3:1–3

Reflection:

Begin your day by consciously acknowledging:

“I am raised with Christ—His life is my life today.”

- Read Colossians 3:1-3 slowly and personally.
- Identify one situation today where you would normally rely on your own strength.
- When that moment comes, pause and ask:
“Am I trying to improve the old life, or live from a new one?”
- Choose to respond by trusting Christ’s life rather than your own effort.

Prayer Time:

Thank Jesus that His resurrection life is already yours in union with Him.

Invite Him into one specific area where you tend to rely on yourself, and ask Him to live His life through you there today.

Day 4 — Deny Sin’s Authority

Scripture:

Romans 6:6

Corinthians 10:13

Reflection:

When temptation arises today, pause and remind yourself:

“Sin no longer has authority over me in Christ.”

- Identify one area where you commonly feel defeated.
- When that temptation comes, stop and consciously reject the idea that you are still under its control.
- Instead of focusing on resisting sin, focus on belonging to Christ.
- Choose one moment today to respond from that identity.

What changes when I see sin as dethroned rather than dominant?

Prayer Time:

Ask God to help you see sin as it truly is—no longer your master.

Bring before Him any area where you feel powerless, and ask Him to teach you to live in the freedom He has already given you.

Day 5 — Present Yourself to God

Scripture:

Romans 6:13, Romans 12:1

Reflection:

At the beginning of your day, consciously present yourself to God:

“Lord, I belong to You—use me today.”

- Identify one area of your life (your words, your thoughts, your relationships) where you tend to act independently.
- As that moment comes, pause and deliberately yield that part of your life to God.
- Remind yourself that you are not offering yourself to earn favor, but because you already belong to Him.

What does it feel like to yield from security rather than fear?

Prayer Time:

Offer yourself to God again in prayer—your mind, your words, and your actions.
Thank Him that you belong to Him, and ask Him to live His life through you today.

Day 6 — Walk in Newness of Life

Scripture:

Romans 6:4
Galatians 5:16

Reflection:

Walking in newness of life means living outwardly what is already true inwardly.

- Identify one specific area where your actions have not been aligning with your new identity in Christ.
- Choose one specific situation today (a conversation, a decision, a reaction) where you will intentionally respond in a way that reflects Christ’s life.
- When that moment comes, pause and consciously depend on Christ rather than your own effort.

How does obedience change when it flows from union instead of effort?

Prayer Time:

Ask God to help your daily walk reflect the new life He has already given you. Invite Him into the specific situation you identified, and trust Him to live His life through you in that moment.

Day 7 — Return and Continue in Christ

Scripture:

1 John 2:1
John 15:4

Reflection:

The Christian life is not maintained by never failing, but by continually returning to Christ.

- When you become aware of failure or sin today, do not withdraw—go immediately to Christ.
- Confess it honestly, without minimizing or excusing it.
- Then consciously return to dependence on Him, rather than trying to fix yourself.

Where do I tend to go after failure—away from Christ, or toward Him?

Prayer Time:

Thank Jesus that He is your Advocate and receives you again. Bring before Him anything that has distanced your heart, and ask Him to keep you abiding in Him.

Experiential Summary Statement

Baptism is not merely something we remember—it is something we live from. When we count ourselves dead with Christ and alive through Him, obedience becomes a response rather than a struggle. Union replaces striving, and newness of life flows from what has already been accomplished.

