

#373 Kingdom: Beginning Kingdom Life By Death

IF we grow in our spiritual life and develop a little maturity in our new inner man, the beginning experiences will become more vivid to us. Each advance forward into the Christian Life will require a deeper experience in our foundational beginnings. For example; Forgiveness of “sins” must result in the removal of the “sin nature” from our experience. Forgiving “sins” is certainly incomplete as long as the root of “sin” remains. While “sins” are outward, “sin” is inward. Of course that elimination should have BEGUN at the very first day of our Christian experiences. However, it is clear that many, many “Christians” are still struggling with “sin” after many years in the church systems. I don’t mean that they are practicing “sins” but that they are struggling with the old sin nature because the “sin factory has not been shut down.”

It is really an embarrassment to share with “old Christians” that their beginnings in the Christian Life were full of ineffective experiences. Some have real holes in their foundation with no experience in some areas. Thousands are still ignorant about what the actual experience of the initial foundations involve.

Innovative programs and 12 step methods are totally powerless to help those who do not have the basic foundations in their lives. In other words a 7 or 12 step program will never help Adam to become a more effective Christian. As long as the Adam life is our life, Christian counseling or any self-help methods or 12 step programs or purpose driven concepts or mechanical systems of “change” will be of NO HELP!

All these self-help methods change from year to year in their emphasis to repair the broken church system but none are effective. Over the last 50 years there have been thousands of meetings devoted to new programs, thousands of books written and audio tapes sold attempting to fix the problems seen in the church. My theory is that maybe it is time to try God’s plan to deal with all these repetitive problems. God’s plan goes directly to the root problem and takes the fallen life into death and burial. Unfortunately many of these self-help programs have become a substitute for God’s formula for establishing proper foundations.

Each month it seems someone comes up with something “new” trying to re-invent the church through more outwardness and outward programs and new systems of religion. Jesus warned the religious leaders about their outwardness.

Mat 23:25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but **inside** they are full of robbery and **self-indulgence**. 26 "You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may **become clean** also.

As long as the “cup” looks good and clean on the outside everybody seems to be satisfied while God looks at the inside. This applies to “outward” maturity also. Someone may appear religiously correct while on the inside they are filled with dead men’s bones. In other words they have no inner life at all. Outwardness nearly always results in some earthly, natural, horizontal system that has no eternal benefit.

My theory is that ALL ETERNAL CHANGE must begin on the inside and through the growth and development of the new inner man. Progress from that “beginning” is upward in an ascending life until

our life comes into UNION with HIS LIFE. The two must become one. When Paul wrote about this union he said that he was speaking about Christ and the church.

The Old Covenant was a covenant of the flesh and offered a series of “laws” to let man understand, without any question, that the natural man of flesh can NEVER improve himself. Man created in innocense failed, man under his own man made laws failed, man under God’s Outward Laws failed, animal blood and sacrifices could never cleanse man or develop man to fulfill God’s eternal purpose. None of any of these things were able to improve or cleanse the inner man. The man of flesh can NEVER improve himself, no matter what innovative system he devises. If the “law” was able to impart “life” it would have endured.

Gal 3:21 Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which **was able to impart life**, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.

This is a startling statement and requires some thought to understand why this is true. The “Law” could never overcome death by the impartation of “Life- Zoe.” If the Law could impart Life then righteousness could be based upon the “Life” rather than just by faith, like with Abraham. When we join righteousness with the uncreated Life

[Greek zoopieio] of God we take righteousness to another realm.

Heb 9:13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes **of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify** for the cleansing of the flesh, 14 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?**

(LITV) Which antitype now also saves us, baptism (not a putting away of *the filth of the flesh*, but *the answer of a good conscience* toward God through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ;

Baptism is NOT a ritual washing to remove uncleanness, or excrement from the flesh but accomplishes something in the new inner man. This “filth” is what we refer to as garbage because that is a little more acceptable term. The word can be translated as “dirt” but flesh is much stronger to affect our lives than dirt which is relatively easy to remove. The context is the flood of Noah which was for the removing of garbage from the earth. Really immoral filth.

The blood of bulls and goats and the various sacrifices could not cleanse the conscience but the blood of Christ CAN cleanse the conscience so we CAN serve the living God. This was initiated by His resurrection. The contrast here is between the cleansing of the flesh and the cleansing of the conscience. It is stated that the “good conscience” is restored at baptism. The renewing of the conscience is an inward act.

God has tabulated in the scriptures hundreds of years of man trying to improve the flesh by innovative methods but the flesh cannot be modified or improved. The extent of the Old Covenant was to cleanse the flesh but was unable to remove it and the Law became ineffective because of the weakness of the flesh.

The church has repeated the failure of Israel of trying to sanctify the flesh by human activity and outward changes. EVERYTHING that is born of flesh **IS** and **can only** be ALWAYS flesh. No

amount of fleshly activity can EVER result in Spirit or in spiritual growth. Yet that is the focus of all these self-help projects that have appeared over the years.

John 6:63 "It is the Spirit who gives life; **the flesh profits nothing**; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

This is a total statement of fact concerning the flesh. We can't improve upon this statement or modify its absolute truth. The flesh is worthless for growing the Christian life within or for developing the new inner man.

Many pastors have used these self-help books for sermon content and Bible study and have recommended these books to their people and have a real confidence that these "new concepts" will revolutionize their church. When you examine the content of these "new revelations" we see they are just another program to improve the flesh. Our theory is this; God has no plans to "improve the old man" but **HIS** program for the "old man" **IS** death and burial. His words for the church are "SPIRIT AND LIFE."

Many now assume that once we have been baptized that will solve the problem with the fallen life of Adam that the Bible calls "the old man." This is in direct contrast with the "new man" in Christ, which is of the new creation. **Baptism is not a system to improve the "old man" and make him acceptable in the church.** A shallow reading of Romans 6 chapter along with other chapters dealing with the flesh may lead us to assume that these problems with the "old man" are solved by certain church rituals, ordinances or ceremonies. Baptism is being included in these church ceremonies. My thesis is that baptism is NOT another church ceremony!

However, it has been interpreted as a Christian Sacrament that admits a person into a Christian Community. In other words it is an outward act of acceptance into fellowship. A lack of personal understanding of scripture lead many people to accept that concept. For that reason we will look at what the Bible teaches about baptism so we can understand how God deals with everything connected to Adam.

Our basic statement is this; That which is born of flesh will always ONLY BE FLESH. Only that which is born of Spirit will result in a mature spirit. Flesh can NEVER be improved, sanctified or used by God. NEVER! Those who are "IN THE FLESH" can NEVER please God. Therefore, NO self-help program is EVER worth the paper it is written on. NO flesh improving seminars are EVER worth attending. No book that seeks to modify human behavior is of any value for the Christian that has experienced God's foundations. When there are "human failures" in the church it simply means that the "old man" has not been dealt with and death and burial are still future events for that person.

Of course we must allow for growth and spiritual development and not demand instant perfection. The question most asked concerning baptism is this; Did my old man cease to exist after I was baptized? If not in baptism then when? It is obvious that much of what we were taught about baptism {if we were actually taught anything other than "just do it" } seemed like some idealism because following baptism we still struggle with the fallen life of Adam! After baptism we may find there is still a conflict with the flesh and we may still manifest many carnal characteristics.

It is true that more "final fatal blows" to these fallen attributes is attributed to baptism than are actually

experienced simply because we don't comprehend the "process of elimination" and when the death and burial of the old man occurred. The other confusion revolves around the popular concepts of forgiveness of "sins" and the actual closing down of the "sin factory" that produces the "sins."

My thesis will be that **the only death and burial that CAN be applied to us, IS the death and burial of Jesus Christ at Calvary.** Trying to apply another "death and burial" as a personal experience today is where the confusion lies. Even our participation in "His Resurrection" becomes a process which we call salvation. The revelation of scripture is that God is ONLY dealing with two men. The first Adam and the Last Adam. In God's mind there is just the second Man and there is no third man. We either MUST be in the first Adam OR in the Last Adam. There is no other choice.

1Co 15:45 So also it is written, "The **first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.**" The **last Adam became a life-giving spirit.**⁴⁶ However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual.⁴⁷ The **first man is from the earth,** earthy; the **second man is from heaven.** ⁴⁸ As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. ⁴⁹ And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

(KJVR) Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **unto a perfect man,** unto the **measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:**

Our growth is unto "a" [or "one"] perfect man which IS to the measure of the

stature that belongs to the "fullness of Christ." That "one perfect man" is the Last Adam or the Second Man. God's divine purpose is NOT to have perfect men but one "perfect Man" which IS Christ. As there is "one fallen man" and all are in him, there is "one Perfect Man" and the true church is in Him. Salvation then is not something we believe or something we confess but a dying to the first Adam, being buried and being resurrected into Christ, the very LAST Adam. Salvation is the process that IS the basis or principle of Living by His Resurrection LIFE! The two shall become ONE means there are no longer two but just One. That "ONE" IS Christ, the Last Adam, and the Head of a completely new creation or a NEW GENESIS! As the first Adam was the head of that creation so now Christ is the Head of a whole new creation. The first creation was outward but the new creation is inward.

This "CHRIST" is both Head and body. This mystery has been hidden from past generations but is now supposed to be revealed by the church, which is His body. This is NOT to be revealed by just a new doctrine but by the Life-experience as functioning members of His body.

1Co 10:1 For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; **2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea;** 3 and all ate the same spiritual food; 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.

The historic Feast of Passover was a seven day feast and they had a final feast on the seventh day. On the seventh day Israel had left Egypt, been baptized into Moses and was traveling through the wilderness on their way to Mt. Sinai. The Feast of Passover started in Egypt but it continued on into the wilderness. It is clear that their Baptism was included in the Feast of Passover. In other words "if we are to keep the reality of the Feast of Passover" baptism is NOT an option. However, our baptism is NOT into Moses but into Christ Jesus.

1 Cor 5:7-----For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. 8 Let us therefore celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Christ IS our Passover Lamb and HE HAS BEEN SACRIFICED. Therefore, if we are going to participate in the "reality of Passover" we must keep the Whole Feast. Not the shadow or type that Israel celebrated but the reality within the context of the New Covenant. Then Baptism is included in Passover {Christ} AND we are baptized into Christ Jesus, our Passover Lamb. In addition we are commanded NOT TO EAT of anything leavened but to only eat that which is unleavened and to eat the Lamb in a specified way.

The reason we are sharing this in this way is because this is all part of our foundation and reveals our proper "beginnings." If we don't begin correctly it will be very difficult to finish the race with endurance. My theory is that lacking these "beginnings" is the failure of the current church system. Too many church systems are not interested in getting new believers started into their eternal path but just to fill the pews and make a showing in the flesh.

It is important to know what baptism is **Not** and then to know what the Bible says baptism **IS**.

HEB 10:22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in **full assurance of faith**, having **our hearts sprinkled {clean} from an evil conscience** and **our bodies washed with pure water**.

Baptism then is **not** a public testimony. It is **not** an outward sign of an inward change. It is **not** a baptism into a church. It is **not** a ritual. It is **not** a ritual bath as in other religions.

Baptism is designed by God to produce something real and eternal in our lives. We cannot take the next step into God's eternal purpose without a valid baptism. If Israel had refused to go through the Red Sea what would have been the rest of their destiny? They would remain in Egypt or in the World system.

Luke 7:28 "I say to you, among those born of women, there is no one greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." 29 And when all the people and the tax-gatherers heard *this*, they acknowledged God's justice, having been baptized with the baptism of John. 30 **But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God's purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by John.**

The religious leaders cut themselves off from the purpose of God simply by rejecting John's baptism. How much then shall we forfeit if we rejects Christ's baptism.

- (1) Baptism is an immersion into the death of Jesus Christ.
- (2) Baptism is an immersion into a death to sin.
- (3) It cuts us loose from the old life of first Adam.
- (4) It destroys the "body of sin" or the sin factory.
- (5) It is a burial following our participation in HIS death.
- (6) It is the preparation to receive HIS Resurrection Life.

- (7) It frees us from slavery to sin.
- (8) It frees us from the fear of death.
- (9) We are freed from sin so that we can be enslaved to God.
- (10) Death and burial sets us free from the law so we can serve in newness of the Spirit.
- (11) Baptism is our escape from the world system of Egypt.
- (12) Baptism frees us from Satan's authority.
- (13) Baptism brings us under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- (14) Baptism is another step into God's purpose.
- (15) At baptism God provides us with a good conscience.
- (16) Baptism is our first obedience to the word of God.
- (17) At baptism we are clothed with Christ (as with a garment).
- (18) Baptism brings to a conclusion all that was before so that in Christ Jesus all things can become new.
- (19) Baptism is one of the foundations of the Christian life.
- (20) God will not permit us to go on to maturity until the foundations are complete.

This list may not be complete but it reveals the essential nature of Baptism. As

we begin to experience the reality of these 20 things I expect many more blessings will be revealed within each experience.

Unfortunately a good explanation of baptism is not very quick or easy. The reason is because every detail is not given in scripture but is still revealed within the context of scripture. On the surface, different statements do not seem to apply to baptism but within the context we understand they are included in baptism. For example; there was no mention of baptism at the Red Sea when Israel crossed over. However, within the context of scripture Paul understood that the crossing was actually a baptism into Moses. At the time it was a mystery why God didn't take Israel over dry ground but within the context of scripture it is clear that God was revealing many different aspects of baptism. God also fatally dealt with His enemies in the water AFTER the baptism. Just the picture reveals that until they passed through the waters they were still in Egypt and under Pharaoh's authority. Following baptism they came under God's authority which was administrated by Moses. In every detail of the wilderness journey God was revealing something about our experience in coming out of the world system with its man made laws and demands to participate in God's Kingdom system with its God ordained Laws and demands. While the church accepts the worlds laws and demands they are offended by God's Laws and demands.

1Cor 10:11 Now these things happened to them **as an example**, and **they were written for our instruction**, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

Rom 15:4 For **whatever was written** in earlier times **was written for our instruction**, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Volumes of instruction meant for us from the Old Testament are ignored because of some culture, tradition, doctrine or ignorance.

Rom 4:23 Now **not for his sake only was it written**, that it was reckoned to him, **24 but for our sake also**, to whom it will be reckoned, **as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead**,

Since we have a New Covenant with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, why should we even be concerned about Adam, his life or his sin? Since we are living in the dispensation of the New Covenant why should we even pay attention to the Old Covenant? This question has affected multitudes because it is supposed that there is a total separation between the two covenants and that the Old Covenant can teach us nothing concerning the Christian life. If this were actually true the Book of Hebrews would be irrelevant. The Eternal Priesthood after the order of Melchizedek would be another confusion without the picture of the priesthood after the order of Aaron. The meaning of ruling with Christ would be misunderstood without the Books of Kings and Chronicles. The special inheritance of the first born or manifested sons of God would be another dead issue.

If we recognize the “inheritance” that Adam received after the fall it gives us some insight into our “inheritance” after we are fully restored in Christ. While these things may seem obtuse they apply to baptism in one way or another. Since baptism is directly set into God’s Eternal Purpose many applications can be made that are not that obvious to the casual believer. However, when we set “casual believers” in the pulpit, many other lives are affected and foundations are neglected as irrelevant to the church. Still, the church is NOT the goal but we must be firmly set into God’s Eternal Purpose.

My theory is that “the flesh, the old man, the old life and the natural man” is greatest threat to the transformation of the church from what man is building to what Christ is building. It appears obvious that what we see developing in the visible church has NOTHING to do with Christ or God’s eternal purpose. “The flesh profits nothing” seems to be the anthem that needs to be sung in every service. Unfortunately if we prohibited the “flesh” from manifesting in the outward meetings there would be nothing accomplished that seems normal in today’s church system. This is NOT just a denominational problem within the “dead church syndrome” but transcends the church systems and includes most religious groups.

The “experience” of flesh is normal and the “experience” of Spirit is too radical in today’s Christianity. Words that are spirit and life are like a foreign language which no one understands. Why? Simply because the natural man can understand nothing of the spirit! He has no capacity by which he can understand “spirit” but in most cases he is unaware of that fact. A natural man in the pulpit, preaching natural words to a natural people is what we call “church” but this has nothing to do with what Christ is building.

Before we can even address the subject of baptism in any depth there are certain questions we need to

clarify. Is the new inner man the ONLY man that God recognizes today? Is The LIFE of the new inner man the ONLY Life that God recognizes today within the New Covenant. What about the natural Jew? Has God once again accepted the fallen life of Adam as good enough for His eternal purpose? Is the cleansing of the flesh now accepted along with the cleansing of the inside of the cup?

Is it true that NO ONE has a right to call themselves “a Christian” until they have a different and better life than Adam? Has God now decided to save Adam **because of what he believes?** Is Resurrection LIFE necessary to be “saved.” Is God “saving people” who have not been regenerated? Is Baptism just a doctrine and ritual OR is it essential to complete God’s purpose? Of course there are many more questions we can ask based upon what the Bible teaches about the Christian Life. For Example; Is the reality of Baptism the immersion in the Water or is the REALITY that which takes place in the inner life when we are baptized in water? Is baptism without an actual exchange in the person a valid baptism? Did the believers in Acts 18 have a valid baptism and if they did why did Paul baptize them again? What was wrong with John’s baptism? If John baptized with a baptism of repentance is that baptism still valid today? Is it really possible to be baptized in water and NOTHING take place that is essential to the New Covenant experience?

While baptism in water is just one of our essential foundations, it is a pivotal experience. Repentance from dead works, forgiveness of “sins”, the closing down of the “sin” factory, being clothed with Christ, being dead and cut off from the life of Adam, being resurrected with Christ into a completely different kind of Life, the birth and growth of the new inner man, the consecration of the new man to complete the will and purpose of God and then participating in the reality of Christ, Head and body, are each one a pivotal experience also. None of these “experiences” can be skipped or ignored IF we are to “go on with God” into the high or ascending call of God.

Our concern revolves around the multitudes that are attempting to live within the Christian Community WITHOUT passing through the death to the Adamic life. Our theme is “Beginning Life By Death.” Trying to skip over the “death issue” and the “burial issue” will ALWAYS hinder the “Resurrection Life Issue.” If we cannot positively acknowledge our death with Christ AND our burial with Christ, how will we ever be able to positively acknowledge our Resurrection with Christ? If we cannot positively identify our Resurrection with Christ how will we ever be able to positively identify or acknowledge our being seated with Him. Therefore, water baptism becomes a pivotal experience. Being “Baptized Into His Death” cannot be optional. To teach that baptism is only a public testimony and produces nothing relevant to our Christian Life is ignorant. To teach that “water baptism” is just “works” is criminal.

If baptism was only into “our death” we might question its validity but our baptism is only into “His death” and that IS essential! If baptism was **when we got “buried”** it may not help us much. But if our baptism is when **we were buried with Him**, WHEN HE was buried, it would be essential. However, to the natural mind this makes no sense because we weren’t even born when He was buried. How can we acknowledge that God is only dealing with two men when it is obvious to the natural man that there are millions of men plus women that God is “saving.”

A much fuller explanation of water baptism can be found in the document “Water Baptism; WHY?” This present document just focuses upon the essential nature of “DEATH” that leads to “RESURRECTION” that leads to participation in “HIS LIFE.” Our emphasis has been upon the futility

of trying to live in the fulness of the Christian Life by our natural life in Adam. Attempting to fulfill God's purpose by continuing in the flesh, in the life of the old man and by the power and cleverness of Adam will always result in what we see in the visible church today.

Regardless of how many "meetings" that Adam attends or how many 12 step programs he subscribes to, Adam will always be Adam, the flesh will always be just flesh and the natural man will never be qualified to serve God.

Until Adam and all the fallen characteristics we have inherited since Genesis 3 are removed from us personally and from the church corporately, we can not expect any change in the status quo mentality seen in the visible church!

The "Faith Movement" was faithful to teach Adam how to exercise faith and how to get God to do what Adam wanted God to do. The "Marriage Ministries" were faithful to teach Adam how to live together with his wife and family and be happy. The "Discipleship Movement" was faithful to teach Adam how to be acceptable in the church and to begin to do the ministry. The "Ecclesiastical Movement" has been faithful to teach Adam how to fill the pulpit and manage a church system. The "Apostolic and Prophetic Movement" has been faithful to teach Adam how to prophesy and move into the gifts of the Spirit.

My theory is that EVERY ministry must teach BELIEVERS how to participate in the Death of Christ, The Burial of Christ and the Resurrection of Christ BEFORE WE WASTE ANY MORE TIME trying to get Adam improved, modified and acceptable in the current church system.