

Dear Crossroads Family,

This week I had the privilege of attending the annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. In Baptist life, a convention is a group of Baptist churches that have agreed to work together to support and encourage one another and participate in joint mission efforts. All the churches of the BGCT are independent churches, but we choose to cooperate together for the sake of the work of God's kingdom. This year marks the 140th anniversary of the BGCT.

Of course, the name Baptist goes back all the way to the period of the Protestant Reformation—nearly 500 years (or to John the Baptist, if you want to goad your non-Baptist friends!). The name Baptist became associated with our type of Christian churches because of the importance we place on immersion (the meaning of the word "baptize" in the New Testament) as a sign and testimony to the fact that a person has chosen to become a follower of Christ. Baptists have been the champions for this biblical understanding of baptism.

This Sunday we will look more closely at what the Bible says about baptism and why it is important for us to know what it is and how we should practice it. I hope you will be in place for this important message that will help us understand what we believe and who we are as Baptists. The message is entitled, "*The Inaugural Sign of Faith in Christ*." (Sermon notes are provided below.)

See you Sunday!

Love,
Bro. Doug

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The Inaugural Sign of Faith in Christ
Acts 10:44-48, 16:30-34, 19:1-5

From the time of Jesus, Christians committed to the _____ as the Word of God and to the _____ _____ are committed to baptism as the inaugural, outward sign of a person's coming to Christ. The Bible depicts baptism as the _____ of a person in water to demonstrate their faith in Jesus. Acts 10:44-48, 16:30-34, & 19:1-5 provide a consistent pattern from which we can discern the nature and significance of baptism.

First, the biblical word means "to _____ in water." There should be no question that Biblical baptism is full immersion. Sprinkling or pouring water was only used in emergencies until _____ years after Christ. In the Bible, people were immersed.

Second, baptism was reserved for those who had _____ and _____ chosen to become followers of Christ. The 1st record of a church leader speaking of baptizing babies was nearly ____ years after Jesus. Baptism in Scripture didn't _____ faith; it _____ faith in Jesus.

Each of the stories in Acts also shows other, individual aspects of the significance of baptism. In the case of the centurion, Cornelius, it was a privilege signifying _____ _____ into the church, the family of God—a kind of opening of the front door. In the case of the jailer, it offered a moment of catharsis—a chance to show, see, and feel that in Jesus, sins are _____ _____. In the case of the disciples of John the Baptist, it was a sign of an _____ _____.

Salvation takes place when a person says to God, "I'm trusting in Jesus for my salvation." It's an _____ thing. Baptism is an _____ sign. It serves as a kind of line in the sand to step over for all to see. That's what makes baptism so important and special. After you've told the Lord that you love and trust Jesus as your Savior, now you want _____ _____ to know and see for themselves it's true.

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A Few Announcements:

There will be no evening activities this Sunday, no Wednesday night activities this week (November 25), and the Church Office will be closed Thursday & Friday (November 26 & 27) in observance of Thanksgiving.

The 2027 Proposed Budget, as recommended by the Finance Committee, is available in the foyer for your review. If you have any questions, contact Sandy McDuffy or Phil Dieter as specified in the cover letter by December 6. A vote will be taken at a Special Called Business Meeting on Sunday, December 13, at 4:00 pm.

Christmas Decorations: If you would like to help with decorating the sanctuary for the Christmas season, plan to come Saturday, November 28, at 9:00 am in the sanctuary.

Dr. Doug Diehl
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