



CHRIST BAPTIZED FOR US – STUDY # 3

The Garden and Expulsion.

The Tabernacle and specifically more furniture in the Courtyard.

The entrance to the courtyard was found on the east side. (Please see Ex 27:13). Looking into the courtyard from the entrance the first piece of furniture one saw was the The Bronze Altar. (See Ex 27:1-8).

The next piece of furniture to be seen in the courtyard past the Bronze Altar was the Bronze Basin. (See Ex 30:17-21).

THE BRONZE BASIN

To learn more about the Bronze Basin please keep in mind what you read from Ex 30:17-21.

Where *specifically* in the courtyard was the placement of the Bronze Basin? See v. 18.

It was between the Tent of Meeting (Tabernacle) and the Bronze Altar.

Though not specifically stated it is safe to say that the basin was filled with water.

Before a priest could minister in the Tabernacle, also called the Tent of Meeting, he first had to wash what? his hands and his feet. This made him ceremonially clean.

If the priests did not his hands and his feet they would die. See vs. 20b-21a.

CHRIST'S BAPTISM BENEFITS US!

Before our High Priest Jesus Christ began his ministry of service before the Father on behalf of the world he too was washed. We read this in Mt 3:13-17.

What specifically did John's baptism do? It forgave sins. See Lk 3:3.

Why was Jesus, who was without sin, baptized for us?

“Jesus submitted to John's Baptism, the same that sinners were undergoing, in order to affirm His identity with sinners and to provide them with perfect righteousness (2 Co 5:21). [The Lutheran Study Bible (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009): 1,582, n. 3:1-12.]

[To help explain Jesus' baptism Hippolytus, an early church father paraphrased Jesus as saying:] “I am the Fulfiller of the law; I seek to leave nothing wanting to

its whole fulfillment.... Baptize Me, John, in order that no one may despise baptism' (ANF 5:236). Jesus' Baptism marked the beginning of His public ministry and anticipated His death on the cross (cf Mk 10:38; Rm 6:3). The fact that all four Gospels report the Baptism of Jesus points to its importance. Luther captured the primary meaning for His Baptism: '[Christ] accepted it from John for the reason that he was entering into our stead, indeed, our person, that is, becoming a sinner for us, taking upon himself the sins which he had not committed, and wiping them out and drowning them in his holy baptism' (AE 51:315)." [The Lutheran Study Bible (St. Louis: CPH, 2009): 1,582, n. 3:1-12.]

BAPTISM UNITES US TO CHRIST!

Many in the church tell us baptism is empty and impotent without life or power. It is no more than an *symbol* of what Christ has done for us!

Read Romans 6:1-5.

We read in verse 3 that Baptism is anything but a lifeless, powerless symbol. Actually baptism has the power to unite us to Jesus Christ in his death.

And, furthermore, we read in vs. 5 that baptism also has the power and ability to unite us with Jesus in his resurrected life.

In other words, Baptism is *not* a placebo! It has its own power by virtue of the Word!

It is a beautiful thing when many brothers and sisters in Christ confess that God's Word is true, correct, errorless information. This is especially beautiful in our day and age when many denominations and Christians say the very opposite!

Gen 1:3 show us that God's Word has its own power. If God's Word simply *described* reality as opposed to *creating* reality we would still be in the dark.

Look at how St. Paul speaks of this creative, all-powerful aspect of God's Word in Rm 4:17 (ESV). God "... calls into existence the things that did not exist .

It all comes from God. Baptism supplies the necessary faith to receive the offered gifts given in Baptism. Both faith and grace are gifts of God (cf. Eph 2:8-9).

If people *really* believed that baptism forgave sins would they wait to have their child baptized at age ten or twelve? If we believe that inoculations protect us from mumps, rubella, German measles, etc., would we wait until our children understood what was going on, or, postpone the giving of this gift? Absolutely not! How much more so with that which protects us from sin, death, and the power of the devil.

How does Tit 3:4-5 show that we do not even contribute our understanding or *any* good work to our baptism? See v. 5. "not because of works done by us in righteousness .

MODES OF BAPTISM

Please read St. Mark 7:1-5. You may not know any Greek and that is ok.

Take an educated guess. What is the Greek word for “washing” in vs. 4? baptize. This word is still used in the Greek language today when you speak about washing. In the Biblical world this word has become a “technical” word, a technical term.

In the southerly reaches of our United States and among certain denominations we are told that a baptism needs to be by *immersion*. Any other form of baptism is *not* acceptable. People may even point to a portrait they have seen of Jesus being baptized by John in the Jordan river. They do so to underscore their belief that baptism must be in the form of “immersion.” However, such people, though well intentioned, fail to realize that this or any painting back is simply an artist’s “rendition.” No one has recorded for us whether Jesus was immersed or not.

Back to the main point; washing. In what ways do we wash things today, or, how were things washed in the days of Jesus?

Immersion: Please give a common ordinary example. taking a bath or soaking a pot.

Sprinkling: Please give a common ordinary example. taking a shower.

Pouring: Please give a common ordinary example. Washing one's hands under the facet.

BAPTISM IN UNLIKELY PLACES

You are invited to read St. John 13:1-20. These are familiar verses especially when it comes to Holy Week and Maundy Thursday.

As an interesting side note. The word “Maundy” comes from the Latin, *mandatum* which means “to command.” What did Jesus *command* on Maundy Thursday? In Christendom there are denominations that believe in the real presence or, *spiritual* presence of Christ in the Sacrament. But at the same time they deny the *sacramental* presence of Jesus’ body and blood in the bread and wine.

And so it is not surprising when these denominations advocate foot washing this holy evening. It should not surprise us then that Church bodies that by the grace of God confess the *sacramental* presence of Jesus in the bread and wine celebrate the institution of Holy Communion this sacred evening.

Now, more specifically to John 13.

What was Jesus doing or teaching when he washed the disciples feet in John 13? Certainly Jesus was teaching and leading by example the concept of service and dying to self as we serve our neighbor. This is an important message without a doubt.

But, could there be more at work here?

Keep in mind that Maundy Thursday is the evening Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper. It is still commonly taught in most churches that at the very least a person is to be baptized before they can receive Holy Communion. With this being said let us look at our text.

Weekly the OT priests ate the Bread of the Presence. This is described in Lev 24:5-9. (Incidentally, this is believed to be one of the "proof texts" for every Sunday Communion in the Apostolic and Early Church). Before the priests could eat the Bread of the Presence on the Sabbath day they needed to wash. See Ex 30:17-21.

Into the Bronze Basin was poured water? In Jn 13:15 Jesus poured water into the basin.

Jesus then began to wash the disciples' feet. Yes this was a form of hospitality that slaves performed on behalf of the masters to welcome guests in the house. But could there be more going on here?

Before Jesus could serve his Father he was washed in John's Baptism. (See Mt 3:13-17). Before we can serve our Father we need to be washed in and through baptism.

We learn in Ex 30:20b-21a that if a person was not washed he would die. In Jn 13:8 Peter says that Jesus will never wash his feet. Jesus responds saying in v. 8, "If I do not wash you, you will have no share with me." What does Jesus mean when he says, "... you will have no share in me?" Jesus is saying you will die spiritually.

How does Jesus say the same thing in John 3:5? Without baptism you will not see the kingdom of heaven. Focus on word, "unless". To understand this see Lk 7:29-30. Also, see question number 251 in your *Catechism*.

In John 13:10 is Jesus simply and only speaking of physical hygiene or is he speaking about something more? What makes a person *clean* in Jn 13:10? Is it Dial soap or something else? The Word.

What does Jesus say makes us clean in Jn 15:3? The Word makes us clean.

IN SUMMARY

In Jn 13:1-20 Jesus is talking about service to our neighbor even if it is through what is viewed as the most menial of tasks. This is a good message for us to receive. How often do the world and even many Christian denominations demean the simple but powerful washing of Holy Baptism which truly makes us clean! Though viewed as a lowly menial act baptism unites us to Jesus so that we live, not die. United to Jesus we are clean and pure; forgiven of all our sins!

See how St. Paul speaks of being made clean in and through the Word spoken over the water in Eph 5:26-27.