

# Christ's Salvation from Heaven Signified on Earth

2022.07.31 Morning Sermon in Acts 10:44–11:18

**Main idea:** Since it is God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—Who has saved us, is saving us, and will save us, He has given us a sign on earth to remember that Jesus is applying this to us from heaven by His Spirit

<sup>44</sup>While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. <sup>45</sup>And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. <sup>46</sup>For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.

Then Peter answered, <sup>47</sup>“Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” <sup>48</sup>And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

<sup>11:1</sup>Now the apostles and brethren who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. <sup>2</sup>And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, those of the circumcision contended with him, <sup>3</sup>saying, “You went in to uncircumcised men and ate with them!”

<sup>4</sup>But Peter explained it to them in order from the beginning, saying: <sup>5</sup>“I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision, an object descending like a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came to me. <sup>6</sup>When I observed it intently and considered, I saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. <sup>7</sup>And I heard a voice saying to me, ‘Rise, Peter; kill and eat.’ <sup>8</sup>But I said, ‘Not so, Lord! For nothing common or unclean has at any time entered my mouth.’ <sup>9</sup>But the voice answered me again from heaven, ‘What God has cleansed you must not call common.’

<sup>10</sup>Now this was done three times, and all were drawn up again into heaven. <sup>11</sup>At that very moment, three men stood before the house where I was, having been sent to me from Caesarea. <sup>12</sup>Then the Spirit told me to go with them, doubting nothing. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. <sup>13</sup>And he told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house, who said to him, ‘Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter,’ <sup>14</sup>who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.’

<sup>15</sup>And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. <sup>16</sup>Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, ‘John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>17</sup>If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?”

<sup>18</sup>When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, “Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.”

**Introduction: What does a new believer need? How must the church respond to salvation? Christ's Salvation Signified—Going from Knowing about Him to Knowing Him**

## 1. Cornelius's household's salvation signified

- a. **Baptism with the Spirit: faith, tongues, praise, fruit (v44–45, 15, 17).** This is the primary Christian baptism. This is what puts you into Christ, through regeneration and faith. This is that by which you put Christ on. This is that by which you are united to Him. This is that by which you die with Him to sin and stay dead to sin. This is that by which you are alive to God and stay alive to God. What does the Spirit do for us? He gives us faith, and He gives us fruit. These would come to be beautifully evident in Cornelius's life and the lives of his household. But they were not immediately evident. Peter and his six friends could see that this had happened by the speaking in tongues and praising God.
- b. **Baptism with water: affirming Jesus's saving performance, Jesus's saving power in and from heaven, Jesus's saving presence, and Jesus's saving permanence (v16, 47, cf. Mat 28:16–20).** Why then baptize with water? If it is Jesus Himself Who pours out the Spirit, and the Spirit Himself Who falls upon us, then why is water required too? “Because Jesus said so, and because I need it.” Christ had commanded it.
  - i. Water baptism would be a reminder that the resurrected Christ had really commanded this to the disciples on a mountain
  - ii. Water baptism would be a reminder that Jesus has all authority in heaven. “It is He Who poured out this.”
  - iii. Water baptism would be a reminder that Jesus has all authority in earth. He is the One Who is working by His Spirit. And He lays special claim to everyone in His church. They must keep all that He has commanded. Repent, and believe the gospel! And keep repenting! And keep believing!
  - iv. Water baptism would be a reminder that as He does this by His Spirit, surely it is He Himself Who is with us.
  - v. Water baptism would be a reminder that this presence with us and power toward us will persist even to the end of the age.

2. **The sign strengthens faith by showing where the faith came from and where to get more (v18).** It is a testimony against the idea that somehow the preacher is to be credited for bringing us to Christ, or the idea that somehow it is the believer that is to be credited for coming to Christ. If our repentance and faith are weak, or even imperceptible, our water baptism points us to Him Who pours out His Spirit to get from Him repentance and faith. And when our repentance and faith are evident, and growing, our water baptism directs to Him all the praise!
3. **The sign reinforces the duty to serve the Master (dealing a blow to the old “those of the circumcision” distinction, v45, 18; cf. Mat 28:20).** It obligates the church to teach us all that He has commanded us. It obligates us to keep all that He has commanded us. It is the new mark of separation from the world, the new mark of devotion unto the Lord. In a few chapters, when the question of circumcision arises for people like Cornelius, the General Assembly will decide against it. Why? There is a greater way that they are distinct from the world: learning and keeping all that Christ has commanded. They are forbidden to fit in by tolerating sexual immorality or participating in it. They are forbidden to fit in by eating meat that is known to have been sacrificed to idols. They are strangers from the world now, and the world are strangers to them. They are identified with the Lord Jesus now. He has saved them. He is saving them. He will save them. And they are glad to know Him Himself, even if their friendship with Him has brought enmity with the world.
4. **We must all continually grow in apprehending that we have been saved not by theological ideas but by the reality of a Being—the personal work and working of the Triune God.** The Father has chosen them in the Son. The Son has redeemed them by His blood. And the Son has poured out His Spirit, and the Father’s Spirit, Who is bringing them into their redemption. The Name in which we are baptized is not just a theological formula. It is the identity of the Being by Whom we are saved and for Whom we are saved.

**Conclusion: Water baptism ties heaven to earth, a visible sign of an invisible reality. For, it is the risen Lord Who is still pouring out His Spirit, still bringing His redeemed to faith, still growing His redeemed in grace. And His Spirit uses water baptism to strengthen our knowledge about Jesus, our personally knowing Jesus, our acknowledgement that it is Jesus Who is doing this, and our adoring Jesus for doing it!**

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Acts 10 verse 44, through 11 verse 18. These are the words of God While Peter was still speaking these words, The Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word and those of the circumcision who believed were astonished as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles.

Also, for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God than Peter answered. Can anyone forbid water that? These should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit, just as we have and he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

Now the apostles and brethren who were in Judea heard that. The Gentiles had also received the Word of God. And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, Those of the circumcision, contended with him saying, you went in to uncircumcised men and eight with them, but Peter explained it to them in order from the beginning saying I was in the city of Joppa praying and then a trance I saw vision an object descending like a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners.

And it came to me When I observed it. Intently and considered I saw four-footed animals of the earth, while beasts creeping things and birds of the air. And I heard a voice saying to me, rise, Peter kill and eat, but I said not so Lord for nothing common or unclean has at any time entered my mouth.

But the voice answered me again from heaven. What? God has cleansed. You must not call common. Now, this was done three times and all were drawn up again, into heaven, at that very moment. Three men stood before the house where I was Having been sent to me from says Ria, then the Spirit told me to go with them doubting nothing.

Moreover, these six brethren accompanied me and we entered the man's house and he told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house who said to him, send men to Joppa and call for Simon. Whose surname is Peter? Who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.

And as I began to speak the Holy Spirit, fell upon them as upon us at the beginning. Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said John indeed. Baptized with water but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. If therefore, God gave them the same gift as he gave us.

When we believed on the Lord, Jesus Christ. Who was I that I could withstand God when they heard these things. They became silent and they glorified God saying, then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life. Amen. Lessons, this reading of God's inspired and inerrant work. And we looked to him to bless the preaching of it.

Please be seated.

Many of you have had new member or profession of faith interviews and you have answered questions and had discussion about what you should do, As a member of the church, what should the person whom God adds to the church? Do and what should the church do? When God adds someone to his church, It was very important that we answer the question that way, because Cornelius and his household.

Do not get added to the church in verse 48. When Peter commands them to be baptized in the name of the Lord, The in the name of the Lord, of course, refers to the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost that name of the Lord that Jesus selects when he commands baptism in Matthew 28 to passage which we hope by God's help to look at in a little while, That is not where they are added to the church.

They're added to the church in verse 44, While Peter was still speaking these words, The Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word and Peter tells us in verse 15 of chapter 11, that it wasn't this moment that he recognized That Cornelius. And his household had been added to the church because it is the Lord who adds to his church.

And so when the Lord adds to his church, What is needed is to trust and to obey. And to praise the one who has added to the church, is to trust that it is the Lord who has done this, not the preacher not himself as the Hearer but God who has saved him.

And he is to obey to recognize that the Lord who has done this has now laid claim to Him as his own that he who has begun with. Jesus must continue with the Lord and of course prayers. For when God displays himself a savior? Yes, we must trust Him that he does.

All of the saving that He is the one who has done what has been done. And he is the one who is doing what he is doing and that he will finish it and it will be, he who has done it. And yes, when the Lord adds to his church, we must obey and we must do as Christians.

Whatever the Bible says Christians do, which is to keep all to observe all that Christ has commanded. But how far we would fall short in a right response? If we did not glorify? If we did not praise. If the main thing in our trusting was not praising him, whom we are trusting to do it.

If the main thing in our obeying was not living for the praise of him who has done it and is doing it. And so those are the three things that I believer and you believer needs to do to trust and obey and to praise. Those are the three things that the church must do, trust that it is Jesus who has done this and obey Jesus in what he says to do with these new ones who have been added to the church.

And certainly Once our complaining and prejudiced mouths have been shut not to keep them shocked because they're silenced in verse 18 but to reopen them. Now, not with you went in to Gentiles and ate with them. But glorifying God and saying, God has granted this repentance You see, they may not know it or call it that but everyone whoever baptizes with water has just made public display.

That God is reformed.

Or rather that when we become reformed, We are following God's declaration about himself. Here is the one who has granted this And so in this passage, We see those three things, the trusting, and the obeying and the praising First with Christ's salvation signified, Christ's salvation signified. Something marvelous has happened to Cornelius and to his household and they must respond to what God has done from heaven with what Christ commands us to do on earth.

It's similar in a way to church discipline. There's a parallel here in this passage, But one of the main things in, in the passage is that while Jews had not allowed Cornelius and his family into the church. We know that because he's called a godfiverer. It's a special category for someone who trusts in the God of the Old Testament.

No hopes in the promises of the Old Testament and attend synagogue but doesn't allowed to have fellowship with the actual members of the synagogue and isn't received and recognized as one of them. He follows the Old Testament calendar. And yet he has kept outside of the church. And now God is the one who has added them to the church.

So when Peter is accused of going in and treating them like church members, he explains just responding on earth to what God has done in heaven. Well, it's the same with church discipline And Matthew 18, and it doesn't read that that. Well, in English, perhaps, I think it reads wonderfully in English because it gives us better theology.

But when he says, what you loose on earth or what you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, And what you loose on earth will have been loosed in heaven. So Jesus actually sets up the timeline of church discipline, he says, people are excommunicated on earth because Jesus has already done it from heaven And the church by following the process, the procedure that Christ has outlined in his word, is making the earthly order.

Reflect a heavenly reality that already exists so that when we live in an age in the church and which discipline is rarely carried out? Even though there is much sin, tolerate it in the churches. We live in an age in the church where to use language from the passage before us the church is standing against God.

Well similarly If God has added to the church of Christ has added to the church from heaven and we don't respond By adding them to the church on earth than we would be standing against God. That's Peter's defense. He says they were already. Baptized then baptize them in verse 48.

I didn't baptize them for the first time verse 15, as I began to speak the Holy Spirit, fell upon them as upon us at the beginning. And you remember his sermon On the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit had fell upon them and he said it is. He referring to Jesus, the risen and ascended and enthroned.

Christ. It is. He who has poured out this He has shown that he is Yahweh from Joel chapter 2 by pouring out his Spirit. On our flesh. He has shown that he is Yahweh from Joel chapter 2, But the fact that everyone who calls upon his name. The name of the Lord Jesus will be saved and so he takes the ones to whom He's speaking in Jerusalem back to that day and he says that's the day.

That's the reality. That's the recognition that I had. When the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as I began to speak the Holy Spirit, fell upon them as upon us. At the beginning that I remembered the Word of the Lord, how he said John indeed baptized with water but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

That is the baptism that saves isn't it? Jesus had already baptized Cornelius and his household. The end of verse 44, He had poured out his spirit. Who had fallen upon them. That's Christian. Baptism. Galatians 3:27 says that he has been baptized into Christ, has put on Christ. It doesn't mean that he who has been baptized with water has been put on Christ That can't put Christ upon you.

It is when the Spirit comes and gives life and gives faith and joins you to Christ that puts on Christ. When Romans 6 says that he who is baptized into Christ, is baptized into his death and baptized also into his resurrection. It's not the water that does that. The water does not join you to Christ so that he is yours.

And His death is yours and his resurrection is yours. It's the Spirit who has done that We're respond with the water short, We're commanded as we'll see as we go along and consider in the passage as you probably have already heard. That's so plain in the text but it is Jesus baptizing with the Spirit that accomplishes Galatians 3:27 and it is Jesus baptizing with the Spirit that accomplishes Romans 6.

And it is Jesus baptizing with the Spirit that had added past tense, already, Cornelius, and his household to the church to which Peter had to respond On behalf of the church with obedience with the water. And so we must do away with this idea that baptism means to dip.

Certainly it originally has that definition but in a passage that keep saying, poured out fell upon and then says, Now remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, John indeed, baptized with water but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. We must give up to the Holy Spirit, the meaning of the word, Jesus, baptized them with the Holy Spirit and that's the baptism that matters.

Oh, dear children. We rejoice that God who arranged who would be there by the excited gathering of Cornelius as he told his relatives and he told his friends and he got them all there. That God who gathered

them all there that they would hear the words and that while Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word he is the same God who has chosen your family for you and who has chosen the time that you would live and the place that you would live, and that the family that you were born into would be a member household of this church.

And we rejoice that as God added you to His church. We could not withhold the water. Also, we would stand against God. We marked you his but the water cannot save you. It doesn't give you faith. It doesn't join you to Christ it points. You to him who pours, out his spirit, who gives you life, who gives you faith?

Who joins you to Christ. That is the great Christian baptism. And when you have the lesser as it were Christian, baptism the water on earth it. Testifies to you. Only Jesus can save, only the Spirit can give life it calls you to repentance and faith and at the same time promises repentance and faith because you can't give it to yourself and your parents can't give it to you day by day and neither I nor any of the elders can give you repentance and faith from the pulpit or in the pasturing.

But Jesus gives repentance and faith from heaven. Now, how did he know How did Peter know that they had been baptized to the Holy Spirit? Well the Holy Spirit produces effect. He produces faith in Jesus Christ. He produces fruit in the life. As many as have the spirit of God, these are the sons of God.

He who does not have the Spirit of Christ as none of His and by the spirit, who teaches us to call God, our Abba. And if God, the Holy One is our Abba. Then the remaining sin is our enemy. The Holy Spirit gives us. He goes around it. He does as a mom, rather, who is just teaching her child to read and labels everything in the house door and floor and desk.

And if you haven't done that that's that's fine. But as if a mom had done that and the Holy Spirit labels for us, God, he says, Abba, he labels for us sin. He says enemy and we don't live according to the flesh anymore. But by the Spirit, we put to death, the deeds of the body takes a while though.

To see that, doesn't? It takes a while to see faith. It takes a while to see fruit, the wonderful fruit in Galatians 5:22 and following and the the fruit of mortification that we were just referring to in Romans 8, you know, it doesn't take a while to see When suddenly a bunch of Gentiles, who didn't know, a lick of Aramaic are praising God in Aramaic and Peter and the six of the circumcision.

And that's a significant word here because the people of God are now the ones of the baptism, the ones of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, there's gonna be a question later. What do we do about circumcision? Lord helping us Indeed. We will consider him to have helped us if we get to that part of the sermon by today, will will talk about the decision that has made in Acts 15.

A decision that is demanded by the same reality that is signified in their baptisms. And so they hear the tongues and they know the same Lord Jesus, who poured at the same spirit, on the day, of Pentecost producing the same immediate effect on that day, is the one who has poured out his spirit on this day.

In Cornelius, says household producing the same effects. Well, slightly in reverse, right? Those of Gentile languages. Speaking aromatic or the first century version as it were of of Hebrew. They recognize that the Spirit has been poured out. Those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, They didn't question, they didn't do like the others in the temple court had done on the day of Pentecost and said, all these Gentiles are drunk.

They're they're like Ben Haddad and his men at the command outpost who are being given over to drunkenness as part of God's plan for slaughtering a hundred thousand of them by the hands of 7,000 Israelites. No, they don't question because it's obvious What has happened. But their astonished at is the fact that it has happened, The gift of the Holy Spirit has been poured out on these Gentiles

The gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus, the Redeemer. And why is he the Redeemer? Because God had planned to redeem. God had chosen in love before the world began. God had planned to send his son in the fullness of time. Jesus! The Redeemer had poured out his Spirit and that that is what makes you alive to God.

He gives us faith. He gives us fruit Now, the faith and the fruit would come to beautifully. Evident in Cornelius's life in the lives of this household. But they were not immediately evident, But Peter and his six, friends could see that. This is what had happened by their speaking in tongues and praising God.

And so Peter says, can anyone forbid water that these should not be baptized have received the Holy Spirit just as we have now. Why, why did they have to be baptized if Jesus himself, pours out the Spirit and the spirit himself falls upon us. Why is it required? That water be used too.

Well, some of you in your profession of faith interviews have been paying attention, these five and odd some years now. You know, the answer because Jesus said so and because I need it. We see that in Matthew 28. This is this is how Peter knew. This is why there was no longer for him.

The option of withholding the water when he says, can anyone withhold or forbid or refuse the water, anyone forbid, the water that these should not be baptized. The answer is no because Jesus said, so Jesus said, As you go, we're going therefore make disciples of all nations. Baptizing them end of consideration.

Jesus commands it. You have to do it. Jesus says, do this. In remembrance of me, if you believe in Jesus, you must confess him with your mouth. If you believe in Him with your heart and you must obey him and come to his table and eat in remembrance of Him, who gives himself to us, not just by means of his word.

Preached. Like we've seen so gloriously in particularly last week, but also by means of eating and drinking in remembrance and by faith. It's not just that, Jesus commands me to. That's enough. It's also that I need it. Do you remember that at the moment of the great commission? There were some among the 11 who just a few seconds earlier were doubting that Jesus was resurrected.

And that it was really, he, Matthew 28 week, we usually start in verse 18. Don't start in verse 18, start in verse 16 at least. Well start in Genesis 1:1 but start in verse 16 we don't have. Certainly don't have time for that. Kind of a sermon this side of glory.

Why don't we wonder? It won't be me. If you've got eternity, you'd have Christ, preach the whole Bible from the beginning of Genesis 1, to the end of Revelation in one sitting. And then you could do it again. And again, forever. There's no time limits. We'll start in verse 16, then the 11 disciples went away into Galilee to the mountain, which Jesus had appointed for them.

When they saw him, they worshiped Him. But some doubt it is that ever been? You you're one that Jesus has set apart to Himself. You're gathered with the others whom Jesus has said apart to himself. You're in the worship. You're hearing the word you're singing. The songs you're praying, but your faith is weak.

You've been backslidden into some sin or there's some circumstance in your life that is filled you with anxiety or there's some something in your life that you've been called to most often parenting or marriage. That's where we live and something some ministry in your life that you know, you've been called to and has been going poorly and it's all just external.

The songs are in in your eyes out the mouth. They never stop at your brain. They certainly don't go down into the heart here on the mountain. In Galilee the 11 disciples are on their faces before Jesus and some of them are doubting even on their faces and he responds with his word and with his sign Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, all authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth as you go.

Therefore going, therefore, make disciples of all nations. Baptizing them. He knows that some of them are doubting but he's the one who saved them and he's the one who called them and he's not waiting until they have better faith or stronger faith to command them into their ministry, He's just giving them what they need for their weak, faith.

His words and his sign. Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all the things that I have commanded you and now. I am with you. Always, you think it's hard to believe in a resurrected Jesus?

Who's standing in front of you. While you're on your face in front of him, what about after? He's ascended into heaven and taken his seat on the throne. Isn't that what the Holy Spirit says? Through Peter blessed. Are they who not seeing have believed, who love me? Because they've seen by faith sight.

Not by eyesight and what is one of the ways that the Lord Jesus stirs up that faith sight. He's given us something that tells our eyesight that he was here and he was risen. And he stood on the mountain and he called the Eleven, that he commanded them, that the gospel that we have heard.

Now 2,000 years and thousands of miles away was sent forth from a risen Christ standing on earth and who sits bodily in heaven every bit as much as really and truly and physically. As he stood on earth, and that he has poured out, his spirit on us and that he is bringing us to faith because it's utterly impossible, Jesus would die for you.

That the Father would send his son to die for you and that he wouldn't then sent his word. And sent his spirit with that word to bring you to that faith by what you come into the benefits that he gained for you. By his death. He is the one who doesn't So water baptism.

As a reminder, that the resurrected Christ had really commanded this to the disciples on the mountain. And water baptism, is a reminder that Jesus has all the authority in heaven. He's the one who has poured out this as Peter would preach, not too long after that. And water baptism is a reminder that Jesus has all authority on earth that his spirit would be doing the work.

But that the Spirit does it as His spirit and that Jesus lays special claim to everyone on the tree in the church, You know, the baptism of John identified people as followers of John And Jesus said, John indeed, baptized with water. The baptism of Jesus by his Spirit identifies and claims people as followers of Jesus.

And when we respond with the water baptism on earth, it demands of them that they behave as followers of Jesus, John preached about baptism of repentance. That if you were a soldier you shouldn't intimidate. And if you're a tax collector you shouldn't steal and whatever it was that in which you were especially sinning against God.

You had to repent. Receive John's, baptism. You're a follower of John you recognize your need for a penance, but you can't give yourself repentance. And John can't give you repentance. So what does he say? Mark chapter 1. There's one coming here. Coming after me. Who is mightier than I who sandals?

I'm not worthy to untie. I baptize you with water but He will baptize with the Holy Spirit. He can give and does give the repentance and so John's baptism with water called you to repentance. Christian water. Baptism, commands. First and foremost, faith, doesn't it? That you trust and the Lord Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins, knowing that it is only the Lord Jesus Christ.

And only forgiven ones who are therefore necessarily also delivered from the power of their sins. And so, if you haven't believed in Jesus Christ, if you haven't turned from your sin trusted in him and your baptized, your baptism demands, that you observe, all that Jesus has commanded. And the first command anyone ever believe or observes from Jesus is to trust in him to turn to him and look to him for salvation and be saved Or to to come to him and cast your burden on him and be yoked in with him, joined with him.

Because when you take his yoke upon you, he is in the other half of the oak and he takes infinity of the Lord and what has left for you.

And so there are some of you who have received the sign because you were added to the church and the water could not be without what you need to respond that. It's Jesus, who saves that? Jesus, pours, out his Spirit from heaven. That Jesus is the one who adds you to the church on earth.

That Jesus is the one who is with us for the obeying. The observing of all that he has commanded the sign strengthens faith by showing where faith comes from and where to get more Do you imagine about people who get converted in the Bible that they believed in Jesus?

And it was easy steady wonderfully ascending curve and to sanctification and glory from that for them from the moment that they were converted, your experience tells you otherwise more importantly the Bible tells you otherwise everywhere. Why is it that we imagine such things as if Cornelius and all his household were suddenly just wonderful and increasingly wonderful.

Believers for the rest of their lives. Never had a doubt, never struggled with sin. One of the reasons they're given the baptism is because they're not going to be better than the apostles who while worshiping some doubt. It and yet they will remember the sign that was commanded to be given on earth that showed that the power and the salvation comes from heaven and it ties heaven to earth.

And when we who have believed have weak faith, or even imperceptible? Faith. We come into those seasons in which we wonder. Am I even a believer? Do I have any at all? Your water baptism says maybe,

maybe not. But you know where to get it from him who pours out his spirit and from the powerful working of His Spirit on earth, you cry out, Lord Jesus.

You know, all things. I don't know that I love you But you know that I love you. You cry out for faith and you cry out for assurance and you cry out for a nude repentance. You say, I don't just want a little more power to fight my sin.

I want all mighty power by which my sin shall be eradicated forever. And in that power, I fight my sin and his alone. The sign is testimony against the idea that somehow the preachers to be credited for bringing us to Christ or the idea that somehow it is the believer that is to be credited for coming to Christ.

Remember, Cornelius, saying you have done, well, that you have come but then in a few moments, He ends up baptized with water. And the baptism with water says, it's not that Peter has done. Well that he has come. It was right. It was obedient but it is that the Lord Jesus has done perfectly and powerfully and that He brought the preacher, He gave the word, He brought the the hearer he gave the faith, He united to Christ.

So we don't give any credit to any of the human actors who are involved the God who saved through them, the Christ who saved through them. The spirit who saved through them.

The sign reinforces the duty to serve the master.

Verse 18 and they heard these things. It became silent and they glorified God saying, then God also has granted to the Gentiles. What did he grant? You could have said faith until life. Couldn't we don't we reform to people who want to identify the alone instrument of justification. So it's not repentance.

Repentance doesn't unite you to Christ faith United to Christ. It's the alone instrument of justification. We wouldn't have written it this way. Well, it's because the Holy Spirit is wiser than we are. That's always the answer. Well, part of the answer to. Why did God write it this way?

How many times have you read something in Scripture that that was either confusing? Or, or felt like it? It muddled the waters for you. Theologically, you know, wonder why is that written that way? Well, part of the answers because the Holy Spirit is wiser than I am. God had granted to the Gentiles repentance unto life because that's one of the things that being marked by Jesus calls you to.

And if you think water baptism called you to holiness. How much more does your spirit, baptism call you to holiness that God? The Son who bore the wrath for your sins would pour out his spirit upon you. That is infinitely. More binding even than the sign on earth. But we are weak in our commitments just like where weak in our faith And so one of the things that the sign does is it calls you to look to him for faith.

But another thing that the sign does is it demands of you obedience because the reality demands obedience and holiness of you do, doesn't it? You cannot hold on to Christ with one hand and hold on to your sin with the other. And so the sign reinforces the duty to serve the master and those things are tied together in Matthew 28 as well.

Aren't they baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe, all things that I have commanded. You It obligates us to sign does and the true baptism the spirit baptism. Does obligates us to keep all that. Christ has commanded us.

It's a mark of separation from the world. This is one of the ways in which it's replaced circumcision. Baptism isn't isn't just circumcision with water instead of blood for girls in addition to boys, it does everything that circumcision did but it does more and it does better The testifies to union with a crucified and risen and ascended and enthroned.

Christ Circumcision, couldn't do that because he hadn't come yet. It was part of the school master that was keeping us in line until he got here And so baptism demands that we be distinct from the world. Not only in marks in the flesh or having received a sign upon our body, But in everything and how we live circumcision demand at that, too, But, baptism demands, it as a sign, from the ascended and thrown Christ.

At least we got that far. That's why in chapter 15 when there are Gentiles. Now being converted in multitudes at the end of Paul's first missionary journey. And there's this question, do they need to be circumcised? You have the general assembly? They know They don't need to be circumcised.



What do they need to do? They need to identify with Jesus over against the Roman world and the Roman culture in the hardest places. Sexual immorality, aren't we? In the church finding out and probably about to find out much more intensely. That it is a very difficult thing to cling to Jesus's teaching.

And morality about sexuality in the midst of a culture that loves immorality. They couldn't go along with and tolerate, and wink at and joke about fornication and adultery, and homosexuality and the perversion alphabet soup which wasn't invented in the 21st century. They couldn't go along anymore. They had to stand out meet sacrifice to idols.

Why is that such a big deal? Because in the Roman culture, with all of these temples and all of these gods, you could blend in if you win and you're elbow to elbow with them and you're telling yourself first Corinthians 8. Yeah, I know an idol. Isn't anything? This lets me fit in, you know I won't stick out so much won't be.

So, distinct and just go to the meat market at the idle temple. Can't do that anymore. 1st Corinthians 10. There are demons that. Pause that those temples as the idols you can't eat from the table of a demon and eat from the table of the Lord. And he asked there in 1st Corinthians 10, are we strong enough to provoke the Lord?

It's the same sort of question, isn't it? As who am I? That I could withstand God, so they didn't circumcise to be distinct anymore. The distinctions that were required by holding to Jesus over against a society that was at enmity with him in places and ways that would make you stick out like a sore thumb, that would make you a target that would lose you friends.

That would lose you jobs. Baptism calls you to that and Jesus marks you as His. You don't have the right or the ability to withstand God. The water marks you once but it demands that you mark yourself over and over again. By observing all that. He has commanded. We must all continually grow an apprehending that we've been saved.

Not by theological ideas. But by the reality of it being the Triune God Father, Son and Holy Spirit that testified that the Father had chosen them in the sun and the son had redeemed them by his blood and the son is the one who had poured out his spirit, who is the father's.

Same Spirit and that Father Son and Holy Ghost who had planned their redemption from eternity. Had brought them into that redemption. In time, we often lose sight of lose connection with that. There is an eternal and heavenly reality that has brought forth our redemption and and guarantees our redemption.

And that the work of the Triune God. Now is that, by which we believe and that, by which we live and that by which we obey. And one of the things God has given you to remind you of that eternal and heavenly reality to connect time to eternity in heaven, to earth is your water.

Baptism calling you back to faith that it is God. Who grants repentance that. It is God alone. Who saves you? See the name into which we are baptized is not just a theological formula. It's a wonderful theological formula singular. By the way we've mentioned at several times Bears, repeating singular name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

That's one name and Matthew 28. It's not just a theological formula. It is the identity of the ever blessed Almighty being who has created and redeemed you for himself. And who makes who guarantees that? He who started the work. Will bring it to completion and it reminds you that the one by whom you were saved is the one for whom you were saved and you are called to honor him with your whole life.

But pick up the second and maybe the third point. Next chords day, but let us come and ask God to help us by His Spirit.

Lord, even in this passage of reminded us, that you're the one who gives life to the dead light to the blind faith to the unbelieving union with Christ to those who had been by nature children of Wrath. We're so grateful for what you did in Cornelius's house and sending Peter and with him six who would resist by your spirits, recording of these words by your words that we might understand something of the eternal and heavenly realities involved.

When you bring to faith, and when you cause to continue in faith, we pray, Lord, that your spirit would help us to meditate upon your word that he would continue to transform us by the renewing of our mind. The

result would be that we would more and more. See the mercies of God that the result would be that we would more and more offer our bodies as living sacrifices.

We thank you that even as we ask for these things, we know and have just heard preached in the preceding passage and echoes in this passage that. This is how you do it And so we pray that you would do it. As you have said, asking it in the name, by which we are sure that you will even the name Jesus.

Amen.