

THE NUMBER ONE REASON TO GET BAPTIZED

Part 2 of Belong. Acts 8:1-8.

Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. September 8, 2024.

MY ALMOST ANNUAL BAPTISM SERMON

THE BACKGROUND OF ACTS 18

Corinth.

- The apostle Paul arrived in the Greek city some time in AD 49.
- It was a cosmopolitan crossroads with a Jewish community.
- It was near the end of Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-18:22).

ACTS 18:1-8

Acts 18:1-8 (CSB) After this, he left Athens and went to Corinth, 2 where he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul came to them, 3 and since they were of the same occupation, tentmakers by trade, he stayed with them and worked. 4 He reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath and tried to persuade both Jews and Greeks.

5 When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself to preaching the word and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah. 6 When they resisted and blasphemed, he shook out his clothes and told them, "Your blood is on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." 7 So he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. 8 Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, along with his whole household. Many of the Corinthians, when they heard, believed and were baptized.

THE PATTERN OF PAUL'S MISSION WORK

1. Paul worked on a team - verses 1-3, 5a.

- He arrived ahead of his usual teammates - Silas, Timothy, and Luke.
- He joined up with Priscilla and Aquila, Jewish Christians from Rome.
- Teams are stronger than individuals.
- We can sink so low when we go solo. Teamwork is dreamwork.

2. Paul preached the gospel - verses 4, 5b-7.

- Paul loved the Jews and wanted to know Jesus as God and Savior.

Romans 10:1 (CSB) Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God concerning them (the Jews) is for their salvation.

- He preached Christ from the Old Testament.
- He reasoned and persuaded - dialogue, discussion, Q&A - to convince them the Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah.
- Paul believed in the gospel's saving power.

Romans 10:8-9 (CSB) This is the message of faith that we proclaim: 9 If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

- The gospel is the one thing no one but Christians can offer the world.
- Share the gospel and leave the results up to God.

3. Paul baptized those who believed - verse 8.

- The Jews were familiar with the concept of baptism. They had baths for ritual cleansing and recommitting to God.

- But the baptism in verse 8 was different. It was Christian baptism - in the name of Jesus, uniting them with Christ in his death to sin and resurrection to new life.

The pattern of Paul's mission work was simple and basically the same everywhere he went:

- He preached the gospel, people believed, and the believers got baptized.
- They always got baptized:
 - Lydia and her household (Acts 16:15)
 - The Philippian jailer and his family (Acts 16:33)
 - Several disciples in Ephesus (Acts 19:5)
 - All the believers in Corinth (Acts 18:8)

THE NUMBER ONE REASON TO GET BAPTIZED

The number one reason to get baptized is:

- It's been the pattern since the start of the Christian faith.
- The apostles taught it because the Lord commanded it (Matthew 28:18-20).

“Baptism was uncompromisingly commanded and ordained by the Lord Jesus until he comes. It was universally practiced and administered by Christians in the early church, and has been all through the centuries. Paul took it for granted; there are no unbaptized Christians in the New Testament (Dr. John Piper). <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/why-is-baptism-important>

An important question.

- “I was baptized as an infant, should I get re-baptized?”
- No, if ... Yes, if...

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Introductions

If it's been a while since the group last met, or there are newcomers, take time to catch up or introduce yourselves.

Review

Review the September 8 study guide (<https://www.famousgod.com/teaching-notes>)

- What was the teaching passage?
- What was the apostle Paul's pattern of ministry in Corinth?
- What were the results?
- What kind of baptism does verse 8 refer to?
- What is the number one reason for getting baptized, according to Peter?
- What questions do you have about the passage or Peter's teaching?

Discuss

Have a friendly group discussion about water baptism.

- Read Acts 2:37-41. What did Peter tell the men to do?
- In what ways did Peter follow Paul's pattern of ministry?
- Why were so many men willing to get baptized immediately?
- Read Acts 8:26-39.
- In what ways did Phillip follow Paul's pattern of ministry?
- Why was the Ethiopian so eager to get baptized immediately?
- What would you say to a friend who has doubts about getting baptized?

Prayers

- Pray for revival and national spiritual awakening.
- Pray for the Cornerstone Church - people, volunteers, staff, leaders.
- Pray for your group.