

G R O W

Get focused, Read, Observation, Worship

Significance of Baptism – Romans 6:4

Why do people wear wedding rings? For some, the circle of the ring represents love without end. For others, it serves as a reminder for the wearer of their vows and commitment. **And** it lets others know that the person is married. What are some other things people do that mark significant events in their life? Some change their appearance with tattoos, uniforms, or jewelry. Others have ceremonies with symbolism. In the same way, baptism is a meaningful symbol of the Christian faith.

GET FOCUSED

God wants to speak to us. What an incredible thing that the God of the universe desires a real relationship with us and wants to communicate with us. But sometimes we miss this because we don't focus. We let the many distractions around us and within us keep us from hearing God. So, take a few moments and get focused as to not miss anything from God.

READ

We believe the Bible is God's inspired word. God inspired these writers to give His revelation to mankind, so it's important for us to read the Bible, so we can know God's revelation. Take time to read Romans 6:4, our main text, and also read all the other references when they are made.

OBSERVATION (COMB through the text)

In this step, we want to investigate the passage, to understand its message and meaning. In addition to reading our main passage, read the verses around it to understand the **context**. Romans 6 opens with a question about sin and grace. If God is glorified in His grace and His grace is seen in His forgiveness of sin, shouldn't we just keep on sinning? Surprisingly, some think this way, but it is not how the Christian faith works. Our focus verse, Romans 6:4, teaches us what the Christian faith is built on, which is also what baptism represents. The Christian faith is built upon repenting of sin and living for Jesus. And the rest of the passage further expounds upon this fundamental truth.

Next, we want to **observe** the key words and phrases in Romans 6:4. What stands out to you? You should see these key words and phrases: buried, baptism, death, Christ, raised, walk, newness of life.

To help understand the **meaning** of these words and phrases, invest in a good study Bible or utilize online tools like netbible.org. One of the pictures of baptism is burial. We understand what happens when someone is under water too long: death. Going under the water in baptism represents dying

with Christ. Jesus calls us to take up our crosses to follow Him (Lk 9:23, Lk 14:27). To be a Christian, you must die to sin and self (Rom. 6:6), and baptism represents this dying with Christ. The word “baptize” is what’s called a transliteration of the Greek word “baptize.” Simply put, there wasn’t an English word equivalent, so they just translated the Greek letters into English and kept their word. Their word meant “to immerse,” and that is why we baptize with immersion. It’s what the word means, and it’s what the practice is meant to represent. The other side of baptism is rising from the water, which represents newness of life. You go into the water to represent burying one way of life, and you rise to represent starting a new way of life. We are to walk in a new way with Jesus Christ. The word “walk” pointed to how we live, how we conduct ourselves day in and day out. So, this is saying that our lives are meant to be different and our lives are for Jesus, not just parts of our life or special occasions, but how we actually live daily. Looking further down, we see this further expounded upon (Rom. 6:11-13). Our lives are now presented for God to use. The ritual act of baptism was to them and is to us a significant act of consecration. People are baptized because they want to commit themselves to Jesus, turning away from a life of sin and self. People are baptized because they want others to witness a significant event that symbolizes this new life for Jesus.

So, what’s the **bottom-line**, how would you sum all this up? Romans 6:4 shows us that baptism is a picture of dying self and living for Jesus.

WORSHIP

In this last step, we consider how to live all this out. This is what worship is. Worship is more than songs; it is showing who God is in our lives. We can sing all the right songs but still live wrongly, so take a few moments and consider what this scripture means for your life.

Romans 6:11 puts it well, “So also you must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.” Have we turned away from sin? Do we treat sin seriously, being careful to not give ourselves to sinful temptations? Repentance is not a one-time event, it is a way of life (Rom. 12:1-2), where we daily battle our fleshly desires and live for Jesus. What do you need to repent of today, how can you turn away from sin today? Galatians 6:8 makes it clear that we reap what we sow, and we are either sowing to the flesh or to the Spirit. It’s not enough to just deny the flesh, we also must feed our Spirits; we must live for Jesus. What must you do today to feed the Spirit? What will help me know God more and honor Him with my life? Meditate and think on these things.

Some reading this may have never been baptized, or you’re not sure if you were baptized fully knowing what it meant. If this is you, contact the church and pastor to discuss baptism. But also realize, you may have to wait to be baptized, but you don’t have to wait to be saved. If you’ve never repented of your sin and given your life to Jesus, you can do so right now. Simply pray to God, confess your sin and turn away from it. Commit your life to Jesus and invite Him into your life to start a real and restored relationship. And share that commitment with others.