

1 John 5:6-12 Water & Blood

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Let's begin with a word of prayer.

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Please turn to 1 John 5:6 and let's read our text for this morning.

1 John 5:6-12

6 This is he who came by water and blood--Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

7 For there are three that testify:

8 the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.

9 If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son.

10 Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son.

11 And this is the testimony that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

We are almost at the end of this series on 1 John and now we start to get into some passages that are not too easy to interpret.

This passage in particular is one in question especially the water and blood section.

There are a number of different interpretations as to what the water & blood mean and in particular the water. Here are just three.

1. The water speaks of Jesus' birth and the blood speaks his death.
When John spoke with Nicodemus about how to see and enter the kingdom of God he said that unless someone is born of the water and the spirit he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:5)
2. The water and blood speak of the time when the soldier
John 19:34
But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water.
3. The water speaks of Jesus' baptism and the blood speaks of his death.
Mark 1:1-15
1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

2 As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way,
3 the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'"
4 John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.
5 And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.
6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey.
7 And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.
8 I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."
9 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.
10 And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.
11 And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."
12 The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.
13 And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him.
14 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God,
15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

For me personally I prefer this last interpretation because not only was Jesus baptized in water by John but the spirit was also present testifying that this was indeed God's son in whom God was well pleased.

What also appeals to me about this interpretation is that the baptism in water began Jesus' ministry and the blood completed Jesus' ministry with the Holy Spirit leading him from beginning to end.

So, let's now diverge slightly from our text and talk about baptism.

I felt moved by the Holy Spirit a couple of weeks ago to mention baptism as being one of the two ordinances that Jesus left for us to follow, the other being communion.

What I didn't know was that someone in this church was discussing with someone else in this church the need to be baptised in water. I heard about this after the meeting had finished and thought that I would like to speak on further on this topic a later stage. Well that stage is here only two weeks later.

Now for those who have already been baptised you might be saying “been there done that” - “what am I going to get of this”.

For you there will be a temptation to turn off at this point. Can I encourage you not to turn off?

My reasoning is this and once again I'll ask a question that just requires you to think about the answer, not actually tell me the answer.

What is the mission that Jesus has left you as an individual and for that matter what he also left me?

I'm sure that the great commission more than likely came to your mind or at least I hope it did and here is the great commission.

Matthew 28:18-20

18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Interesting that it is called a commission and not a mission. That's because we fulfil the mission together because Jesus said to “them” and in cooperation with Jesus because he said I am with you always, to the end of the age and it is also his authority over everything in heaven and earth that guarantees that we will make disciples.

Our commission is to make disciples by teaching them and by baptizing them.

I want to commend the person who was encouraging that other person to be baptised - you are a disciple who is willing to disciple, keep up the good work.

Now a disciple is simply one who is teachable. Are you teachable or do you know it all. Can you learn from many different situations that God places you in your life and also from many different people?

A disciple is willing to learn, they are also willing to obey and they are willing to live a disciplined life as they follow Jesus for the whole of their lives, not just when things are going well.

It is too easy to for us to think that being a disciple more for those who don't know Jesus and not for us. I would say that it is both us and them that need to be continually disciplined. It is from beginning to end.

So if you are a disciple and have not been baptised then now is the time. There is no need to wait until you feel worthy. By knowing Jesus as Lord he has already made you worthy.

Why get baptised?

1. Jesus tells us to
2. Jesus did himself as an example for us to follow even though he didn't have to
3. It releases ministry in your life as it did in Jesus' life
4. It is a declaration that you are willing to publicly identify yourself with Jesus
5. It is a way of identifying yourself with Jesus' body the church
6. It is a way of celebrating the dying of our old self and being raised to new life in Jesus

Romans 6:3-5

3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

Colossians 2:12

Having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Now a few practical considerations regarding baptism

If you have been christened as a baby, this is not the same as believer's baptism. Jesus was dedicated or presented to the Lord as a child - but he was baptised as an adult. For baptism to take place we must have first experienced new life in Jesus - we must be believers.

It needs to be by full immersion in water to carry the full symbolism of dying, being buried and then being raised to new life. Jesus also came up out of the water when he was baptised.

Any believer can baptise any other believer. It does not need to be done by a pastor or a priest as all believers are priests. So if someone close to you wishes to be baptised and you are a believer, you can have the honour of baptising that person.

You cannot baptise yourself, if you could Jesus would have done it.

It is good to be baptised with other people present as Jesus did in the Jordon River with witnesses present who saw the spirit descend on him as a dove and heard God's commendation of him.

If you would like to get baptised soon please let me know and we will arrange for a place to do this. We will do everything we can to make it a memorable experience for you and not one that will embarrass you in any way.

Now, let's finish off with the last couple of verses from the 1 John passage.

1 John 5:9-12

9 If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son.

10 Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son.

11 And this is the testimony that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

John wrote this letter to encourage the believers who must have been deeply questioning their salvation. The Gnostics were saying that they had to be initiated into a higher form of knowledge or enlightenment to know this assurance and they were speaking of a Jesus as someone very different to the person they had first believed.

John is assuring them that Jesus lived and died and that whoever believes in the son of God has the testimony within them. And guess what this testimony is: ETERNAL LIFE. If you know that you have eternal life, then you have the testimony within yourself that you are a believer.

This dawned in me for the first time when I was 19 and was only a brand new believer. I was in my bedroom reading John 3:16 and got to the part where whoever believes HAS eternal life. The revelation flooded my mind with an incredible sense of security in Jesus and an overwhelming sense of joy that I let out this huge YES!!!!

What got me was the sense that I was living in eternal life right then and there. That it wasn't something I would get when I die.

Do you know that you HAVE eternal life or do you one day HOPE that you may get it?

The testimony of the believer is one whereby that they know that they know they HAVE eternal life because whoever has the Son has life and whoever does not have the son does not have life.

John is in essence saying to these believers “relax in Jesus” don’t let anyone upset your faith in him. Jesus is the Christ and he has you in the palm of his hand and will never let you go.

Let’s pray