

A Word from Our Preaching Pastor:
Sunday, March 15, 2009

Baptized into Him

Romans 6:3-6 says,

³ Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin

It's a special day at Rockport whenever we get to begin our worship service with the celebration of baptism. I suppose that makes this a very special day since we are planning to baptize four who are professing their faith this morning.

But what is baptism for the Christian? Paul indicates here that baptism pictures in a physical way, this marvelous spiritual reality that takes hold of the Christian when he or she is saved by grace through faith in Christ. Notice he says in v 3 that we were "*baptized into Christ's death,*" and in v 4 "*buried with Him*" and then raised with Him to "*newness of life.*" Paul is not simply giving an illustration here. He is saying that spiritually these things have actually happened to us who are in Christ. Because we are "*united to Christ*" by faith, all He has done now counts for us as if we ourselves had done it. In Him we have "*been crucified*" so that our old self – the sinful self – no longer reigns. We have been "*raised from the dead*" so that sin can no longer hold us. We have been "*seated with Christ in heavenly places*" (Eph 2:6) so that death, hell, sin and the grave no longer have a claim to us. We are free to "*walk in newness of life!*" That's what baptism represents to the Christian – this new reality we have entered by faith in Christ! A new life in Him where we have been set free from sin's power to live to the praise of His glorious grace! *No wonder we celebrate!*

By His Grace and for His glory!

Pastor Scott!