



Cleansed and Fed: The Sacramental Life God Has Poured His Love Upon Us

BAPTISM SANCTIFIES

“I don’t know what you were doing outside this afternoon, but you’re covered in dirt, and you have to be at work in half an hour! Go take a shower!”

What’s the dual purpose of washing?

- 1) Cleans the dirt from you.
- 2) Makes you ready for work.

Last time’s lesson was about the first purpose. Today’s lesson is about this second purpose.

Romans 3:23-24

²³ For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

What does it mean to be *justified*? **God declares sinners “not guilty” for Jesus’ sake. A DECLARATION by GOD.**

John 17:17

[Jesus said,] Sanctify¹ them by the truth; your word is truth.

What does it mean to be *sanctified*? **God sets believers apart to live holy lives. A PROCESS in US**

John 15:5

⁵ [Jesus said,] I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Evaluate: Once God gives you saving faith in Jesus, it’s up to you to put your faith into action and live a good life.

We can and do cooperate with God in our new life, but apart from God’s continuing rescue and forgiveness delivered to us in his means of grace, we will go nowhere. If sanctification is all up to me I can do nothing. (like a branch lying on the ground)

¹ Greek *hagiazō* (set apart for sacred use or make holy) – Footnote taken from NIV 1984

Who died on the cross and rose from the dead?

The point of this section – The easy answer is: Jesus.

But it is also correct for a baptized believer to say, “me!”

Acts 3:15

[Peter said,] “You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.”

What does Jesus’ death and resurrection mean for us?

Forgiveness, life, salvation – in short, everything.

Romans 6:3-6

³ Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, **we too may live a new life.**

⁵ If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. ⁶ For we know that **our old self was crucified** with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, **that we should no longer be slaves to sin** –

Underline key phrases above: what does it mean that you have died and risen with Jesus?

When it comes to “living a new life,” my sinful nature says I *can’t*. I can’t deal with my cross, my trouble, God’s high expectations, so why try? Here is God saying that in Baptism you have a new life, and you may live it.

Baptism: Fourth (from Luther’s Small Catechism)

Baptism means that the old Adam (a.k.a. “old sinful nature”) in us should be **drowned** by daily **contrition** and repentance, and that all its evil deeds and desires be put to **death**. It also means that a new person should daily **arise** to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Underline words in the paragraph above that strike you as especially vivid or “extreme.” Why would Luther use such “extreme” language to discuss Baptism’s meaning in our daily life?

God doesn’t say that we are pretty good people who just need a few tweaks here and there. He uses extreme language because of the real and continuing presence and effects of our sinful nature. We can’t reform it or fix it or ignore it and expect anything good to come. It must die! All of this comes not from Luther, but from Romans 6.

What’s contrition? **The realization of what my sin means and where it leads. Fear, terror.**

Colossians 2:12; 3:3

¹²[You have] been buried with him in baptism and raised with him...³For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

In what sense is your Christian life *hidden* with Christ in God?

Holy but can't see it. Forgiven but can't see it. Going to heaven but can't see it. But it's all there in your Baptism.

How does this truth help you deal with trouble in your life?

When you have pain, it feels like you're being punished. Baptism says otherwise. When it looks like all is lost, Baptism says otherwise. Etc.

How does this truth teach you to look at your life of sanctification?

Looks like I'm constantly failing. Baptism says otherwise. Looks like my work is useless, unimportant, in vain. Baptism says otherwise.

"My baptism helps me be a better person." Explain.

In Christ, I'm no longer shackled by guilt, driven by fear. Baptism is God's way of connecting me to the death and resurrection of Jesus. Your sinful nature was crucified with Jesus. Picture Jesus raised from the dead, appearing to his disciples, weight of sin off of his shoulders. That's you. New life, clean slate, fresh start each day. "I can do what God wants me to do!"

Sing or say the following hymn stanza together:

Baptized into your name most holy,
O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
I claim a place, though weak and lowly,
Among your saints, your chosen host,
Buried with Christ and dead to sin.
Your Spirit now shall live within.

*Johann J. Rambach (1693-1735)
Christian Worship, Hymn 294, s.1*

Saint and Sinner

1 Peter 2:9

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a **holy** nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Evaluate: Nobody's perfect. **Shocking answer: I am!**

Romans 7:18

¹⁸ I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

Evaluate: Everybody has a little bit of good in them. **Shocking answer: No!**

We are saints and sinners at the same time. Not half and half. 100% and 100%

Romans 7:22-23

²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

What is life like for someone who is both a saint and a sinner at the same time?
War.

What potential does this have for causing confusion?
Which side am I on? Who am I? Where do I stand with God?

Galatians 3:26-27

²⁶ You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

What part does your baptism play in settling any confusion about who you are and where you stand with God?

Your Baptism settles the debate about who you are: SAINT!

Evaluate: Living a godly life is like going on a diet. Just make a decision to cut down on sinful behavior. It's all about will power.

Horrible illustration, and it's easy to fall into this thinking. But see Ro. 7 above. This isn't about just trying harder. This is war!

Sing or say the hymn stanza:

My loving Father, there you took me
To be henceforth your child and heir.
My faithful Savior, there you let me
The fruit of all your sorrows share.
O Holy Spirit, comfort me
When threatening clouds around I see.

Hymn 294, s.2

A Clean Conscience

Psalm 38:4

My guilt has overwhelmed me
like a burden too heavy to bear.

How can you tell if you have a guilty conscience? What are some symptoms to look for?

More difficult to recognize than we may think. Watch for symptoms: dishing out guilt on others (guilt trips), unwillingness to serve, despair (all is lost), arrogance (let's pretend I can handle everything without God's help). Whether we recognize it or not, guilt is a heavy weight. (Ps 38)

Matthew 5:6

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

Who is doing the filling in this verse? How does this filling happen?

Passive verb: God. Means of grace.

What part does a clean conscience play in our life of sanctification?

Guilty conscience inevitably works the wrong motivation. Since sanctification is being set apart in heart, mind, will, and deed, there can be no sanctification without a clean conscience. We can make it look like we're sanctified on our own, but only a clean conscience from God makes it truly so.

"Should the cabin experience a change in pressure, oxygen masks will drop from above you. Those of you traveling with children should first place a mask over your own face and then help your children."

Why put a mask over your own face before helping your children? What truth can you draw for your life of sanctification?

Can't be any good to others if you don't take care of yourself. "I don't have time for contrition and repentance, because I'm too busy serving others" - May seem like a noble approach, but the idea that we can serve well without God's grace is a hellish lie.

Sing or say the hymn stanza:

My faithful God, you fail me never;
Your promise surely will endure.
Oh, cast me not away forever
If words and deeds become impure.
Have mercy when I come defiled;
Forgive, lift up, restore your child.

Hymn 294, s.3

Getting Dressed

Ephesians 4:22-24

²² You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³ to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Confessing sin and trusting God for forgiveness are compared to changing out of old clothes and putting on new ones. The point of this comparison is:

- A. It's up to you to turn your life around each day.
(Why not? Vine / branches)
- B. Getting rid of sin is as easy as getting dressed in the morning.
(Why not? Romans 7. Battle! Carry Cross! Deny self! No battle more fierce, more difficult than this one!)
- C. People who own clothes that are clean and new will want to wear them. **C. is the correct answer. In your baptism, God has given you everything you need for your marriage, your vocation, your life under the cross.**

What are some sources other than the Gospel where we sometimes turn to find motivation and power for godly living? How well do they work?

Guilt. Will power. What other people think of us. / Limited help or none at all.

What makes Baptism unlike any of those other sources of motivation?

Comes from outside of us as a gift. Comes from God. Always there for us. Continuing status.

You know better than anyone else what's currently going on in your life. Jot down something about Baptism that you would like to take home and use.

Today's closing prayer... Sing or say this hymn stanza:

All that I am and love most dearly -
Receive it all, O Lord, from me.
Let me confess my faith sincerely
And help me your own child to be!
Let nothing that I am or own
Serve any will but yours alone.

Christian Worship, Hymn 294, s.4