



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

LESSON 3: BAPTISM DESERVES OUR CAREFUL ATTENTION

**Part A:
Paying Attention to Baptism... In our personal life**

**Part B:
Paying Attention to Baptism... In our congregational life**

Read the Lord's specifications for Israel's place of worship while traveling in the desert.

Exodus 30:17-21 - Read in your Bible

Why did God order the construction of a large bronze basin for his people's place of worship? What was he teaching his people?

Last Week

Colossians 2:16-17 - *Do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.*

Hebrews 10:1 - *The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming – not the realities themselves.*

We are going to take a look at a couple over-the-top baptismal fonts.

Comment on this: *"I want to be baptized in a font like that!" So she arranged to be baptized there, even though she had already been baptized.*

What rules does God give New Testament believers concerning the art, architecture, and symbolism present in our places of worship?

Why do we pay careful attention to the art and architecture of our places of worship?

What are some ways churches can use art, architecture, and symbolism to help people pay careful attention to God's gift of Baptism? (Font, Music, Art, Ceremony)

Say the following hymn stanza together:

Here stands the font before our eyes,
Telling how God did receive us.
Th'altar recalls Christ's sacrifice
And what the sacrament gives us,
Here sound the Scriptures that proclaim
Christ yesterday, today, the same,
And evermore, our Redeemer.

Hymn 856, s.4

Baptism: Fourth (from Luther's Small Catechism)

Baptism means that the old Adam 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.

Review: What is contrition? What is repentance?

Matthew 16:19 – *[Jesus said to his disciples,] “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*

John 20:22-23 – *[Jesus] breathed on [his disciples] and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”*

How does God help a contrite and repentant sinner find relief? In what sense is the use of the keys really a return to Baptism?

Discuss these three ways God invites each of us to relive our baptism.

- Confession and absolution before God
- Confession and absolution before a fellow Christian
- Confession and absolution before your pastor

As a closing prayer, say the following hymn stanza together:

Grant then, O God, your will be done,
That, when the church bells are ringing,
Many in saving faith may come
Where Christ his message is bringing:
“I know my own; my own know me.
You, not the world, my face shall see.
My peace I leave with you always.”

Hymn 856, s.5

Current Events – Off-Topic, but Worth Discussing

#1 – What’s a Funeral About?

“For humanists, the purpose of a funeral is to memorialize life. For Catholics, the point is to pray for the deceased’s soul — and at the subsequent reception, to reminisce. For some transgender activists, the point is apparently to create a political spectacle to embarrass your enemies.”

Kearns, Madeleine. “*Sacrilege in the Cathedral*” National Review, 2/20/2024

So, for Lutherans, what is the purpose of a funeral?

Primary Purpose

Secondary Purposes

#2 – Alabama Ruling against an IVF Clinic

The material facts of the case:

“The three couples who brought the Alabama case concerning an in vitro fertilization clinic are not, as anyone casually following the news or hearing of President Biden’s statement might think, pro-life activists hostile to IVF. They wanted to have children via IVF. But a patient wandered into the facility where the clinic stored embryos and dropped several of them. The parents sued the clinic for negligence under the state’s wrongful-death statute. The state supreme court ruled that the embryos fell within the statute.”

Editors, “*What the Alabama IVF Ruling Was Actually About*” National Review, 2/23/2024

Commentary from Christian Life Resources:

Hans Christian Anderson’s fable of the Emperor’s New Clothes concludes with a child stating the obvious – “he is naked.” That is what the Alabama State Supreme Court did on Friday, February 16, 2024, when it ruled that frozen embryos obtained by means of IVF are children and not property. A person is a person, no matter how small, conceived, or wanted.

For years, people have turned a blind eye to the IVF industry. Parents, grandparents, and friends praise the blessing of children born through IVF and never speak of those children who were destroyed in this quest for a child. Countless human lives, conceived in a Petri dish, nurtured to grow, and then sorted to select those to implant, freeze, or destroy.

The IVF industry, much like the abortion industry, thrives on obfuscation. Barbara Collura, CEO of RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association, said, “This ruling is stating that a fertilized egg, which is a clump of cells, is now a person. It really puts into question the practice of IVF.”

With dehumanizing terminology like “fertilized egg” and “a clump of cells,” Collura and those of her ilk attempt to obscure the truth. Fertilization, whether within a woman’s fallopian tube or in a Petri dish, creates a human life.

That “fertilized egg” and those “clumps of cells” are not pieces of a plant or animal. They are growing, and left to grow, will progress through the stages of life as we have. They do not become something else. Destroyed as a microscopic “clump of cells,” aborted as a larger “clump of cells,” or killed at birth as an even larger “clump of cells” always means the same thing – there was human life, and now it is dead...

The Scriptures also talk about how people will portray evil as a good thing and good as an evil thing (Isaiah 5:20).

We commend the Alabama Supreme Court for declaring the truth so clear a child could see it. To defend the current practices of abortion and IVF demands that we admit we want to defy God and kill some lives and then figure out how to explain that to life’s Creator.

“*Calling Out the Emperor*” Christian Life Resources, accessed 2/23/2024