United to Christ

Baptism pictures our union with Christ in His death and resurrection. To be united with Christ is to be one with Him—

**1. In His *Death to Sin***

Romans 6:3-6

(Baptism in water is the outward sign of what Jesus does when He baptizes us in the Spirit—Matthew 3:11).

**2. In His *Life for God***

Romans 6:8-11

**3. In His *Body, the Church***

1 Corinthians 12:12-13

**4. In His *Heavenly Exaltation***

Ephesians 2:4-7

**How to be united to Christ—*through faith***

Ephesians 2:8-9

**For Private Meditation or Family Discussion**

1. How did the Lord speak to you through the message? Did He put His finger on any habits or attitudes that you need to change? Did He encourage you regarding some difficulty, move you to undertake some new challenge, or open your heart to some truth you hadn’t seen before?

2. In the New Testament, baptism was by immersion.

* The Greek word *baptizō* means to dip or immerse.
* Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River. After the Lord was baptized, He *“came up immediately from the water”* (Matthew 3:13-16).
* Later John the Baptist transferred his place of ministry from Bethany to *“Aenon near Salem, because there was much water there”* (John 3:23)—which was hardly necessary if a few drops on top of the head were sufficient.
* When Philip baptized the Ethiopian eunuch out in the desert, they didn’t pour a little water out of a water skin. They *“came to some water”* (Acts 8:36); *“they both went down into the water”* (v. 38); *“they came up out of the water”* (v. 39).

3. In the New Testament, baptism followed a profession of faith.

* Lydia was baptized after *“the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul”* (Acts 16:14-15).
* The whole household of the Philippian jailor was baptized (Acts 16:31-34). Some have contended that the household must have included infants, so that infant baptism is scriptural. However, the text is clear that the jailor *“believed in God with his whole household.”* Therefore, any children present must have been old enough to give a confession of faith in Christ.
* In the Old Testament, baby boys were circumcised as a sign that they belonged to the covenant family of Abraham (Genesis 16:9-12). Since baptism is the initiation ritual for Christ’s new covenant, some have argued that infants should be baptized as a sign that they are part of the new covenant family. However, babies entered Abraham’s covenant family by physical birth. We enter the new covenant family by spiritual birth (John 3:1-16). Therefore, the new covenant initiation ritual logically follows spiritual birth and faith in Christ.