

BAPTISM AS A WHOLE CULTURE

Peter Hay, Presbytery Word for week commencing Sunday 02 November 2025
Transcription of recording, slightly edited

It is wonderful to be together. We are giving thanks to the Lord for His word and rejoicing in our participation in the word and in our fellowship in the word. These events are an amazing time of fellowship and preparation and festival. I know plenty of households have been preparing, getting their houses ready - cooking food; then preparing for our worship festival tomorrow and learning the songs. We have been singing the songs in our house and have been really labouring on the line of the song, 'Founded on the rock, ooh...'. It has become a bit of an anthem for us - almost like a greeting for us as we have enjoyed that song. That is a little beauty that we give thanks to the Kaa family for. We are looking forward to our fellowship in the word as we hear it; as we consider it together in our houses; as we sing it to one another; and as we continue to walk in it.

In this session today, I am going to be focusing on baptism. I will be detailing what Lach has articulated in his typically clear and succinct manner - the amazing understanding of baptism as a whole culture. Over the course of this year, the Lord has been addressing our understanding of baptism, and we have been applying ourselves as we have been labouring to understand the gospel of God. Today we are going to further upgrade our understanding of baptism. We will be considering the response that a son of God makes to abide in God as they are baptised through discipleship. That is what we are to be doing, but we are also to be those who are disciples and are ourselves being immersed into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

In his first epistle, the apostle John signalled two realities that are necessary for obtaining the blessing of being born of God and made in the image and likeness of God. That happens in its fullness on the day of resurrection and when we receive the promise of the Spirit. That is the blessing of Abraham. The apostle John signalled two realities that belong to obtaining this blessing. He said in 1 John chapter 4 verse 15, 'Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God [and we know that that is necessary for salvation], God abides in him and he in God.' 'God abides

in him and he abides in God.' Both these elements are necessary for obtaining the blessing of the promise of the Spirit.

God abiding in us is what we receive from God's initiative toward us. This is everything that is proceeding from the fellowship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit that belongs to Their covenant initiative as a promise that is coming to us. That is God abiding in us. It is what we have received when we are made alive from the death of sin. That is the first element. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit then dwell in our hearts. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit, making our bodies a temple of the Holy Spirit. When that happens (when we receive the Holy Spirit, sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise), it is ratifying that we belong to God the Father, and it grants to us a heavenly body. When we talk about a 'heavenly body', we are talking about a dwelling place in the heavenly city. That is what we receive when we are sealed with the Holy Spirit. We are born as a new creation son of God - the unique seed of our sonship. Name and life are germinated on the ground of our spirit. We are then brought by Christ to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, 'to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the Firstborn who are registered in heaven'. All that is God's initiative towards us. That is God abiding in you. God is abiding in us, and we belong to Him.

However, this tremendous birthright is insufficient for salvation. That is an amazing point: made alive from the dead; Father, Son and Holy Spirit dwelling in us; temple of the Holy Spirit with a heavenly body; born again of the Seed of the divine nature; and then gathered to Mount Zion as part of the assembly of the firstborn. That is a birthright - but in and of itself it is insufficient for salvation. That delivers to a person (or makes a person) a germinated seed or a new plant. Christ's parable of the sower and the grounds teaches us that if we do not live in a particular way or walk in a particular way, that seed can die. We can lose that birthright. Another way of saying it is that we will not lay hold of the blessing that belongs to the promise of the Spirit.

The birthright is insufficient for salvation. We must abide in God to obtain our salvation. We do need to be born of God; we do need to be made alive; we do need to be brought to Mount Zion; we do need to be sealed with the Holy Spirit. There is another response that we are to make that belongs to laying hold of that birthright as a blessing. Here is a key point: *we do not abide in God simply by association*. You are not abiding in God because you are here today. It helps; and you do need to hear the word; but your association in a community is not abiding in God. Abiding in God is the implication of baptism into the name of the Father, the name of the Son and the name of the Holy Spirit. That is another key point: *abiding in God is an implication of immersion or baptism into the name of the Father, the name of the Son and the name of the Holy Spirit*.

It is important for us to register that this immersion is not merely an action of being baptised by water. You are not immersed into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit simply because you have gone into water. We as a church (and as a broader church) have spent a lot of time focusing on the need to get people wet as if that assures them of their salvation. I am telling you now, you can get dunked as often as you like, and if you do not walk in the culture of what it means to be immersed in the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit, it will profit you nothing. In the same way, the words spoken over a person when they get immersed in the water profits nothing. You are not going to heaven because you were baptised in water and someone said over you, 'I baptise you into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.' That does not mean that baptism in water is not important; but it does mean that we need to understand it in relation to the need to be immersed in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. That is to highlight that we are not saying that that is the other formula. There is *no* formula that is the ticket to salvation when somebody is being baptised in water.

What is baptism into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit? It is a whole culture of living and walking that needs to be learnt from Christ. It is a whole culture of living and walking that needs to be learnt from Christ through the ministry of His messengers. This is what Jesus said. This is the great commission that Lachlan

was referring to in Matthew 28 verses 18 to 20. It says, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...' Not on *behalf of them* - *into* those People - *into* the Person of the Father, *into* the Person of the Son, *into* the Person of the Holy Spirit. These are the Ones in whom we are to abide. They have initiated towards us, bringing us to birth. That is God abiding in us. Baptism is immersion into the Ones in whom we are to abide. That is God abiding in us and us abiding in God. You have to make disciples. By what means? By baptism. What does that baptism look like? It looks like *teaching* them. No water. '... teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' That is pretty straightforward - pretty clear in terms of Christ's instruction. We need to understand what that looks like and what it means. What are the implications of being baptised into the Person of the Father, the Person of the Son and the Person of the Holy Spirit?

Those in whom God abides, and who then abide in God are disciples. Those in whom God abides and who abide in God, this is what it means to be a disciple. They are made disciples because messengers baptise them into the name or the Person of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and they are being taught by these messengers to observe all things that Christ has commanded them. Remember this is the word of the Father because Jesus has received everything that the Father is saying and that is the word of the Father being proclaimed by the Son through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The first action of baptising it is not getting your board shorts on and your surf blouse or vest or whatever you wear. The first action of baptising involves messengers of Christ establishing a specific kind of relationship with someone. I find that an absolutely beautiful point, that baptism begins with relationship. Now to establish this relationship, as one who is doing the baptising, a person who baptises others must meet some basic qualifications. We are not saying that any person can go and baptise. You could if you like. You can dunk as many people as you want. But the baptism that is going to deliver a person to

abiding in God does require... (and it is important who does the baptising) ...some qualifications that are needed. Those qualifications are not a theology degree. It is not even specific giftedness. The most basic qualification for someone to be a baptiser of others is that they are themselves the friend of Christ. The most basic qualification for someone to baptise others is that they are a friend of Christ. A friend of Christ: what does that mean? A friend of Christ is a slave who knows and demonstrates the culture of Christ and the Father's house. That is what a friend is. They are a slave who knows and demonstrates the culture of Christ and the Father's house, and they belong to the fellowship of a presbytery whose fellowship is with the Father and the Son. Can you see, you would need to be connected to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit to be able to immerse someone into that fellowship? We are not saying that presbyters are the ones who need to baptise. We are saying anybody, who is connected to that fellowship (because they are a worthy house and they are emerging as a firstfruit) has this capacity. A firstfruit looks like a person in whom the word has taken root and is bearing fruit and is growing and is able to be shared with others. It is connection to a relational community and culture.

This is what Jesus said about friendship with Him. This is John 15 verses 14 to 15. It says, 'You are My friends if you do whatever I am command you.' That would be a slave - totally committed to obeying the commands of Christ. 'You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you slaves [or servants], for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.' Now connect that with what Jesus said in the great commission — '...teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you.' Can you see that the person who is doing the baptising is the friend of Christ because they are committed to slave hood? They are not just doing it by *command*; they are doing it now because they are *birthed* of it and they know and carry the culture of it. That is the basis of the relationship.

Those who make disciples are joining their hearers to Christ. This is another big point and

another clarification on baptism. Those who make disciples are joining their hearers to Christ because their hearers are first joined to *them* - the people. The example of this is Paul and Silas, but Paul in particular. His example is very helpful in understanding this principle of a friend of Christ who is then able to establish a relationship with someone that is joining them to the fellowship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is Acts chapter 17 verses 2 to 4. 'Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and demonstrating...' Paul is a messenger. He is speaking the words of Christ from the Scriptures by the capacity of the Holy Spirit. This is his messenger work. But the qualification of him as a messenger (someone who is teaching the commands of Christ) is that he is *demonstrating* something. It is not just the capacity to communicate the theology. Paul is embodying the culture. Literally, he said, 'I carry in my body the dying and the living of Jesus.' That is a friend of Christ - carrying this culture through demonstration. He is '...explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead.' The key point to get from this is that *the message of the promise of the Spirit is proclaiming the resurrection*. The resurrection is the hope of the gospel, and the word of that hope is what has been proclaimed to every hearer. It becomes the substance of their faith. That is what Paul said: 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for.' Paul is proclaiming the resurrection of Christ who is the substance of everybody else's resurrection. How is he doing that? He is doing it by *explaining* it and by *demonstrating* it. This is making disciples. He is explaining and demonstrating that Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead by saying, '“This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ [or you could say the first Man made in the image and likeness of God].” And some of them were persuaded... [Just note that the word is going to have a polarising effect.] ...some of them were persuaded; and a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, joined Paul and Silas.' They are hearing the word; they are believing it. This is God's initiative towards them to abide in them. What is the outcome of that? They join Paul and Silas.

This needs a little bit of explanation. This does not mean that they were baptised into the name of Paul. Okay, Paul said, 'Were you baptised into the name of Paul?' Of course not. Nor did they become Paul's groupie when Paul becomes the guru, and they just gravitate to Paul. Rather, they would join to a fellowship of which Paul was a part. Can you see that the way Luke has written this is very specific? He said they joined Paul *and* Silas. Who is doing the proclaiming? *Paul* is explaining and demonstrating. Who do they join? *Paul and Silas*. Can you see that the relationship is not joining a person to you personally; it is joining a hearer to the *fellowship* of which you belong.

Exemplifying this principle of being baptised (or immersed) into this fellowship, which is fundamental to then being able to understand what it means to be in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we note that the whole of the nation of Israel was baptised by God into Moses. That is a funny formula: 'I baptise you into the name of Moses.' That is not what it means. What is Paul talking about here? This is 1 Corinthians chapter 10 verses 1 to 5. It says, 'Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, all were baptised into Moses in the cloud and the sea, all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink.' He is saying 'the same as the food and drink that we are eating'. They are baptised into Moses; they ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink. There is a connection now between baptism and what you eat and drink. Baptism and the *agape* meal become very significant. '... For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.' The question would be: why were their bodies scattered in the wilderness? Because they would not obey the word of the Lord spoken through His servants, Moses and Aaron. They *did* get wet. They *did* participate in the *agape* meal, but in the end, the thing that cost them their salvation was their inability to be instructed - their inability to receive the word and be obedient rather than draw back in fear. It says they were strewn in the wilderness because

they grumbled and complained against Moses and Aaron.

What are we talking about when Paul said they were baptised into Moses? When the children of Israel passed through the Red Sea, Moses became to them more than just their deliverer. He did come down to Egypt, he did proclaim the gospel that brought this amazing deliverance of this company out of Egypt (which is a picture of the world), but once they were delivered, that was not their baptism. It says he delivered them out and then baptised them into Moses. Moses became to them more than just the word of their deliverance. He was now their messenger and their baptiser into Christ. He has proclaimed the word that brings the deliverance and the Lord God Himself baptises them (or gives them to Moses), so that Moses, through His instruction, can immerse them in the culture of Yahweh's own house. That is what baptism looks like.

In this regard, we can view Moses as being a type of the presbytery. In fact, Moses, through the work of his ministry, was the expression of all the four faces that belong to Christ's administration. That now does not reside in one person; it now resides in the fellowship of a presbytery. When God is immersing (or baptising) someone into Moses, we can liken that to being baptised or immersed into the fellowship of a presbytery.

God first baptises the hearer into the presbytery as He baptised Israel into Moses. The presbytery's work then is to baptise their hearers through discipleship into the name of the Father, the name of the Son and the name of the Holy Spirit. That is exactly what the great commission was. Baptise them this way, by teaching them everything that Christ has commanded. Even *baptizo*, the Greek word that is translated in this passage as 'were baptised', means they were baptised into Moses. The Greek theologian Spiros said that term means that they were *identified* with Moses. They are identified with Moses. In the Exodus from Egypt, the Israelites were identified with the work and purpose of Moses. Accordingly, this baptism included teaching and cultural training so that the nation was properly informed and connected to Yahweh as the family of God and as a kingdom of priests. Can you see that the fruit or the implication of baptism into

the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is establishment in a kingdom and the expression of priesthood. This is what happened when Moses brought them to Mount Sinai and delivered to them the Law. The law was defining a whole culture that belonged to Yahweh's house.

Likewise, in the New Covenant, messengers are to teach the implications of immersion in the Father, in the Son and in the Holy Spirit. As disciples walk in the light of this word on the pathway of salvation that Christ pioneered for them, they are abiding in God and are progressively being made into His image and likeness. What is delivered to them as a birthright is then progressively becoming blessing for them.

What we are going to do is have a look at what immersion into the Person of the Father looks like, what immersion into the Person of the Son and into the Person of the Holy Spirit looks like as those who are being disciplined by presbyteries in the right hand of Christ. That should be our testimony as those who are ourselves disciples. Let us have look at baptism into the Person of the Father first.

Having been born of God... (which is the initiative of God towards us) ...and brought to the city of God by Christ... (I am going to make a distinction in a moment between being brought to Mount Zion and the assembly of the Firstborn and being His bride. Both are called the 'church', but not everyone who comes to Mount Zion progresses to be part of the bride. They are not synonymous.) ...Having been born of God and brought to the city of God by Christ, the believer is then immersed by Christ into the Person of the Father. Jesus described this action in John chapter 14 verse 6. He said, 'I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.' The One who is doing the immersing or bringing us to the Father (the name of the Father, the Person of the Father) is Christ. How does He do this? Christ brings a believer to the Father by joining them to Abraham, so that Abraham becomes their father and he belongs to their family. Any child of Abraham is also a child of God the Father. So the adoption (the implication of abiding in God as part of the adoption) is that you are delivered to the family of Abraham. We know this because Paul said in

Galatians chapter 3 verse 29, 'If you are Christs... [You are Christ's not firstly by immersion into the Person of the Son. You are Christ's when you receive the seed of your sonship which has come from the sheaf of firstfruits. When you receive that seed, you are not independent from the sheaf; you are in the sheaf. That is why Christ can bring you to the Father.] '... If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs [an heir is someone who is receiving something promised by the Father] according to the promise.'

As a believer walks by faith in obedience to the word of Christ's messengers that is ministered by the Spirit (this is the promise - heirs of the promise), they receive the discipline and the instruction of the Father. This is what Christ is delivering us to. This is what it means to be a child of Abraham. Remember, the Lord came and revealed His purpose to Abraham because He said, 'I know that Abraham will train up his children after him.'

If you have been immersed into the name of the Father, it looks like your readiness and easiness to receive the discipline and instruction of the Lord. As they grow up as a son, they glorify the Father by doing the works of obedience that Christ learned and finished for them through the things which He suffered. These are sons. A person who is engaged in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, these are sons who are led by the Spirit. 'Everybody who is led by the Spirit, these are the sons of God.'

Now the amazing point is that if you have been born of God, that desire (that motive in you) is part of your nature now to follow the Spirit. That is part of your nature. It is your desire to follow the leading of the Spirit. Those who are led by the Spirit of God (He is the one who is pouring into your heart the sincere love for the brethren), they will also desire the sincere milk of the word, which is sound doctrine by which they can grow. A son of God being delivered to a household - they start immature and they are growing up as they receive the discipline and instruction of the Lord. That is them being led by the Spirit and desiring the sincere milk of the word by which they may grow. A person who desires the sincere milk of the word is a person who is committed to receiving sound doctrine which is teaching

you the culture of the Father's house. It is a person who is looking for that instruction, easy to receive it. They are not mature yet, but they are growing up.

A fundamental message (remember, messengers are immersing a person into this reality) that belongs to immersion in the name of the Father is the exhortation that speaks to a believer as to a son. Immersion into the name of the Father has to do with growing up as a son. It requires discipline and instruction. Here is this instruction that addresses us as sons. This is Hebrews 12 verses 5 to 8: 'My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged [That means, nor grow weary] when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the Lord loves, He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of Spirits and live?' That is the demeanour we have to the initiative of the Father toward us. The content of the Father's instruction is sound doctrine, but it is also delivering us to the process of chastening by which we are being brought to Him and by which we are bearing the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

Of course, the sufferings that are associated with chastening are painful. However, sons of God need to be reminded that through chastening they are growing to know the Father as they are being received by Him. Furthermore, they are bringing forth fruit unto eternal life. John said, 'To know the Father is eternal life.' That is the implication of immersion into the name of the Father. It has to do with starting immature and growing up through seasons of life; sowing and reaping to bear the peaceable fruit of righteousness as sons of God.

Baptism into the Son. Messengers of Christ explain to a son of God the need to be baptised into the Person of Christ. This is the initiative of the Father who immerses them into the Son and then makes them a member in particular of the body of Christ. Now again, I want to highlight

that this immersion into the Person of the Son is not water baptism. It is into Christ, the Person, and it is making them a member in particular of Christ's body. That is what this immersion is. This is 1 Corinthians 12 verses 13 to 18: 'For by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body - whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free - and we have all been made to drink into one Spirit....But now God [that is God the Father] has set the members, each one of them [or in particular], in the body just as He pleased.' This immersion into the Person of the Son has to do with your membership of the body of Christ, not just corporately, but as a member in particular. Your unique expression as a body member revealing Christ and revealing the Father by the capacity of one Spirit. That is immersion into the person of the Son.

Jesus Himself explained that it is the Father who immerses the son of God into the person of the Son and this is what He said in John chapter 6 verses 44 and 45: 'No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up [this is the Father who is delivering us to Christ] on the last day.' The hope of the gospel is the resurrection. Jesus is the substance of the resurrection. He is what we are to become. 'No one comes to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, "They shall be taught by God." [That is taught by God the Father.] Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.'

Immersion into the person of the Son is by receiving the instruction or the word of the Father that is delivering us to the Son. Coming to the Son means to be built on the Rock, to be built on the foundation Stone that Christ is. Depending on how we receive His word, it is either going to be a stumbling Stone and a Rock of offence, or it is going to be a precious Stone for us. The word is coming; it is bringing instruction to us; it is proclaiming to us the substance or the hope of the resurrection; but to have that, we have to be built on Christ.

The implication of baptism into the Son is that the believer continues to receive and to live by the word of the Father that is proclaimed through the ministry of Christ's messengers. The easiest way to explain the nature (or the implication) of

immersion into the Son is that we are receiving from the Son His *substance*. We are receiving from the Father our *identity* and the *word of our name* as the Son of God and we are receiving grace from Him to grow and be fruitful, but from the Son we are receiving (or partaking of) His substance - His Person. Jesus identified this word that has been proclaimed to us as a participation (or fellowship) in His body and blood as a member of His body. We are coming to Him as those who are hearing His word. That is the eating. The drinking is then a participation (or an obedience). His body and His blood - our participation in it - is that we are becoming the bread and the cup to one another as the body ministers to itself in love. This is the context of our priesthood. He is making us kings and priests to His God and Father. If you are immersed in the Son, the evidence of being immersed in the Son is that you are partaking of His substance, and you are being made a kingdom of priests; able to make offering; able to minister as the bread and the cup to one another. Can you see that that is what Melchisedek did when He brought out bread and wine to Abraham? That is what we are being joined to. That is the implication, if you like, of being a member in particular of His body.

Paul identified the failure to discern and embrace one's sanctified participation in the fellowship of Christ's offering as a member of His body as eating and drinking in an unworthy manner. How we partake of the word, and how we walk in it is either going to be worthy or unworthy. He said that if we eat and drink in an unworthy manner, it brings us under the judgement of God. That judgement looks like weariness or weakness. It then looks like sickness. Then it looks like falling asleep. That is the implication of not eating and drinking or as there are messengers looking to immerse you in the body to equip you for a participation as a priest, you are selectively engaging with that word. This means you are receiving it in an unworthy manner. It is not the bread of heaven for you. It is picking and choosing what belongs to you or what you agree with or do not agree with, and the evidence is weariness, sickness and falling asleep. Falling asleep means insensitivity to the initiative of the Spirit.

However, Jesus said that if a person eats His flesh and drinks His blood, He will raise them up on the last day. That means that you will receive literally from His physical body the substance of your spiritual body, both as an immortal and incorruptible body, and also the substance of your heavenly body which clothes your immortal incorruptible body so that you have a spiritual body. You have obtained the promise of the Spirit. Eat and drink His flesh as one immersed into His person.

The second implication of immersion into the Person of Christ has to do with coming forth from Christ through your engagement in the travail of Christ (which is His death, burial and resurrection) as His bride. The second element of immersion into the name of the Son is that you come forth as a bride. This is fantastic. You are already part of the church, but remember the church is a sifting ground. Some people are being sifted *in*, and some people are being sifted *out*. That is, they are either going to abide or not. If you are going to abide in Christ because of the way that you are receiving the word of Christ as it has been proclaimed to you, you will be established as part of the bride that is proceeding from Christ. You are now part of the articulation of the word - revealing Him. You are part of the community of the word. That is fantastic.

We are connected to His offering travail, as a member of His body, and we are then proceeding forth from His body as part of the corporate bride of Christ. In the fellowship of Christ's travail (which is our daily participation in His death, burial, and resurrection, taking up your cross daily as a disciple), we are being sanctified and cleansed by the washing of the water of the word, which is bringing regeneration to our humanity and reformation to our houses. It is the reformation of our houses, making them worthy as we are connected to other houses that is our mark of connection to a bride That is you - part of an elect lady. This word is the substance of your resurrection today. Are you getting the point that the hope is of your full resurrection. It is the word of that that is being proclaimed to you today as bread and wine. As you receive it and walk in it, what Jesus finished of your resurrection is your provision to walk and live today. You are progressively getting your spiritual body. It is a certainty. It is a guarantee. As you

journey with Him, not only are you receiving something, but you are also proceeding from Christ to reveal Him as His bride. That looks like restoration in your houses. These are houses that are being joined together as a network in submission to your Head, Christ. This is the fellowship of offering totally established and enabled in your household. This is immersion into the Person of the Son.

Now, of course, you cannot grow up as a son, and you cannot journey with Christ as part of His bride, unless you receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not a dispensation; it is not an additional extra; it is fundamental to abiding in God because He is the Spirit of fellowship. When you are baptised into the Person of the Holy Spirit by Christ Himself (remember John the Baptist said that Jesus will baptise you into the Spirit and with fire), you are receiving from the Holy Spirit Himself the sevenfold Spirit of God. That capacity of the seven spirits of God enables you to participate in the conversation that belongs to Their fellowship. That is abiding in God. You cannot abide in God without baptism in the Holy Spirit. You cannot. If you have not been baptised, you can if you want, but you have to let go of control. You have to, as one who has been born of God, desire to be led by the Spirit. That is the nature of the new creation.

When a person is baptised into the Holy Spirit, it will be indicated by the capacity to speak in tongues. The sevenfold Spirit of God enables a person to participate in the fellowship of the prayer meeting of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit with their brethren. This is the house of prayer now. It is also the same capacity that Jesus received as He journeyed and pioneered the pathway upon which we are being made in the image and likeness of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. That is the capacity of Eternal Spirit. We receive that same capacity to participate with Jesus in everything that belongs to growing up as a son of God, everything that belongs to the travail of the Son, and then everything that belongs to revealing the Father and the Son as temples of the Holy Spirit. You are made a temple of the Holy Spirit before you are baptised with the Holy Spirit. But when you do receive that capacity, you then become a revealer of the Father and the Son in the same way that the Holy

Spirit was a revealer of the Father and the Son when the Everlasting Covenant was initiated. That is an amazing participation that you and I have in proclaiming the gospel. This is revealing the gospel as part of the bride, but also as families who belong to the Father, to cultivate the divine nature of our children and those who are going to come into our houses. That is the work of a spiritual temple. Jesus explained this when He said, 'But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses [There is *power* and *witness*] to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' Act 1:8.

I have not spoken about baptism in water except to say something is *not* water. Do you need to be baptised in water? And the answer, of course, is 'Yes.' But the reason is not what we have previously understood or perhaps promoted. In these last couple of minutes, I want to explain why a person will be baptised in water. If baptism is immersion into the name or the Person of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit through discipleship, what is the purpose of *water* baptism? If baptism is immersion into the Person of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit through discipleship, what is the purpose of water baptism? Here is the key: *baptism by water is requested by a son of God in faith for (or to identify themselves with) discipleship*. It is not us identifying them by putting them in water. It is them saying, 'I want to be discipled under a presbytery and abide in God.' We need to teach that. We need to explain that. A person who is being baptised is saying, 'I want to be identified with that whole process. I am coming here to receive and to be immersed in this fellowship and to eat of that spiritual food and drink of that spiritual drink. I am coming to be one who abides in God.' Is that not what the Ethiopian did? Philip did not tell him to get into water. What did the Ethiopian do? He said, 'Look, there is water. What hinders me? I want to identify myself with that.'

Baptism by water marks a believer's commitment to be taught the commands of Christ and to walk in the light of the word that is ministered by His messengers. Through discipleship, they are established on the pathway of salvation that Christ pioneered for them on His offering and suffering journey. We see that the pathway of

salvation is the pathway of discipleship in the community of a local church under the instruction and care of a presbytery. For this reason, baptism by water happens under the hands of firstfruits messengers who are co-workers of Christ. They are sent by Christ to make disciples of those who receive and believe their message. When you are joined to this culture of instruction, you are able to give that instruction too. You are being prepared as a household that can proclaim the word and instruct others in the very same culture that you are immersed in because you are a friend of Christ. No longer just a slave, but one who knows the will and desire of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Praise the Lord.