

David Stein - Baptismal Discourse

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All of us are full of joy to be able to be here to witness any baptism. But the baptism today is particularly precious to us. Normally, I say I want to welcome new brethren in Christ, but when I look at Sister Judy, Sister Pam, we've known you for decades, and we've known your service to the brethren, your support. How lovely it is that you've made the decision to make a consecration. So now you are new to us in a way that you weren't before.

New brethren in Christ. Baptism is a symbol of consecration which both of these candidates have already made to the Lord. It is especially appropriate because our Lord Jesus himself, when beginning his ministry, was challenged by John the Baptist as to the necessity of his baptism. But Jesus answered and said in Matthew 3:15, Suffer it now, for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness. So he sent a pattern for his disciples using baptism as a symbol for the work that followed.

It became more pronounced after Jesus death. When the disciples were converted at Pentecost, they were baptized, and even more so a little bit later when, when 4,000 were baptized. Most, if not all of us today have already made that decision that each of you, Pam and Judy, have made, and for those of us that have made that decision, baptism or a baptismal service is a good opportunity for us to review our own consecration vows and to look back and to consider, do I still have the same determination, that same motivation of love, that same first love that brought me to the point of consecration to the Lord and subsequently to the point of baptism? The scriptures that I would like to share with you this morning are scriptures that are probably not new to you, certainly not new to all of us here.

They're familiar texts, but they are texts that we should constantly review in our minds to see if we're measuring up. The Lord speaks much about baptism, the disciples even more. But I think one of the clearest, simplest explanations of what consecration means is to be found in the words of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 16, verse 24. Then Jesus said unto his disciples, if any man would come after me, let him, and I'm going to enumerate these one, deny himself, and two, take up his cross, and three, follow me.

The first concept that is mentioned in Jesus formula of discipleship is self denial. When we think of consecration, a word that frequently we link to it is the word sacrifice, and when we think of the word sacrifice, we combine that with that word, our material possessions, sacrifice of money, sacrifice of home, sacrifice of our car, sacrifice of our body, maybe even immaterial possessions. Such as sacrifice of our time. But the emphasis that Jesus lays on this is of far greater importance and one that requires much more probing.

It is the sacrifice of your will. It is the determination that as you move not from this day forward, but but from the day of your consecration forward, from that day forward, that you have determined that your actions in life would not be so much determined by what you want to do or even by what you feel you should do, but they are determined by what you feel God wants you to do. Now the problem is, how do we know what God would have us do? We come to the prayer of consecration. In our individual lives and in our own words, we say the same thing that Jesus said when he offered his life.

Lo, I am come to do thy will, O my God. But the problem is, how do we know God's will? What determines God's will? The apostle deals with this question in probably the most familiar text of all

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about consecration. Romans, chapter 12, verses 1 and 2, verse 1.

He says, I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present in your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. But then he gives us the first step in the formula for understanding what God's will is. In the next verse, he says, there and be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by renewing your mind that you may prove what is good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Now, non conformity to this world does not mean that we need only to be not to conform to the evil patterns of the world. It also means we cannot be conformed even to those patterns which to our human minds may seem as good patterns.

It is not to be our determination of good, but is the seeking to find out what the Lord's determination of good is, that that becomes the criteria of our life. The Lord has given us four specific aids to help us determining what that will is. The first aid is prayer. When we come to the multitude of decisions that we face each day in our consecrated lives, the first thing we need to do is take it to the Lord and say, lord, I want to do your will. I'm just not certain of what your will is.

Therefore, give me the indications of what that will is. It's a beautiful prayer. It's a prayer of a consecrated heart. The prayer of a heart that really and truly wants to do and carry out what God wants. The second aid or assist that the Lord has given us is a very important one.

The Bible itself. From a constant and regular study of the Bible, both topically and verse by verse, we desire to become so familiar with the concepts of Scripture that these concepts become transferred to our mind and from our mind to our heart, and the transference of these scriptural concepts to our minds is what Paul is talking about when he writes there in that second verse about renewing the mind. This is a trading in our thoughts for God's thoughts. The Bible is a source book for God's thinking.

It does not lie particularly in the words of Scripture. It lies in the concepts of Scripture. Again, there are literally thousands of decisions we're forced to make each day, which in this 21st century world, they aren't exactly directed by Scripture texts. You know, for example, the Bible doesn't tell us how to drive a car. It doesn't tell us about how to handle ourselves in the current corporate world that we live in.

But the Bible in fact does tell us how to do those things. It doesn't tell those tell us these things by spelling out the specific words like driving a car. All right, here's the clutch, here's the turn, this way and that way. But no, what it gives is principles, and the single most important thing in our study of God's Word is the comprehension of God's principles.

If we're studying a doctrinal subject, doctrines show us the method by which God operates. The importance of doctrines is not only in the beliefs themselves, but it is through these beliefs comprehending the character of God and how he operates. The study of history as given in the Bible shows us how God has operated in the past, and the study of prophecy shows us how God will operate in the in the future. But in both of these, the important thing, much more than names and events, are the principles of God's operation.

What kind of God do we serve? And as we comprehend these motivational principles of God, we begin to renew our minds. In the Hebrew Scriptures, God has a standard of obedience. Now, this standard was the law that God gave to Moses and he gave to Israel. That standard is perfect.

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It is of divine origin. But in itself it does not represent the Christian mind. That standard of the law represents the highest ideal of the human mind. What God is seeking to develop in each of us is not the human mind, but the spiritual mind. The Apostle Paul, addressing the Corinthian Church, says, what man understands the things of man unless he has the spirit of man?

Then he says, who could understand the things of God unless he has the spirit of God? The difference in concept between the earthly and the heavenly is the difference between the Perfection of mankind on the earthly and the spiritual ideal of the heavenly, which rests on justice and love, is a difference between a life based upon preservation and a temporal life that is based upon the destruction of the flesh. The sacrifice of the flesh, the death of the flesh. Matthew 16:25 outlines this change of God's dealings and this renewal of mind. Jesus says, there.

And those in the world will look at this and scratch their heads. What does he mean by this? He says, for whosoever should save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it. This is the concept of renewing the mind.

To discover not only that which is just and righteous, that's a foundation and that's important. But to discover over and above and beyond what is just and righteousness. What would God have me do in the way of sacrificing? And this may involve not only the denial of our wills, but something else very dear to us, the denial of our own rights. Rights which by justice we have a perfect and legitimate claim to, but rights that we are also willing for the time being, to lay aside in the sacrifice for others, so that we might have an opportunity of enjoying spiritual life with Christ.

The second part of Jesus formula for consecration must have been somewhat confusing to his disciples. He said, one must take up his cross. Now, the disciples, living in the Roman Empire, as they did at that time, knew what crucifixion was, and they knew how the Romans used it as a form of execution. But Jesus had not yet borne the cross at the time he said this. He did not say, take up my cross, but instead take up his cross, his own cross.

The illusion here is that he is drawing to where the criminal had to pick up the cross and carry it to the death site, to the site of his execution, and it is this carrying of the cross that Jesus has in mind, this burden which is part of our sacrifice. He's using the cross as a symbol of deep sacrifice. Because certainly anyone in Roman Empire who was carrying across their own death was in a very bad place. But it's not bad for us because it represents a service to our Heavenly Father.

Even though it eventually leads to our death, nevertheless, it is a service of joy. Remember the set of Jesus. For the joy set before him. He endured the cross. There is one case where the apostle says, having done everything that he has done, that he had not yet resisted unto blood.

Here we have back to a reference to what our sacrifice unto death is all about. Paul at that point had not met the full standard of sacrifice that he saw yet before him. It is interesting in the Gospel of Luke that we find the same formula that we've been quoting from Jesus in Matthew, but there's a slight variation. The variation is the second element, where the Gospel of Matthew records Jesus as saying, take up his cross. Luke says, take up his cross daily.

He adds that time element, that this is something that must be done day after day for the rest of our consecrated life. It also adds the concept that taking up the cross was not, as it was with a criminal, a thing that took place on the last day of his life. We take up our cross at consecration, the first day of our spiritual life. Now let's go to the third element in Jesus formula. Follow me.

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Jesus, by his own example, demonstrated the prime picture of what a sacrificial life should be. He calls attention to it when he says to his disciples, the foxes have holes, the birds have nests, but the Son of Man has not where to lay his head. Jesus gave up the conveniences of life. He gave up the joys that are normal and proper for a human being. He did not enter into the joys of marriage.

He chose to live a life separately for the Lord. By the way, when we talk about living a life separately, we're invoking this idea of sanctification. What is sanctification? The setting apart for something special, and Jesus gave up not only his life, but his rights that he would have had as a normal human being in order to serve God.

We see this even in looking at such important spiritual elements that Jesus had as prayer. Now you say, how did Jesus give up prayer? Well, listen, remember, he sought a place of solitude. At one point he wanted to pray to the Heavenly Father, and the multitudes followed him, and he sacrificed even that spiritual privilege of prayer, foregoing it for a time because he had compassion for the multitudes.

This is the idea of sacrifice, of giving up even that which is good sometimes in order to be of service to others. The three elements that Jesus sets forth as the ideal for discipleship are elements that we do not meet. None of us meet those elements perfectly, but they are the ideal that we need to place before us. It is always helpful to have a highest ideal, recognizing that as we look at it, it's an ideal. It's not the rule that we're actually able to perfectly follow.

Again, that's why Jesus said, or the Apostle Paul said in First Corinthians 8:12. For if there first be a willing mind, it is accepted according that a man hath and not According to He hath not. I like taking this principle here and applying it another way. Each of us has a different set of skills that we bring to our service to the Heavenly Father, to our Lord Jesus, and to the brethren, and those skills vary.

Some brethren are very skilled, others not so much, and as we get older, we find out that some of those skills start to deteriorate a little bit. We no longer have the energy to do what we used to do. We no longer have the sharpness of mind. What does God require of us?

Again, going to this principle, God requires of us what we can give in our life. He never requires what you can't give. So don't feel guilty. Well, I can't do this or I can't do that. If you can't do it, God doesn't require it.

But whatever you have that God does require. So each of us need to take stock every day. Am I bringing everything that I have to the table of service to the Lord as part of my consecration?

Now, we had mentioned earlier that the concepts that govern God's dealings with Israel in the Jewish age and God's dealings with the Christian age are very different concepts. Perhaps this could be best illustrated by comparing the three requirements that we just looked at with God's requirements for natural Israel and by extension, for natural man. These are given in Micah 6, 8. He hath shown me, O man, what is good and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God. That statement in Micah is the highest ideal for the natural man.

It's an ideal, a requirement that will be laid upon every human being in the kingdom. But that statement was not meant for Christians, and to love, kindness and walk humbly with God certainly are required, but something more is required. That statement is replaced by the ideals that we read

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of Jesus in Matthew 16:24. Deny thyself, take up thy cross, and follow him.

To the natural man. He was required to do justly, and in doing justly, that meant he was to love his neighbor as himself. That he was not to put himself and his needs above the needs of others, but nor was he to put his needs below the need of others. They were on a par.

There was an equality there. That was the law of justice, the measure of justice. But in contrast, Jesus says to the Christian, I don't want you to just do justly, to merely stop there, but to deny yourself, to put yourself beneath others, to love your neighbor more than yourself. That's where Sacrifice comes in. Sacrifice goes over and above the requirements of a natural man.

To the natural man, he says, you are to love mercy. The natural man under the law was required by that law to do mercy. He was required to do justice. But there are hints in that law that there is a mercy beyond justice. These were not just part of a law, but part of God's law to Jesus, to the Christian, he says, take up your cross.

Taking up the cross means to identify your experiences, the common experiences of mankind, and that means that when we do that, we're doing more than just loving mercy. We are doing mercy. Mercy becomes an actual part of our life. The Jew in the book of Micah was told to walk humbly with his God.

He was told to follow the example and lead that God had given him. God gave that lead in the law given to Moses. That was God's statement of what God demanded and expected of men. But Jesus says, more than just walking humbly with God, follow me. Jesus in his life was setting a pattern that went above and over the law.

He was setting a pattern that went into the depth of giving up things that the law never required man to give up, including the giving up of life itself. So we might say that for the natural man, God says, I want you to do justly, I want you to love mercy and walk humbly with God. But to the spiritual man, to paraphrase the words of Jesus, I want you to do love, I want you to do mercy, and I want you to follow the example of my son.

One of the beautiful pictures that we have before us in the Bible of a pathway of a Christian is the picture that is illustrated in the tabernacle. You remember there were three steps in Jesus outline of the way of a disciple. So there's three steps in the tabernacle. The gate of the tabernacle, the gate of the courtyard was the first. Then there was the door to the tabernacle and.

And then there was the veil between the holy and the most holy. These steps, these entrances have some things in common, but they also have some things that are diverse. Both the things in common and the things are diverse are valuable lessons that point out to some of these things we've been talking about. In the Gospel of John, chapter 14, verse 6, Jesus says that he fulfills the three roles to the Christian by saying, I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life. These are the entrances we have.

In each of the entrances of the tabernacle, we have exactly the same area of these three entryways. The entrance to the court was 20 cubits wide and 5 cubits high, 100 square cubits. The door to the tabernacle was 10 by 10, again 100, and the veil between the most holy, again 10 by 10, 100. They all represent Jesus and his fortune at various parts are walking along the narrow way.

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The going into the court represents to us the power of God in drawing us to a place where we make the decision that I want to do what is right. It's a dedication to righteousness, that righteousness. So we come through there and now we want to do right, we want to be right with God. But once we come into that condition, the condition of awareness of the importance of righteousness along with the belief in Christ our Savior. Because the first thing you see when you come to the courtyard is that is that brazen altar, that copper altar representing Jesus himself.

So we're starting to come into that special relationship with God, and that relationship with the Lord is increased when we pass into another place, another capacity, and dear Judy and dear Pam, it's the place where you're standing today, pressing into the holy of the tabernacle. Spiritual conditions, but still upon the earth. But if in your life you follow the text before us, be thou faithful unto death, then you'll be ushered into the Most Holy, the final condition, the final location of our hope, our aspirations, the achievement of the divine nature.

When we first look at Christ, before He opens Himself up to us, before we open the spiritual mind, we see the perfection in that number 110 squared in the gate of the courtyard. Well, that's five by 20. But notice that the gate is broad but not that high. This is interesting. We see Jesus in the breadth of what he has done, more than its height.

That's probably what attracts us to Jesus in the first place. The fact that his love, his generosity and giving, his life is as broad as mankind. It reaches everybody, and it's merely this appreciation of love that is not exclusive, but inclusive. A salvation for the believer and the non believer alike.

An opportunity for life in the kingdom for both the saved and the unsaved. That's broad, isn't it? So you have this broad gate that hits our hearts and we want to emulate it, and that breath brings us into a faith relationship. But it's only as we come into this faith relationship and understand more about the privilege of sacrifice and the responsibility of cleansing.

Remember, right behind the brazen altar is the copper laver. So cleansing is necessary. But we start now to see his love is matched in its Height as well as its breadth. Because the door of the tabernacle is twice as high as the gate to the courtyard.

The apostle Paul puts it Beautifully in Ephesians 3, 18, 19 may be strong to apprehend with all the saints. What is the breadth and length and height and depth, and know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge that you may be filled in all the fullness of God. How broad is that love? It's broad enough to cover every human being who's ever lived.

How long is that love? Well, for starters, it's 7,000 years for finishing. It's eternity. It keeps going and going. A love that never ends.

How high is that love? To the divine nature itself, to being like Jesus. How deep is that love? We might say six feet. Deep down to everyone who has died, everyone has gone into the common grave of mankind.

And those in the grave, every one of them, will be brought forth and given an opportunity in every dimension. Height, depth, length, breadth. We begin realizing the comprehensiveness of the love of Christ, and we see in that comprehensiveness something else. The door of the tabernacle is white linen, intermingled with blue, purple, and scarlet.

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These colors that are beautiful within themselves are even more beautiful in their meaning. In the blue, we see, as we studied Christ, his total faithfulness, and as we see that faithfulness, it becomes a motivation for us to be faithful as well, and the end of that faithfulness is the red, the sacrifice unto death, and we say too, when we see Jesus, I want to do that.

I want to lay my life down just as my Lord did, and then in the purple, we see the reward of that faithfulness, the royalty of divine nature. Even as the blue, red, and are all together in this door, so too faith, sacrifice unto death, the crown of life, which is our hope, mingled together in our lives each day we put it all together, have a spiritual mind. Because remember the tabernacle, just looking at the door, it's time to holy and the most holy again, as we mentioned, it's the same size as the other portals in the area. But this veil was not made only of white, but also of blue, purple and scarlet.

But it was a different pattern than what was outside of the tabernacle. Here we see the figures of cherubim, heavenly figures, figures of spiritual beings. We no longer just see the colors in front of us, but the pattern that they form, these angelic patterns, and it is the pattern of spiritual life that we are to copy when we look at Jesus. Paul says in 2nd Corinthians 3:10.

But we all with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord are changed into that same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Thus it becomes a picture of these three ways. The way, the truth, and the life. Here Jesus is pointing the way. Here at consecration, you have faced a truth that you're going to be like him.

If you're going to be like him, you have to do as he does, and when you face that truth and live faithfully to it, then you'll see Christ as the life at the end of your course, and as our text in front of us points out, it's not just any life, but if you're going to be faithful unto death, it will be the life of immortality. That's a very special life that the Heavenly Father has drawn you to Jesus and invited you to be part of. The word for Crown In Revelation 2, 10 is not the word for the gold crown of a king, but it is the word diadem, a victor's crown, a laurel wreath of victory.

And it is that wreath of victory that will be yours if you're faithful unto death. Now I want to go back to taking up the cross and say a little bit more about that. These words of Jesus take on a much deeper meaning to us after his own death. Remember the apostles, they knew what crosses were, but they didn't really have a grasp on this is going to be the destiny of Jesus. But after his death, they could look back on those words and see meaning there, see understanding that they didn't see before.

When his own death came, they went through those torturous nights of Jesus in the grave, not knowing what would come next, they thought, well, we thought it had been he, and their hopes seemed dashed. But when he explained to them after he was raised from the dead, particularly on the road to Emmaus, he explained to them the scriptures going all the way back to Moses, and they began to see the necessity not just of death, but of death as a criminal. Now the whole concept of the cross and cross bearing begins to take on new meaning to us.

A cross is at the same time a most cruel symbol and a most beautiful symbols. It is cruel because of the utter suffering, the tremendous injustice that Jesus went through for our sakes. But it is also beautiful because it represents not only the cost of our redemption, but the cost of our deliverance as well. There is a distinction between redemption and deliverance. Redemption implies a coming back, a payment for that which was bought on the condition of because of the payment for Death.

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Because of the condition of sin and death, mankind was brought there by that original sin of Adam, and redemption is coming back from that. But as Paul says, by one man's sin, death entered the world. So by one man's righteousness, life will come into the world. Christ dying on the cross gave that exact correspondence.

We are not needed on the cross. I'm not needed on the cross. None of us in this room are needed on the Cross. Only Christ was needed on that cross. Only Christ and Him alone has enough value for the redemption of all mankind.

There is only one Redeemer, and that Redeemer is Jesus of Nazareth. But Jesus says we're to take up our crosses. We all start to bear our crosses at the time of our consecration. The crosses in this case do not represent redemption, but they represent deliverance of that which is redeemed. In the Prophetic Book of Obadiah, verse 21, we see this concept.

Obadiah writes there, and Saviors, please note. The plural Saviors shall come upon Mount Zion to judge the Mount of Esau, and the kingdom shall be Jehovah's. Here he says we have a multiplicity of Saviors. We don't know how many, it just says a number.

Now we do know how many. Revelation gives us that. But there's only one Redeemer. But there are many Saviors. In Revelation 14:1, we have the same picture that Obadiah paints before us, and it's on the same Mount Zion.

And I saw and behold the lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 having his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads. These hundred and forty four thousand, like their Master, take up their cross. It is a cross not only of sacrificial death, but a cross of salvation.

I'm choking up a little bit. I'm sorry. The cross of salvation that God gives us is the role designed for these Saviors. There are various titles assigned to the Church in their work in the Kingdom. They're called Saviors.

In the Bible, as we've seen, they're called priests, kings, judges. In each of these roles, the title illustrates a little part of the Kingdom work that they are to perform. But to perform these works, they need to be educated. Just as if you were going to be a doctor, you have to go to school for many years, and not only would you have to go to school, you'd have to become an intern at a hospital.

You'd have to practice doctoring. If you're going to become a teacher, you would go to school, learn education and the principles of education. Then you would have to practice teach. They would judge you on your practice teaching as well. Dear sister Judy and dear sister Pam, you're in the school of Christ now, and there's wonderful training that is going on now.

I have no doubt in divine providence that he's been working with you for many years, nay, decades. But you've come to a wonderful pinnacle now being enrolled in the School of Christ. The School of Christ teaches doctoring. Under the great physician, it teaches teaching. But the main course, the specialty of the School of Christ, the degree that you'll get is a degree in blessing.

That the stars of the heaven will be the seed of Abraham that will bless all of the families of the world, is what we have to look forward to, and in this blessing, this graduate course in the School of Christ that you've entered will teach you how to be a blessing. But we have to be attentive to the lessons learned in that school. We need to learn what makes a man unblessed. Why does a man

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fall?

Why does a man sin? The Lord says, I can teach you best the lesson by letting some of you sin and letting some of you fall to let you have the experiences so that you know what they feel like, to give you that complete empathy with the experiences of those around you, the rest of mankind. This experience of empathy, this experience of identifying what you are having to go through in your life from this point forward is for the purpose of teaching you how to overcome and not do it again. Now you will, in your Christian walk, dear sisters, and certainly all of us, you'll be no better or no worse than the rest of us. You're still imperfect.

You still will make mistakes. You will, even on the same specific point, after having once learned the lesson, do it wrong again. The Lord knows this. He said, the just man will fall seven times, but he will rise again. A lesson in the school of Christ where there's been a failure is not automatically considered a lesson not learned.

A lesson where there is no victory on the long run is a lesson not learned. Our lessons, our experiences, are only valuable if in the long run they teach us to overcome. We must all be overcomers. But in the way of overcoming, there may be shortcomings, and that's where the Lord has given you one of the most protective elements that's available to anybody, anyplace, anywhere.

Not just to you, but to all of us who have made a life consecration, and that's the robe of Christ's righteousness. Jehovah, God chooses to see us covered in the righteousness of Jesus. We know what we are. We know our failings, our shortcomings, our repetitive sins that we just wrestle with so often.

God knows that, too. But he says, I've given you Jesus. Jesus covers you. What a wonderful gift that is. In the first chapter of the first epistle of John, he emphasized the fact that we do sin.

In fact, he says, anybody who says he doesn't sin is a liar. Now, we might look at this and say, well, okay, if this is the reality, I fail. I'm. I guess that's just the way I am. You know, God knows it, so everything's okay.

But John doesn't exactly say that. In the second chapter, he says, wait a minute, that's not the point. I'm not telling you that you're not going to sin so that you can just go ahead and do it, or I'm telling you that you're going to sin just so you can do it. He says, my little children, these things I write to you so you don't sin. I'm just telling you that he who says he doesn't sin is a liar.

But I'm also telling you not to sin, and I'm telling you not to justify yourself about it. But he goes on, this is the beautiful thing. If you do sin, and when you do sin, when you fall short, you have an advocate with the Father. God has taken care of it, and that's Jesus Christ, the righteousness. He's the propitiation for your sins, and not only yours and ours, but the sins of the whole world.

Well, this brings us back to the ceremony of baptism. I'm going very shortly to ask you some questions, Judy and Pam. But before I ask those questions, I want to review those questions with you so that you realize what I mean when I ask the question. I'm going to ask you first if you recognize that you are a member by nature of a sinful and dying race, and when you answer affirmatively, it will mean not only that you intellectually know that you are a child of Adam, but you realize that being a child of Adam has left certain effects on you and that you are by nature a sinner, that you have nothing of yourself that warrants God's commendation.

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The second question I'm going to ask you is if you have repented of any personal sin and done what you can to make amends for it, an affirmative answer to that question will mean that you are not just sorry for the sin there and that you got caught, but that you're really sorry, that you did wrong, that you really did not want to do it, and that you're going to try to correct it, and that not only have you done in the past, but what you can do now to correct things, you want to try very hard to make sure these things don't recur. The third question I'm going to ask you is if you have accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. Now, that question does not ask if you have accepted Jesus as the Savior of the world. The answer to that, of course, would be yes, I know Jesus died for the sins of the world.

We all know that that's important. But what's even more important in this question is that he died for you. There's this personal, intimate aspect to it, and that his death covers not only the sins of the past, but when weaknesses of the future come, you will have access to him as your redeemer, as your advocate, and he will plead for you. Can you imagine that Jesus pleading for you before the Heavenly Father? What a friend we have in Jesus.

Isn't that true? He's a continuing Savior. The fourth question I will ask you, and the final one, have you made a complete and full consecration to do the will of God to the best of your ability? An affirmative answer to that is what's really included in the word full. A complete consecration.

What you are giving to the Lord is everything. What the Lord is giving back to you is much more. All of his protective power. His assurance to you that he will never, never, never, never leave you. Jehovah will never let you down.

And he's giving you justification through Christ. He's given you a brotherhood, these brethren. This is just a small part of the dear brothers and sisters that are still on this side of the veil. They are all your family, a family that God has given you. You already know that.

You've been a part of this family for a long time, but now it's even more intimate, even more precious. A brotherhood should be and must be committed to being true friends with love in the fullest degree, and, dear brethren, to those of the brotherhood, the rest of us here, it means we must pledge to each of these our new brethren in Christ to stand by their side when any falls. Lift them up. When one rejoices, rejoice with them.

When one sorrows, sorrow with them. That's the responsibility and privilege that each, each of us have to these two dear sisters and indeed to each other, and finally, he's given you a company of Angels, guardian angels to watch your steps.

Most importantly, he's given you the sacrifice of his Son. The love of Christ constraineth us. I'd like to come down now and speak to you more personally.

There we go. Thank you. I'm going to ask both of you these four questions.

Do you recognize that you are a member by nature of a sinful and dying race?

Have you repented of any personal sin and done what you can to make amends for it? It.

Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal savior? That's a wonderful yes, isn't it? Have you made a complete and full consecration of your all to do the will of God to the best of your ability? You know, on the basis of these questions, I want to be among the first to extend to you the right handed fellowship.

David Stein - Baptismal Discourse

I have some baptismal cards for you as well. Let me say a few more things here just to close all of these. Dear brethren, recognize you now as part of this divine family. Again, you have a long history as part of this family. But now it's so much more precious.

Each of us recognize our loving accountability to God to take care of you. But now you have that same accountability to take care of us. Each as well each other. May the Lord's blessing and guidance be upon you. May he always be with you and realize always that he will never leave you nor forsake you.

Sister Pam, I have a baptismal text of Psalm 37:4 5. Delight thyself also in Jehovah, and He will give thee the desires of your heart. Commit thy way unto Jehovah. Trust also in Him. He will bring it to pass.

And Sister Judy, we have Deuteronomy 31:8 for you and Jehovah. He it is that doth go before thee. He will be with thee. He will neither fail thee nor nor forsake thee. Fear not, be not dismayed.

I extended the right hand of fellowship.

Brother Chairman.