

Baptismal Class 6 of 6

Service in Outdoor Baptistry

#1044

Study given by W.D. Frazee—August 20, 1962

[Several hymns are sung.]

What a precious, precious day. How good God is. We thank Him for this pleasant occasion, don't we, this beautiful setting. We have a wonderful Father. We thank God for every one that's here today. We want to especially welcome every visitor, those from near and far. We know we're going to have a great blessing because God has promised to be with us on such occasions.

So, we're going to, at this time, look to the Lord in prayer. We're very happy to have as our district pastor, Elder W. W. Walker. Elder Walker is a man of God. He spent many years in the service of the Master, both as a foreign missionary and as a pastor here in the homeland.

Wildwood and Lookout Mountain and Rankin Cove are very happy that the Lord has placed him in charge of our work in this area, and he's going to lead us in prayer at this time, as we look toward heaven. Elder Walker.

[By Elder Walker gives prayer:]

Our Father in heaven, our hearts are moved with gratitude and thanksgiving as we gather here in this beautiful spot this Sabbath afternoon. We see evidences of Thy greatness and Thy power all around us, and it causes our hearts to rejoice in Christ Jesus.

We thank Thee for the precious promises of Thy Word that have led us to surrender our lives to Thee. We thank Thee for the appeal the Gospel has brought to us. We thank Thee for the wonderful gift of Jesus in suffering and dying upon the cross of Calvary for our sins and for the Gospel of salvation and for Thy precious Word and for every revelation of Thy love toward us.

We thank Thee for these dear people who are casting in their lot with Christ Jesus. It rejoices our hearts to see souls born into the kingdom of God, and we pray Father that Thou will continue to bless Thy work in this part of Thy vineyard.

As these dear people who have dedicated their lives to Thee go out near and far, we pray that Thy Holy Spirit shall overshadow them and direct them that many, many precious souls will be won to Christ.

We thank Thee for the onward progress of Thy work throughout all the world. As we hear of thousands coming in in all parts of the world, we're reminded of what Jesus said:

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” Matthew 24:14.

We believe that we’re near that hour.

We thank Thee, too, for another promise that Jesus made when He said:

“...lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world”
Matthew 28:20.

And now, dear Father, we pray that this service here this afternoon may bring a blessing to every one of us, may be a time when we will rededicate our lives to Thee, and we pray that Thou would help each one of these candidates to realize that this is a lifetime experience—this step that they’re taking this afternoon—that there’s no power on earth that can overcome them if they place their trust in Christ Jesus because He is able to save to the uttermost every one that comes to God through Him.

We pray that their surrender to Thee may be complete, that they may recognize that this step is so solemn and so important that they’re aligning themselves with Christ Jesus and with His church, and we pray that we who witness this scene this afternoon may feel our responsibility to these newborn children, and that we may do all we can to support them and to sustain them as they begin this walk with Christ Jesus.

So, bless us in this service here this afternoon. Keep each one of us faithful, guide us continually, at last, in Thy kingdom, save us. We ask in Jesus’ name. Amen.

[W.D. Frazee:]

I shall read the Gospel commission, as recorded by Matthew, in the 28th chapter of his Gospel, beginning with the 18th verse:

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world”
Matthew 28:18.

So, in His name, we are here today, teaching and baptizing, and therefore we claim His promise:

“...I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” *Ibid*.
Jesus is here today, as we teach and baptize in His name.

You know, in our physical life here in this world, there are three great experiences that come to most. Two of them come to all. The first is birth. The second is marriage. The third is death.

And all three of those experiences have been taken by the Master to represent what takes place when a soul is converted, gives his heart to God, and receives this ordinance of baptism. This is a birth today, this is a marriage today, and this is a funeral today.

I would like for a few minutes to study those three facts with you, as presented in the Word, as you dear candidates are about to experience and enter into this sacred ordinance.

I'd like to speak first, of the last one, the experience of death. Yes, this is a funeral service. In Romans, the sixth chapter, as we've studied in our baptismal class, the apostle says:

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” Romans 6:3-4.

So today, there's a funeral. The old nature, the old man, as the Bible speaks of it here, is buried. Why? Because, believing that Jesus died for you, you have consented that your old nature shall die and be put out of sight, and baptism is a sign that this is the end of self, as far as ruling your life is concerned.

Now, don't misunderstand me. I know that after you're baptized, self is going to clamor for attention. You're going to be tempted to let that old self rule again. But this ordinance today is a sign that you reckon yourself dead, and every time that old self clamors to have its selfish way, you're going to say, “No. You are dead. You are dead. We settled that at the water. That was the funeral.” And that old life, that old self, that wanted its own way and got it for so long—no more, no more. It's dead. It's gone. Thank God. That's what this choice means today and that's what this ordinance means.

You know, I'm so glad that this funeral has a happy ending. It's like the funeral of Jesus. Everybody wept when Jesus died, but, oh, you remember that early morning the third day, He rose from the tomb and all the universe shouted with joy, and it's been joy ever since, friends, joy ever since.

And so it is with this funeral today. It has a happy ending. The old nature dies, but Jesus says He's going to raise you to walk in newness of life. From now on, you're going to count the old nature dead but the new nature alive. From now on, you're going to say, No, to Satan, but, Yes, to Jesus. And the same Father in heaven that raised His Son from the tomb will raise you from this watery grave today and by the power of His Spirit enable you to live that new life.

Yes, this is a funeral, but a funeral with a happy ending. It's a death and a resurrection, and because Jesus died and rose again, we know that there is power in that risen Christ to raise you henceforth to walk in that new life.

Now, I said that baptism also represents the spiritual birth, and for that, we will go to John, the third chapter, verses 3 and 5. Jesus was talking to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. He said:

“...Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” John 3:3.

Nicodemus was startled that there should be anything that *he* needed to enter in that he hadn't already for, after all, wasn't he a great religious leader, but Jesus said, Nicodemus, you need to be born, you need to be born again.

But Nicodemus, stung in his heart, he answered:

“...How can a man be born when he is old...” *Ibid.*, verse 4.

Then Jesus explained it. He said:

“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” *Ibid.*, verse 5.

Yes, we are born into this world as children, and we grow up in this earthly life, but in baptism we are born into the kingdom of God and we grow up in the heavenly life. And, oh, how much there is in birth and growth to represent conversion in the Christian life. Think of it today, dear ones, regardless of how old you are, you are today being born.

You know, the other day I had a precious experience. I must tell you a little of the background of it. Some 25 years ago, I was called to Oklahoma City to conduct an evangelistic campaign there, and among the people who came was a fine man who was the district manager of the Singer Sewing Machine Company. His wife had prayed for him for 20 years but he had never accepted Christ and this message. He was simply a man of this world, living in this world and carrying on the business of this world.

But, as he listened to the sermons night after night, the time came when his heart responded, and one night in his home we knelt together and that dear man gave his heart to God. And after a series of instructions, we had the joy of leading him down into the water, just as we will with you today, and baptizing him.

Well, that's been, as I say, about 25 years ago. God has blessed him, he's become a worker for God, has managed one of our sanitariums out in California, and the other day, as he visited us here, I put my arms around him—he's a big fellow, taller than I am and weighs a good deal more, and older—but I put my arms around

him, and I said, “Well, Brother Martin, you’re older than I am and bigger but you’re still my boy.” “That’s right,” he said, and it *is* right.

When a person accepts this message and is baptized into this truth, he’s as a baby born, and he grows up in the things of God. And dear friends, may I suggest this to you for your comfort. What God expects of you is simply the response of children. And if you should happen to fall, as a child falls learning to walk, don’t think that Father’s going to kick you out of the house because fathers and mothers aren’t that way, and God isn’t that way, and the church isn’t that way. Thank God.

God in heaven and all the angels and your brothers and sisters here on earth—they’re here to help you to learn to walk, and don’t forget that verse we had in the class the other night, As newborn babes desire what? The milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby.

Yes, baptism is a birth. You’re beginning the life with God in a new and special way. Have frequent feedings of this wonderful milk, this divine milk, this milk of the Word, and thus, you can look back to your baptism as the day you really began to live.

And thank God, that life which begins here at the water’s edge reaches on through the ages of eternity. Your birthday here, whether it was 10 years ago or 80 years ago, as with dear Sister Powell here, that begins a life that must end, as far as this world is concerned, but, oh, the life you begin here need never end. Here is a birthday that begins a life that reaches on with God as long as God shall live. What a birthday, friends, what a birthday.

And then, finally, as I said, baptism is represented also by marriage, for as in marriage, a man and a woman are joined to be one, so in this service, you have been called to union with Christ.

I read in Romans, the seventh chapter, and the fourth verse:

“...that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God” Romans 7:4.

That’s right. This is your wedding day. This is the day that seals the union of your soul with Christ.

You know, in the Bible, He’s presented as the great lover, the heavenly Bridegroom, and, oh, His church is the bride. But that church is made up of many members. You today become members of that church. As such, you are joined in *union* with Christ.

You know, in marriage, the bridegroom seeks the bride. He seeks her love. And so Christ has sought us. He came from heaven, left His Father’s throne. Heaven wasn’t a place to be desired as He thought of His love for us. And so, He came to this world, seeking us.

Some men have made great sacrifices to prove their love for the one that they chose, but, ah, there is nothing in all this world that can compare with the sacrifice that Jesus made to win us, to save us.

Speaking of the church, the hymn writer rightly says:

From heaven He came and sought her
To be His Holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her,
And for her life He died.

And so today, thank God, friend, in this service, you are married to Christ, as Paul says here. You know how it is at a wedding. The young man and the young woman stand there, and the minister says, in the measured phrases of the marriage ritual—he says words that mean this, essentially, to that young man:

“Will you leave everything else and everybody else and do you choose to have *this* woman to be yours *always*?”

And he says, “I do.” And the minister turns to the young woman and he asks similar questions to her, and she says, “I do.” And then, the minister placing his hand upon their joined hands says, “You’re married.”

And, you know, friends, even if the next day or the next week or the next month they don’t feel quite the thrill they did at the moment at the altar, they’re still married, aren’t they? Don’t forget that, friends, in your future experience.

Your marriage to Christ is something that is to be eternal, and if tomorrow or next week or next month you don’t feel quite the same as you do some other day, don’t let that worry you in *any* way. Say, “I am Jesus’. I am His child. He died for me. He left everything for me. I’ve left everything for Him. I choose to be His. He chose me and I’ve chosen Him.”

And so, today, dear friends, in the presence of these witnesses here on earth, in the presence of the assembled church, and in the presence of the heavenly witnesses—ah, if our eyes could be opened, we would see this air all about us filled with heavenly angels, dear friends—they’re here to witness the vows that are to be made today. Thank God.

And so, I say, in the presence of these witnesses, earthly and heavenly, human and divine, I want to ask you some questions. I want to ask you as candidates for baptism, first of all, do you believe that the Bible is God’s Holy Word? If you do, raise your hand.

Do you believe that Jesus Christ, that this Bible sets forth, died for you upon the cross and He’s your Savior?

Are you willing to give your heart and life fully to Him forever?

Do you believe that He has a church in the world and that the Seventh-Day Adventist Church is His remnant church today?

Do you desire to be a part of that church, to support it with your efforts, your prayers, your means, as God makes possible, and to share in the work of giving the Gospel to others?

Have you confessed your sins to God, as far as you remember them, and do you believe He forgives you?

Do you desire now to be baptized, to share with Jesus and with His church in the life that never ends?

May God bless you every one.

Now, I'm happy to present to the church for membership, these candidates. Would you rise, and Brother Damon, who is our first elder here, will take charge of receiving these into membership.

This is Brother Thomas Blevens, his wife, Myrna, Margaret Kingman, Sister Ida Powell, Linda Raymond, Brother Logan or Eddie Watkins, Sylvia Harmer and Eloise Escalona.

You have heard as a church and witnessed their confession, and I'm glad, Brother Chairman, to move that these candidates be received into the church today, subject to their baptism, and that we enroll their names on the record in heaven, believing that Jesus will write their names in the Book of Life.

[Elder Damon:]

You've heard this motion. Is there a second to it? [Second.] All in favor of this, make it known by the uplifted hand.

We welcome you into the Wildwood Seventh-Day Adventist Church. And now, the elders will give to you the right hand of fellowship. Be glad, Elder Walker, if you will lead in that.

[Hymns are being sung.]

[W. D. Frazee:]

My dear Brother Thomas Blevens, because you've accepted Jesus as your Savior and His message for today as your guide of life, I now baptize you into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

[Baptism, with singing.]

My dear Sister Myrna Blevens, upon your profession of faith in Jesus Christ and His message for today, I now baptize you into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

[Baptism, with singing.]

My dear Sister Margaret Kingman, because you have given yourself to Jesus to be His forever, I now baptize you into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

[Baptism, with singing.]

Dear Sister Powell will be 80 years old her next birthday. Our dear Sister Powell, upon your profession of faith in Jesus Christ and His saving truth, I now baptize you into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

[Baptism, with singing.]

My dear young Sister Linda Raymond, because you've given your heart to Jesus, to be His always, I now baptize you into His dear name, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

[Baptism, with singing.]

My dear Brother Eddie Watkins, because you've turned from the world and given your heart to Christ, to be His forever, I now baptize you into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

[Baptism, with singing.]

My dear Sylvia, because you've given your heart to Jesus, to be His forever, I now baptize you into His dear name, the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

[Baptism, with singing.]

My dear Sister Escalona, because you have turned from the world and sin and given your heart to God, I now baptize you into His dear name, the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

[Baptism, with singing.]

Well, dear friends, I can say this, and I'm sure every parent and teacher and minister and Bible worker, and every church member that's had a part in working for these souls, agrees with me, that this is the greatest business in the world, isn't it? And you know, it takes all of us to carry it on. Jesus could have carried it on without us, but I'm so glad He gave us a part in it, aren't you? Yes. This is the greatest work in all the world.

And now, friends, as we close this service, we're going to have a prayer, and we're going to have a prayer especially for those that want to get ready for another baptism in the future. You know, we've been having baptisms for many years and all those times whenever we have a baptism, there's somebody getting for another baptism. Isn't that nice? Isn't that nice? That's the way God wants it.

And so, this evening, as we have our closing prayer, we'd just like to invite anyone that believes that God wants you to get ready for a baptism in the future—maybe you've already been getting ready or maybe you're making your decision today, but if you've already decided and haven't been baptized, just come and take these seats here that these candidates have vacated. They've been baptized. Wouldn't it be nice that some other folks would come now and get ready?

So will you just leave your seat where you are now and come down here, find your way down to this seat, and we'll have prayer for you, any of you that believe that God is calling you. That's right, dear ones. Thank God. Thank God. Oh, let everyone that hears the call of Jesus come. Thank the Lord.

This is a wonderful day for God, isn't it? A wonderful day, as these that have been baptized have their names enrolled, and now these are going to get ready. That's right. God bless every one of you folks.

Now, there are some others here that hear the call of Jesus. You know that Jesus wants you to get ready. Now, you might not know all about it today, folks, but that's all right. We'll help you. We'll help you learn. That's what our work is for—to help you learn.

And there may be somebody here that has some problem that's standing between you and a full decision, but if you believe God is calling you to do this, why not say, Lord, I want to get ready and I'm going to trust you to help get that problem out of the way.

Ah, friends, whatever the problem is, God can solve it. I've seen God solve problems for hundreds of people. I know He can solve your problem. There's no question about it. God can solve your problem and you can have a life that is forever. You can have a life that never ends. And it doesn't make any difference what the difficulty is. That problem can be removed. And so, do not hesitate, do not wait, do not delay.

Now, let me say a word to somebody else. There may be somebody here today that says, "Well, Brother Frazee, I've tried before and I've made the beginning before but I've never been able to carry through."

My dear friend, just as I told these candidates a few minutes ago, when a baby is starting out learning to walk, what might happen to it? It might happen to fall. What do we do with it? Do we push it out and say, "Well, you stay out there until you've learned to walk?" Do we?

Why, you know, every father and mother, and if there are any grandfathers and grandmothers or aunts or uncles or older brothers or sisters around, what are they doing with that baby? Why, they're right there to help it get up and start again.

But just as—watch this—just as they don't put it out in the cold, neither do they put it back in the crib and say, 'Well, bless your little heart, I guess you'll never be able to start again.' Do they? Why, no, friends, no.

And if you've started before and fell down, thank God, Jesus is ready to help you start again, my brother, my sister. *Never* doubt it. Come, just as you are. Come, if you have fallen a *hundred* times. Come, and say, No matter how many times I've tried before, *today*, by God's grace, I'm going to try again.

Will you folks just move right over there, please?

God bless you, dear folks. There are the seats for you. Praise the name of Jesus.

Now, who else is God calling?

Choir, sing for us. Just as I am, without one plea. You were singing it a while ago. Sing it again for us. I want to hear it.

And, as these sweet strains float through the air to your ear, let Jesus call you, and come, dear hesitating one, come. Your taking a step toward Jesus means everything to Him.

[Singing.]

Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
Oh, Lamb of God, I come, I come.

You know, there's something about this matter of making the public witness. Jesus says:

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me..." Matthew 10:32.

Where?

"...before men, him will I confess also before my Father
which is in heaven" *Ibid*.

We stand for Him here. He stands for us up there. It's a wonderful thing, dear friends, to stand for Jesus, to come for Jesus. And now, dear ones, God loves you, and He's ready to help you. I know He is. I've seen Him help hundreds. I know He'll help you. There isn't any question about it. And so, while God is calling, "Come", sing:

[Singing.]

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
Oh, Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt;
Fightings within, and fears without,

Oh, Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in Thee I find,
Oh, Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
Oh, Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, Thy love I own
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be Thine, and Thine alone,
Oh, Lamb of God, I come, I come.

And how much are these worth, dear friends? Why, if we'd say every one was worth a million dollars, we'd be millionaires here this afternoon, wouldn't we. But are they worth more than a million? Amen. A billion? How rich does that make the dear Lord today? How much value does He put on them?

Why, friends, if there had been only one soul that needed the Savior, He would have left all the worlds on high and come for just one. Is that right? That makes every one of these worth everything—worth everything. So we thank God for every one.

Is there one more, before we have our prayer? My heart goes out to any hesitating ones.

Let me ask you this, friends. Is there somebody here that somehow you haven't had whatever it takes to come down here today, but you know that Jesus is calling you, and oh, you wish, you just wish that you could have the help to do what you know you ought to do, and you'd like us to pray for you right where you are? Will you raise your hand? We'll pray for you.

Somebody that says, Yes, I need help. Pray for me. Somebody that says, Christ is calling. Yes. Is there somebody else that says, Jesus is calling me today and I need help. Pray for me. Is there one? Another one? All right, dear ones.

Now, shall we look to the Lord in prayer. Will the audience arise. You may be seated that have come forward here. I want to have few words with you after the benediction.

Our heavenly Father, let Thy benediction rest upon each one who has been baptized today, upon each one of this audience, and in a special way now, upon these who have come, that they may get ready for another baptism.

God bless every one of these men and women and boys and girls, and may they know today that, as they accept Jesus, Jesus accepts them. And may they

count their surrender to God, if they haven't made it before, from this day forward. God bless them and help us to do faithful work in getting them ready, and may we all share in the heavenly reunion, for Christ's sake. Amen.

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