

# Arise, Be Baptised

Acts 22:16, Matthew 28:16-20  
*Halifax: 7 February 2010*

## **Introduction**

My brothers and sisters,

- This is definitely one of those weeks when there is something so significant going on in the life of the congregation that I am going to break from our regular sermon series in Isaiah!
- Today, we have the privilege of publicly welcoming four persons into the fellowship of this congregation,
  - First, there is Crystal Atkinson who grew up in a godly home and comes to us by transfer with a full blessing from her home church, Hillside Baptist, in Moncton.
    - What an encouragement it is to see how the LORD has kept her walking with him after moving from her home to attend University and to live in another city.
    - How glad we are to have her as an official part of this congregation.
  - Next there is Daniel—and what a wonderful story here!
    - Daniel grew up in a believing home and was baptised, but rebelled against God’s covenant and estranged himself from the LORD,
      - but the LORD would not let go of him, but brought him to repentance a few weeks ago through the ministry of a faithful evangelist.
    - Daniel met with the elders and was received into the full communion of this congregation by profession of faith.
      - He does not need to be baptised because he was already baptised...
        - and there was nothing wrong with his baptism or the faithfulness of God—
          - The problem was that Daniel was not faithful to walk in God’s covenant, but now, by the gracious working of God,
            - he has repented and that has been corrected!
    - And thirdly, we have Victor Nickerson.
      - Victor is from Liverpool and was a member of small Baptist church there, but had more reformed leanings.
        - In God’s providence, that church closed down and Victor found himself without a church home.
        - For the last several months, he has been driving up from Liverpool to worship with us—almost 2 hours each way.

- And today, he met with the elders and was received into membership.
- And fourthly, we have Kyle Stewart...
  - Kyle grew up outside of God's covenant as a disciple of the Jehovah Witnesses until his father was removed for moral reasons.
  - There was a lot of confusion in Kyle.
    - But just a week or so ago, all the confusion cleared up when Kyle came to see clearly that Jesus is the Son of God who came to save ruined sinners...
    - And today, Kyle professed his faith before the elders, and it was agreed that he should be baptised and received into the full communion of the church.

And so with all of this before us, I thought it would be good to preach a message to you on Baptism.

- In a region where over 85% of the people have been baptised,
  - and as we do not believe in re-baptising those who have once been baptised—
    - it is fairly rare that we should have an adult baptism.
      - In fact, this is only our fifth adult baptism since we began ministering in Halifax.

And so on this special occasion, I want to call your attention to Acts 22:16.

- This morning, I want to focus in on this one verse.
  - Here we have Paul telling the story of his conversion on the Damascus road,
    - and in this verse, we have the words of the minister who was sent to him to baptise him:
      - To Paul he says:
        - Acts 22:16: 'And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'

### **I. You see from these words that Baptism ought not to be delayed.**

- That is the first thing I want to consider from our text today.
- A. We might well put this question and command to many in our day who delay baptism:
  - "Why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized."
  - 1. I have run into persons who say that they came to Christ two years ago, but have yet to be baptised...

- I have met missionaries who will tell of those who were converted, only to then learn that these converts have not yet been baptised.
  - The question must be put to them...
    - “Why are you waiting?”
    - Paul had been a violent persecutor of the church, but now that he had come to believe,
      - there was no reason for delay.
2. There seem to be two main reasons for delaying a person’s baptism.
- a. First, there is sometimes a delay because of wrong views of baptism that have arisen.
- 1) Over the first three centuries, there were some who came to look at Baptism as that which washes away past sins.
- Therefore, it was thought that baptism ought to be delayed as long as possible because of the danger of falling into sin over the course of one’s life.
    - This way, a person could be baptised to prepare for heaven just before his death.
    - Eventually, the Roman Catholic Church added an additional sacrament called “last rites” so that there could be a baptism at the beginning and at the end of life.
      - but they did this without any authorisation from scripture.
  - Tertullian was one who advanced this view.
    - He did not argue that the apostles had delayed baptism...
      - He rather argued that because so many were falling away from the faith in his day, it was wise to delay baptism.
      - Constantine was one who followed this counsel and waited to be baptised until he was well advanced in years.
  - Tertullian well understood that baptism ought not to be administered more than once in a person’s life,
    - but he erred in supposing that the cleansing represented by baptism could not be given to a person after they had lapsed.
- 2) This view has perhaps affected modern churches in more ways than we realise...
- I have often heard churches say,
    - “We want to make sure of this person’s confession—we want to make sure that it is going to stick before we baptise them.”

- Underlying this is the view that it is not wise to administer baptism until *after* a person is rooted and grounded in the faith.
- For this reason, there are membership classes and other such things that are given before baptism.
  - Of course we are to look for a credible profession of faith—
    - we want to see that a disciple:
      - sees his need of Christ for the forgiveness of sins,
      - that he is trusting in Him alone for salvation,
      - and that he is committed to follow Him and live for Him by His grace,
      - and that he is prepared to submit to the elders in the church—
    - but we do not have to test him over time before we admit him—we receive him upon a simple profession of faith.
- Then, after the disciple has been admitted, we concern ourselves with his continuance in the faith.
  - It is after he has been baptised that we teach him to observe all that Christ has commanded.
  - And if there are problems,
    - the church is to carry out the steps that Jesus gave us in Matthew 18 or by His apostle in 1 Cor 5 to reclaim him.

TRANS> So the first reason for delay of baptism is the mistaken notion that a disciple should be rooted and grounded in the faith before he is baptised.

- b. A second reason for the delay of baptism is on account of the notion that Baptism is not very important.
- This is a reaction, I think, to the externalism that has been such a mammoth problem in the church through the ages...
    - You know, there are so many who draw near to God outwardly but whose hearts are far from Him.
    - This has led persons to wrongly disparage church membership, baptism, the Lord's Supper—
      - all the external stuff—because *real Christianity* is a matter of the heart.
  - Persons who err in this way will say:
    - Baptism and church membership do not save you...
      - The important thing is what is in you heart...
      - We see no need for any emphasis on the externals.

- Or course it is true that externalism that is mindless and insincere is very offensive to God...
  - but does it follow that we should therefore neglect or diminish the importance of those external rites and ceremonies that the Lord Himself has appointed for us?
    - Does it not rather follow that we should endeavour to use these ceremonies with eager sincerity?
    - Should a husband who takes his wife out to eat or buys her flowers be thought insincere because “those are just externals?”
  - No! God appointed these things for us!
    - The externals are important because He gave them to us!
    - They are so important that we ought to make every effort to see to it that we practice them with sincerity of heart!
      - Our text impresses us that baptism is not to be delayed:
        - “Why are you waiting? Arise and be baptised.”

TRANS> And this is no isolated text either—

B. The scriptures consistently show us that baptism is to be administered without delay.

- Let me show you that this is so...
  1. First, we have the example of Peter at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the church after Jesus ascended into heaven.
    - What does Peter do when thousands of people come to believe that Jesus is Lord and Christ?
      - He commands them to be baptised.
      - Acts 2:41-42 tells us what happened that very day...
        - Acts 2:41: Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added *to them*.
        - Every person who received Peter’s counsel was baptised that very day.
          - And you see that it says they were added—added to the church.
          - The next verse shows that being added to the church, they continued with the church...
            - Acts 2:42: And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.”
  - There were no twelve week membership classes or testing periods...
    - they were baptised and added to the church the very day they professed faith!

2. And then we move on in Acts and we have the Samaritans in Acts 8.
  - Here we have Philip the evangelist preaching to them.
    - Now these were Samaritans who had been brought up in a distorted faith, but what happens as soon as they believe?
      - Well we are told in Acts 8:12:
        - Acts 8:12: “When they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.”
    - We are even told about one fellow who was baptised that was found to be a hypocrite just a few days later...
      - But it was still right for Philip to be baptise him when he professed faith.
      - There was nothing wrong with his baptism, the defect was with his own unbelief.
3. And there are more examples of immediate baptism that follow...
  - There is the Ethiopian Eunuch who is baptised by Philip the evangelist on the desert road as soon as they spot water.
    - As in our text, a question is raised about delay:
      - Acts 8:36 “See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?”
  - Then in chapter 10 there is Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, whose entire household is baptised; in his case, as soon as the Holy Spirit has fallen.
    - And again, the question is raised,
      - Acts 10:47-48: Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?"
  - And then at Philippi in Acts 16, there is Lydia and her household who are immediately baptised and then there is the Philippian jailor...
    - Lydia was a woman who had be seeking the Lord,
      - but the jailor is especially significant because he was a pagan Roman who had no prior connection to the Lord.
      - Yet, with but a single night of instruction, Paul baptises both he and his household.
        - Acts 16:33 says: “And he took them the same hour of the night and washed *their* stripes. And immediately he and all his *family* were baptized.”

TRANS> So you see that baptism without delay is the New Testament pattern that is set for us.

C. But there is one legitimate difference for us today...

1. All of the baptisms we read about were missionary baptisms in places where there was not yet an established church.
  - From Paul's words to Titus in Titus 1, we can see that a church is not considered to be established until it has elders appointed.
    - In Titus 1:5, he says to Titus:
      - Titus 1:5: For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you—
  - Once elders are in place, it is no longer apostles or evangelists who do the baptising—
    - Now it is the elder's task to baptise new converts and their households.
      - They are responsible for administering discipline, both for removing those who prove to be wicked, and for receiving those who repent and confess Christ.
  - In 1 Cor Paul emphasises that as a rule, he was not sent to baptise, but to preach the gospel.
    - He mentions some of the first converts who were baptised by him, but after that, the responsibility was turned over to the local eldership.
2. But what does this have to do with our practice today?
  - Namely this,
    - That it is our judgement in the ARP churches that when there is an established church in a community,
      - it is good to wait until the time that the church is assembled together to baptise new converts for the encouragement of all.
  - When Peter or Paul or Philip baptised in Acts, elders had not yet been appointed.
    - Therefore, the baptisms were performed outside of the assembly.
    - I would not say it is *wrong* for baptism to be done outside the assembly today, but in most cases,
      - the elders collectively should examine candidates before they are baptised.
  - The church errs, not in waiting until the church can assemble for a baptism,

- but in requiring something more than a simple profession of faith before a person can be baptised.
- This is objectionable because it prevents the new convert from entering immediately into the privileges that God has for him.
- I was very pleased to see how eager both Kyle and Daniel to unite with the church and enter into communion.

TRANS> So you see that baptism ought not to be delayed.

- By why is this?
  - Why is baptism something that should be done from the very start?

## **II. Baptism should be done right away because baptism is the official way we enter into a saving relationship with God.**

- This is the second thing I want to look at this morning.
- A. You can see in our text that baptism is closely associated with the washing away of sin.
  - Paul is told,
    - Acts 16:22: Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins.
  - 1. The washing away of sin is a washing that we all need.
    - Our sin is what we might call “spiritual dirt” and it needs to be washed away.
    - a. The Bible tells us that “All have sinned and come short of the glory God.”
      - It tells us that there is “none righteous, no not one.”
      - It tells us that the LORD sees that
        - “the wickedness of man is great in the earth and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually.”
      - It even tells us that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags—
        - things like our good works and our worship... filthy rags... garments stained by menstruation!
          - If that is true about our righteousness deeds, what does that say about all of our unrighteous deeds?
    - b. The Bible also tells us that we are guilty and condemned because of our sins.
      - Even God’s working in providence reveals the wrath of God against our sin.
      - And the Bible tells us that if our sins are not pardoned, we will all be cast into the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth—
        - into hell, the place prepared for the Devil and his angels.



- And so you see that we not only need to have our corruption washed away,
- we also need to have our guilt washed away!

TRANS> So you see that we desperately need to have our sins washed away—

- we need to wash away our corruption so that we are holy...
  - and we need to wash away our guilt so that we are pardoned...
- c. We become very good, all our lives, at trying to avoid this need of washing.
- But once you come to truly face the living God,
    - or perhaps I should say, once He comes to reveal Himself to you,
    - You realise that you cannot deny the problem...
      - You are vile and guilty before a holy God and you need to have your sins washed away.

2. And you see that in Acts 22:16, the washing away of sins is put together with baptism.

- It almost looks as though baptism is the very thing that washes our sins away.

a. And indeed, baptism is a washing...

1) The Jews were very familiar with baptisms.

- In fact, they had become obsessed with washings.
- God in the Old Testament ceremonial law had appointed all sorts of baptisms to keep his people's need of cleansing always before them:
  - Hebrews 9:10 speaks of “various washings (*baptismois* in the original)”
    - and then in the discourse that follows, there is a discussion about all the different types of baptismois that were applied to the people for ceremonial purification.
  - But as I say, the Jews had become obsessed with these baptisms or washings...
    - They had added to the ones that God had appointed with the result that they complained to Jesus was not baptising His hands before He ate.
    - In Mark 7, we are told how they went around baptising everything—cups and pictures and copper vessels and couches.

2) Water is used in baptism to represent washing.

- We are told repeatedly in scripture that baptism is to be done with water...
  - as when John the Baptist said, (Mark 1:8)
    - “I baptise you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.”
  - Water is used because water cleanses.
- b. And the New Testament is full of references to washing with water as associated with cleansing.
  - There is, of course, our text—
    - Acts 22:16: Arise, be baptised, washing away your sins...
  - There is Hebrews 10:22 where it says:
    - “let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”
  - And there is John 3:5 where Jesus says:
    - John 3:5: Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.
  - And there is Titus 3:5-6 which speaks about the
    - Tit 3:5-6: washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,
  - And even in the Old Testament, the LORD promises that He will wash His people in NT times when Jesus comes...
    - Ezekiel 36:25: Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

TRANS> So you see that God has a whole lot to say about washing us from our sins.

- And you see that baptism is associated with the washing away of sin.
- But how is it related to the actual washing away of sin?

B. Baptism is the way we officially come to God for cleansing from sin, and the way He officially shows us that we are cleansed.

- Let me explain.
- 1. First, understand that there is a whole lot involved in coming to God for cleansing from sin.
  - Baptism is just one part of that coming to Him—the official entry into covenant with Him.

- Let me explain some of the other things that are involved in coming to God for salvation.
- a. I will start with the most important part—the essential part...
- Most importantly, coming to God for salvation involves faith.
    - You must believe in your heart.
    - If you don't believe in your heart, everything else is worthless.
  - And what is it that you must come to believe?
    - You must come to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ...
      - That God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.
      - You must believe that you are a sinner and you must believe that God sent Jesus to redeem sinners by dying on the cross in their place.
        - You must rely on His sacrifice for the remission of your sins!
        - You must come to Him and trust in Him as the only Saviour.
        - With the heart, man believes unto salvation.
          - That is the principle thing.
- b. But there are many other things that are also involved in coming to God for salvation...
- 1) We turn from our idols to serve God... if these are actually images, we get rid of them and cast them away...
    - This is how Paul described the conversion of the Thessalonians.
    - If they had continued to worship idols, they would not have done that which is involved in coming to Christ.
      - Believing with the heart is certainly at the root, but turning from idols is also part of all that is involved with coming to Christ.
  - 2) We also make restitution to those we have wronged, like Zacchaeus did when he resorted all that he had unjustly taken as a tax collector...
    - It was when Zacchaeus said:
      - Lu 19:8 Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold."
      - that Jesus said:
        - Luk 19:9-10: "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

- It was not that Zacchaeus was saved *by* making restitution to those he had cheated,
    - but it was that salvation necessarily involved making restitution.
- 3) In coming to Christ, we also deny ourselves and begin living the new life to which He has called us, loving our brothers and sisters in the Lord.
    - John says that if we do not love our brothers, we do not know Jesus.
      - Again, we are not saved *by loving our brother*, but this is something that is involved in our coming to Christ.
  - 4) In coming to Christ, we also turn from sins of the flesh, drunkenness, immorality, laziness, etc...
    - Paul says more than once (1 Cor 6:9, Gal 5:21) that those who engage in these things will not inherit God's kingdom—as John puts it, the love the Father is not in them.
      - We are not saved by renouncing these things, but when we come to Christ, this is something we do—something that accompanies our coming to Him.
  - 5) In coming to Christ, we also confess Jesus Christ with our lips—we cannot keep silent about it if we have truly come to believe...
    - David said, “I believed, therefore have I spoken.” (Ps 116:10)
    - Jesus says (Mt 10:32-33) if we don't confess Him, we don't really belong to Him.
      - It is not confession that removes our sin and guilt—it is Christ...
        - but when we come to Him, confession is involved in that coming.
2. And I say that baptism is also involved in the whole of what is to come to Christ for salvation...
    - a. Just as a person who did not turn from idols has not done all that it involved in coming to Christ...
      - or as a person who has not repented of his covetousness, drunkenness, immorality, and envy has not done all that is involved in coming to Him...
      - or as a person who has not begun to love His brothers and sisters in the Lord has not done all that is involved in coming to Christ...
      - or as a person who has not confessed Him before men has not done all that is involved in coming to Christ,
        - so also a person who has not been baptised has not done all that is involved in coming to Christ!

- This is why baptism is insisted upon right at the start...
    - Until you are baptised, you have not done all that is involved in coming to Christ.
  - b. Now a lot of people get all uptight about a statement like that!
    - They say, “Are you saying that a person cannot be saved without baptism?”
      - No, I am not saying that...
        - I am saying that they have not done all that is involved in coming to Christ if they have not been baptised.
        - There is something they need to do—they need to arise and be baptised!
    - That doesn’t mean that if a person comes to trust in Jesus and is struck by lightning before he has a chance to be baptised that he will go to hell because he has not been baptised.
      - Clearly, the thief on the cross was not baptised and Jesus declared that He would be in paradise that very day.
      - It doesn’t even mean that if an individual is trusting in Christ and the church he goes to doesn’t call him to arise and be baptised for ten years that he will go to hell.
        - But it does mean that if a professing believer knows that the Lord has called him to baptised and he refuses,
          - it is a pretty good indication that he does not really know the Lord...
            - just as when a person refuses to renounce his adultery or his idols or refuses to love his brothers, it indicates that he has not truly been born again.
3. So just what is the part that baptism has in coming to God for salvation?
- Baptism is the official part of coming to Christ—of entering into God’s covenant of grace.
  - a. Let me illustrate this with Adam and the forbidden fruit.
    - God commanded Adam not to eat of the forbidden fruit, but here is a question for you...
      - When did Adam transgress?
        - Was it when he decided in his heart that he would eat?
        - Was it when he actually sunk his teeth into the fruit?

- or was it when swallowing had occurred?
  - What was involved in eating the forbidden fruit?
    - It was his apostatising or rejecting of God in his life.
      - It involved his heart, and his actual eating was the expression of that heart rebellion.
      - We might say that the two could not really be separated.
        - When the heart rejected God, it resulted necessarily in eating the fruit...
        - And likewise, eating the fruit meant that he had already rejected the LORD in his heart.
          - The formal action that expressed what had happened in his heart was his eating of the forbidden fruit.
          - The apostasy happened in the heart, but the eating of the fruit was the official action that ratified the rebellion.
- b. Now apply this to baptism.
- God calls those who come to believe in the LORD Jesus for salvation to be baptised...
    - Baptism is the way He has appointed for us to officially enter into His gracious covenant.
      - Of course, God looks on the heart, and if we are baptised without faith and repentance, our baptism is, on our part, a lie.
        - A lie for which we will have a greater condemnation.
  - But we are talking about the right way to receive baptism.
    - The right way to receive baptism is with a heart that believes God's promises.
    - Then you enter into God's covenant by baptism (officially) and receive the salvation that He promises in that covenant through Jesus Christ.
- C. Let me show you from scripture that baptism is the way we officially enter God's covenant.
1. First, I would point out that it is God's way to deal with His people through representative signs.
    - a. I already spoke about Adam.
      - As God sees our hearts, He might have simply told Adam that if ever his heart should turn away,

- he would surely die...
- But instead, He told him that as soon as he ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that he would die.
  - There was an outward sign attached to Adam's rebellion.

b. Consider Abraham

- The Bible tells us that Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness...
- Yet, some time after this, God gave him the sign of circumcision as the formal way of entering into His covenant.
  - He even said that circumcision *was* the covenant.
    - Gen 17:9-11: And God said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.
  - He also said that any male who was not circumcised had broken His covenant.
- Yet, Paul points out to us in Romans 4 that Abraham was justified long before he was circumcised.
  - Circumcision did not justify him, therefore, but was a seal of the righteousness of the faith he already had.
    - Circumcision was God's covenant pledge to him that marked him out as one of God's people to whom God's promise had been given.
    - It was their official entry into the covenant.

TRANS> So you see that God used signs to mark out those who were in covenant with Him...

- And when they were to enter the covenant by applying the sign.

2. Secondly, I would draw your attention to the baptismal formula...

- namely, that we are baptised
  - *into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*
  - Jesus told us to baptise into this name in Matthew 28:19.

- a. This formula shows that by baptism we are brought into association with all three persons of the trinity.
- We, who were once cut off by our sin, are now privileged to be:
    - Joined to the Father as His own sons and daughters...
    - Joined to Jesus Christ the redeemer for the remission of our sins...
    - and joined to the Holy Spirit for His mighty work of renewal in us to transform our hearts and minds that we might live a holy life.
  - The word baptizo does not mean to dip (as the word bapto does).
    - It rather means that the thing which baptises is joined to the thing baptised so that the thing baptised is permanently changed!
      - We are not put into Christ and taken out when we are baptised into Him, nor are we put into the Spirit and taken out...
        - But rather Christ and the Spirit are joined to us in such a way that we are never the same again!
        - We are permanently changed because we joined to them.
- b. Let me give you a couple of examples
- 1) In Galatians 3:27-29, it says:
    - Gal 3:27-29: For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.
    - Do you see that—
      - The idea is that being joined to Christ, we have put on Christ—permanently.
        - Baptism joins us to Him forever and ever!
        - And it makes us heirs of the very same promise that was given to Abraham—that God would be our God forever and that we would be His people.
          - Baptism is the thing that makes the connection.
            - Not apart from faith—of course—because without faith our baptism is a lie.
            - But for those who believe, it is God's sure pledge that we are joined to Christ.
            - It is our formal entry into Christ Jesus.
  - 2) The Spirit is spoken of in the same way.



- John the Baptist promised that although he baptised with water, Jesus would baptise with the Holy Spirit.
  - So water baptism is clearly distinguished from Spirit baptism.
    - Yet the two are intimately connected.
    - Spirit baptism is the inward union that transforms us,
      - but water baptism is the pledge and sign of it that God puts on us to promise and ratify His covenant with us.
- And because the two are so intimately related,
  - when God through miracles showed that Cornelius the Gentile had received the Holy Spirit,
    - it was immediately understood that they were to be baptised.
    - They are to be given the sign who had received the thing itself, just as Abraham was given the sign when He received the thing itself.
- But it works the other way too...
  - At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit did not visibly fall on the people to whom Peter preached,
    - but Peter promised that they should repent and be baptised and that God would give them the Holy Spirit.
    - This time, the baptism came first, then the Spirit.
      - You see, the baptism with water is related to the baptism of the Spirit whether it is given before or after the Spirit comes.

### 3. So what is the point?

- The point is that in baptism, we enter into covenant with the triune God...
  - The covenant in which He promises to wash away our sins by:
    - joining us to Jesus who died for the remission (or forgiveness) of our sins...
    - and joining us to the Holy Spirit who purifies us, making us holy.
- So if you have been baptised,
  - It is for you to trust God according to what He has promised!
    - Your baptism will do you no good unless you believe the promise of cleansing and look to the Lord for it through Jesus and the Holy Spirit.
    - And if you have already come to believe God's promise in Christ,

- Why are you waiting?
  - Arise and be baptised and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord!
  - Come and enter into the covenant by receiving the sign that God has appointed...
    - And be comforted by this sign that exhibits the washing away of sin that God promises to all who come to Christ for salvation.
    - By this sign, he assures you that what you have come to Him for (the washing away of your sin),
      - He gives to you!