

Easter Sunrise Service



Text: 1 Peter 3:21

²¹and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

Theme: “Reborn to a New Life in Christ

After Adam and Eve sinned God sent them out of the Garden of Eden for a reason. He said, “[*The man*] must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” (Gen 3:22) God sent Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, so that they would die. It is part of His will that we will die to leave this sinful world and that we die to sin, so that we will be reborn to a new life in our Savior.

I. There was a rebirth, which occurred after Noah’s flood.

It says in Genesis 6 that God was grieved that He had made man on the earth because everything inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all of the time. (6:5,6) The only thing that people ever thought about was evil. The good world that God had created had become a very wicked place. It was corrupt and full of violence. (6:11) In the entire world, there was only one man who walked with God, and that was Noah. God had an idea. He would use Noah to bring a rebirth to the world. He told Noah to build an ark, which took 120 years. Noah took two of every animal and his family into the ark. During the 40 days that it rained and the succeeding days that the world was flooded, every living creature died. When Noah and his family came out of the ark, there was a new beginning. Every creature on earth can trace its origin to those that came out of the ark. Every person’s lineage can be traced to Noah. Through his righteousness the world experienced a rebirth from death.

II. Christ’s resurrection also brought new life for Him.

On Friday we left the church in silence as we commemorated the death of our Savior. It is a horrible event as we remember how He was wounded for our transgressions. He was mocked, beaten, and nailed to a cross to die. Then the Lord of all was laid in a grave. When we consider the suffering and death of Christ, we see the punishment that we should have born for our sins. He died an innocent death in our place.

But on Easter He rose to a new life. When Mary recognized Him, she wanted to hugged Him. She thought that everything was going to be the way that it was before, but Jesus said, “*Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father.*” Mary thought that it was going to be like old times. Jesus would be with them just like He was before, but everything was different now. All of His weakness, His poverty, His suffering, and His bearing our sins were now gone. He died and was raised in glory. Now He would ascend to the right hand of His Father. He would live in glory and power and rule all things for the good of His people. Jesus would still have the body that He had since His incarnation in Mary’s womb, but that body was now raised to a new life. It is the glorified body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

III. Baptism in Jesus' name also gives us new life.

Like the people before the flood we were dead in sin. We all have the sinful nature, which loves to do wicked things, and too often we carry out those desires. When we are baptized in Jesus' name, we die to sin. That sinful nature is drowned, and we rise to a new life in Christ. Paul puts it this way in Romans 6, "*Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?*" *We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*" In his letter to Titus Paul calls baptism "a washing of rebirth and renewal." In our epistle lesson this morning, Peter goes so far to write that baptism saves us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It was because that Jesus rose from the dead, that He was able to give baptism this power. It washes our sins away, and gives us new life in Christ. It is not that different from Noah's flood. The sins of the world were washed away, and when Noah came out of that ark, the world was reborn. As Baptized people, our sins have been washed away. Our sinful nature is drowned. We have been reborn to a new life in Christ. We have been clothed with His righteousness. His Spirit lives in us and gives us the desire to do what is good. When we do sin, we confess it, and trust in God's forgiveness for us in Christ. Before we were sinners, but as baptized children of God, we can now call God our dear Father, the friend who loves us most.

This new life in Christ also extends for all eternity. One day every one of us will die if the Lord does not return first. We all know the grief and tears that come with death. It is a very sad thing. But here there is also victory in Jesus. The new life that we have in Him will extend through all eternity. The remains that we put in the ground will be raised imperishable. We will be given glorified bodies, which will have no more suffering at all and which will live forever. We will live and reign for all eternity with our Savior Jesus Christ.

Death is a sad consequence of sin, but the gift of God is new life through the resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ. May His Spirit grant us all faith in our hearts, that we may die to sin and rise to live with our glorified Savior, both spiritually now and physically for all eternity.

Amen.

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