



I. INTRO

A. 2041 – What will joy be like 20 years from now, on our 50th anniversary

We should all be concerned about the future because we will have to spend the rest of our lives there.

C. F. Kettering (1876- 1958) American engineer, industrialist

B. What is it about the Church that's so important?

Acts 20:28 (NLT) ²⁸ “So guard yourselves and God’s people. Feed and shepherd God’s flock—his church, purchased with his own blood—over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as leaders.

- The church is God’s plan “A”

Mark 16:15-16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

II. BAPTISM

A. The word “baptize” didn’t start out as a “church” word

- It actually means to be “immersed” in, or “placed” into

B. The number one question about baptism

- Do I need to be baptized again?

Acts 19:3-6 ³ And he said to them, “Into what then were you baptized?” So they said, “Into John’s baptism.” ⁴ Then Paul said, “John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.” ⁵ When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

C. Baptism in the early church

Acts 8:12 (NLT) ¹² But now the people believed Philip’s message of Good News concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. As a result, many men and women were baptized.

Acts 8:36-38 (TLB) ³⁶ As they rode along, they came to a small body of water, and the eunuch said, “Look! Water! Why can’t I be baptized?” ³⁷ “You can,” Philip answered, “if you believe with all your heart.” And the eunuch replied, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” ³⁸ He stopped the chariot, and they went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

D. Baptism paints a picture of redemption

- Communion – a picture of what Jesus did for us
- Baptism – a picture of what we did with Christ



Romans 6:4-6 (NLT) ⁴ For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. ⁵ Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was. ⁶ We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin.

III. JOY TO THE WORLD

- A. A family church, teaching people, to reach their world
- We believe the world starts right here in central MN

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- B. We have been incredibly blessed – but why?

Ephesians 2:4-10 (NLT) ⁴ But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, ⁵ that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God’s grace that you have been saved!) ⁶ For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus.

- Here’s why we are incredibly blessed

Ephesians 2:7-10 (NLT) ⁷ So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus. ⁸ God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. ⁹ Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. ¹⁰ For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

- C. This is bigger than us

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (TLB) ³⁻⁴ What a wonderful God we have—he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of every mercy, and the one who so wonderfully comforts and strengthens us in our hardships and trials. And why does he do this? So that when others are troubled, needing our sympathy and encouragement, we can pass on to them this same help and comfort God has given us.