

## **Baptism**

**2 Kings 5 v 1 – 15a** - Naaman    //    **Romans 6 v 1 – 11** - Baptism

### **Sickness**

**v 1**    - *We are all born into a sinful nature and require healing* -    **v 1**

**Romans 3 v 23** "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

### **Searching**

**v 2 - 9**    - *Everyone is seeking the answer for healing* -    **v 2**

**John 3 v 14** "As Moses lifted up the serpent on a pole in the desert ..."

**Numbers 21 v 8 – 9** "...and everyone who looked upon it was healed."

### **Solution**

**v 10**    - *We have to be obedient to God's instruction* -    **v 4 – 5**

**John 2 v 5** "Whatever He says to you – do it!"

### **Sadness**

**v 11 – 12** - *Without Christ, we are sentenced to spiritual death* -    **v 6**

**John 3 v 18** "Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe in God's Son is already condemned."

### **Stigma**

**v 13**    - *Christ's death broke the slave-chains of sin* -    **v 6 – 7**

**John 8 v 34 & 36** "...everyone who sins becomes a slave to sin...but if the Son sets you free, you will indeed be set free."

### **Seven**

**v 14** - *Perfect healing, through the cleansing of Christ's blood* - **v 8 – 10**

**Psalms 51 v 1 – 9** "...cleanse me from my sin (**v 2**)...wash me and I will be whiter than snow (**v 7**)...blot out all my iniquities (**v 9**)."

### **Salvation**

**v 15**    - *Die to old self, and have a new-life realisation of Christ* -    **v 11**

**Galatians 2 v 20 – 21** "Having been crucified with Him, it is no longer I that lives, but Christ who lives in me... by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me."

## **Romans 6 v 1 – 11 - Baptism**

### **Sickness** - Shall we go on sinning?

**v 1** - *We are all born into a sinful nature and require healing -*

**Romans 3 v 23** "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

### **Searching** - How can we live in sin any longer?

**v 2** - *Everyone is seeking the answer for healing -*

**John 3 v 14** "As Moses lifted up the serpent on a pole in the desert ..."

**Numbers 21 v 8 – 9** "...and everyone who looked upon it was healed."

### **Solution** - How can we live a New Life?

**v 4 - 5** - *We have to be obedient to God's instruction -*

**John 2 v 5** "Whatever He says to you – do it!"

### **Sadness** - Am I doomed to die?

**v 6** - *Without Christ, we are sentenced to spiritual death -*

**John 3 v 18** "Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe in God's Son is already condemned."

### **Stigma** – Can I be made free?

**v 7** - *Christ's death broke the slave-chains of sin -*

**John 8 v 34 & 36** "...everyone who sins becomes a slave to sin...but if the Son sets you free, you will indeed be set free."

### **Seven** – Is God's healing a *complete* healing?

**v 8 - 10** - *Perfect healing, through the cleansing of Christ's blood -*

**Psalms 51 v 1 – 9** "...cleanse me from my sin (**v 2**)...wash me and I will be whiter than snow (**v 7**)...blot out all my iniquities (**v 9**)."

### **Salvation** – Am I therefore *made alive* in Christ?

**v 11** - *Die to old self, and have a new-life realisation of Christ -*

**Galatians 2 v 20 – 21** "Having been crucified with Him, it is no longer I that lives, but Christ who lives in me... by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me."

## **The Family of God**

**I John 3 v 1 – 3** “How great is the love that our heavenly Father lavishes on us, that we should be called **His children**? It’s true, we are!...We are **His children**...and one day we shall recognise Him and be recognised by Him”.

i) We know that God’s love is a Father’s love. **INHERITED**

**I John 4 v 7 – 9** “Let us love one another, for love comes from God, and everyone **who truly loves is born of God**, and knows God. Anyone who does not love, cannot know God, for God is love. This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son, Jesus Christ, into the world, that **we might live through Him**. This is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins”.

ii) We know that God’s love is in us. **INDWELLING**

**Galatians 3 v 26 & 4 v 1 – 7** “You are sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. By **being baptised in Christ you are clothed with Him**...you are **all One in Christ**...we were slaves...but God sent His Son...to redeem us and **claim us as His children**; therefore God gave us His Holy Spirit in our hearts, so we can cry out, ‘Abba, Father!’. You’re not slaves any more – you are **His children, His heirs**”.

iii) We know that God’s love has brought us into His family. **INCLUSIVE**

**Romans 8 v 15 – 17** “By the Spirit of God we can cry out, ‘Abba, Father!’ as a testimony that we are God’s children, and, **if children, then heirs**; yes, heirs to God and joint heirs with Christ. If we **share in His sufferings**, we shall also **share in His glory**”.

iv) We know that God’s love provides us our inheritance. **INTEGRAL**

**Matthew 19 v 13 – 15** “Jesus said, ‘Let the children come to me\*, and do not hinder\*\* them. The Kingdom of Heaven belongs to\*\*\* such as these.’ And He placed his hands\*\*\*\* on them, and blessed them.”

\*Jesus **welcomes** the children

\*\*Jesus **receives** the children

\*\*\*Jesus **includes** the children

\*\*\*\*Jesus **blesses** the children

Also: **Mark 10 v 13 – 16 / Luke 18 v 15 – 17**

“...anyone who will not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child, will never enter it”.

# **Christian Rituals on the Theme of Baptism**

## **Christening –**

A tradition within the established Church, dating from the Reformation. Newborns are “named” with their Christian name, and presented to God before the Church community.

The sprinkling of water on the forehead represents the blessing from God bestowed upon the child.

The sign of the cross is also made as the following words are spoken – “In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

A candle is lit to represent Jesus – the Light of the World.

***The onus is on the parents, God-parents and the congregation, to bring up the child in the Christian faith.***

## **Infant Baptism –**

A tradition within the established Church, dating back to the 1st Century. Much emphasis in the early Church was put on the welcoming of children into the Fellowship of Believers. “Jesus said, ‘Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them. The Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these.’ And He placed his hands on them, and blessed them.” **Matthew 19 v 13 – 15.**

In the middle-ages, priests would use picture-language/emblems, to aid the illiterate: Water – God’s cleansing, Oil – Holy Spirit’s anointing,

Candle – Jesus, Light of the World, White Garment – protection from sin

***The onus is on the parents, God-parents and the congregation, to bring up the child in the Christian faith.***

## **Dedication –**

After the Reformation, non-conformist Churches wanted to move away from the traditional rituals. But they still wanted to recognise newborn infants in their Groups. This practice emphasizes **Luke 2 v 21 – 24** “The infant, Jesus, was taken to the temple to be presented to God, as was the Law of the Lord.”

Giving thanks to God for the child;

Offering the child to God’s service;

Presenting the child to the Fellowship community.

***The onus is on the parents, God-parents and the congregation, to bring up the child in the Christian faith.***

**None of the above are personal confessions of Faith by the individual!**

**Ephesians 2 v 8 & v 19** “For, by grace you are saved, not by any works that you may have done...and through Christ you are no longer foreigners...but citizens of God’s household”.

## **Milk – Solids: Growing in Our Faith**

i) Milk of Necessity – we need milk to live

**Hebrews 5 v 13 – 14** ““You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, cannot discern the teachings regarding righteousness. Solid food is for the more mature.”

ii) Milk of Nurture – we need milk to grow

**1 Peter 2 v 2 – 3** “Be like newborn babies, craving pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow-up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.”

iii) Milk of Nourishment – we need milk to develop

**Philippians 2 v 12 – 13** “...continue to work out your own salvation, with reverence and caution, for it is God who works in you to develop according to His purposes.”

Our lives are built on the foundations of another's faith.

We thank God for the prayers, the support, and the faith of others.

But - *their* testimony is not *my* testimony.

- *their* commitments and promises are not *my* commitments and promises.
- *their* faith is not *my* faith.

### **Milk is Given – Solids are Taken!**

Paul could declare in **2 Timothy 1 v 12** “I *know* He whom I have believed, and I am *convinced* that He is able to keep and guard that which *I have entrusted* unto Him.”

### **Take Responsibility for Your Own Salvation!**

**Hebrews 10 v 22 – 23** “So, let us, therefore, draw near to God with *sincere hearts*, in full assurance of *our faith* in Him; having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from our guilt, and having our bodies washed with pure water. Hold unswervingly to the blessed Hope *which we profess*, for our God is faithful. So, let us spur one another on!”

Baptism is my *personal* Testimony to my *personal* Salvation.

Baptism is picture-language.

Baptism tells a story of Redemption (being bought back/redeemed) –

It says, “Hey, look! Once *I was* lost, but now *I am* found!”

## **Baptism – Review of Principles**

God has given many instructions to the Church. **Romans 6 v 1 – 11**

Usually the last thing we're told to do, is probably the most important –

**Matthew 28 v v 19** "Go, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, even to the end of time."

**\*The route by which we come to God for healing**

**2 Kings 5 v 1 – 15a** - Naaman // **Romans 6 v 1 – 11** - Baptism

Sickness; Searching; Solution; Sadness; Stigma; Seven (perfection); Salvation

**\*Belonging to God's Family**

i) We know that God's love is a Father's love.

**INHERITED I John 4 v 7 – 9**

ii) We know that God's love is in us.

**INDWELLING Galatians 3 v 26 & 4 v 1 – 7**

iii) We know that God's love has brought us into His family.

**INCLUSIVE Romans 8 v 15 – 17**

vi) We know that God's love provides us our inheritance.

**INTEGRAL Matthew 19 v 13 – 15**

**\*Our growth in independent understanding and personal acceptance by Faith**

i) Milk of Necessity – we need milk to live

**Hebrews 5 v 13 – 14**

ii) Milk of Nurture – we need milk to grow

**1 Peter 2 v 2 – 3**

iii) Milk of Nourishment – we need milk to develop

**Philippians 2 v 12 – 13**

**Milk is Given – Solids are Taken!**

**Take Responsibility for Your Own Salvation!**

Baptism is my *personal* Testimony to my *personal* Salvation.

Baptism is picture-language.

Baptism tells a story of Redemption (being bought back/redeemed) –

It says, "Hey, look! Once *I was* lost, but now *I am* found!"

**Hebrews 10 v 22 – 23** "So, let us, therefore, draw near to God with *sincere hearts*, in full assurance of *our faith* in Him; having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from our guilt, and having our bodies washed with pure water. Hold unswervingly to the blessed Hope *which we profess*, for our God is faithful. So, let us spur one another on!



## **Baptismal Symbolism**

Baptism is portrayed as symbolic in three different ways:

### **Initiation – *Infant Baptism/Christening/Dedication***

**Luke 2 v 21 – 24 & v 41 – 42** – Jesus' presentation at the temple

- A corporate act of welcoming into the community of God.
- Grown out of the Old Testament tradition of circumcision.
- A rite of passage symbolising cleansing.
- A seal of initiating into God's covenant or bond with His people.
- The Holy Spirit plants the seed of Faith to be nurtured.

*A sacramental symbol of God's cleansing.*

**Colossians 2 v 9 – 15 - Initiation parallels the old symbolism of circumcision with the new symbolism of baptism.**

### **Identification – *Believers/Adult Baptism***

**Acts 8 v 36 – 38** – "Look, here is water! What's stopping me from being baptised?"

- To identify with Christ's suffering, by an act of personal choice.
- An expression of repentance and conversion to Christ.

*Identifying with Christ's death, in immersion, then rising from the water, symbolically, into new life.*

**Romans 6 v 3 – 4 - Identification parallels Christ's sacrifice with the new symbolism of full immersion baptism.**

### **Infusion – *Baptism of the Holy Spirit***

**Matthew 3 v 11** – "I baptise with water...He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

- God's promise of the infilling of His Holy Spirit.
- The act of receiving the Holy Spirit's power for ministry.
- This "baptism" is often referred to as the "second blessing".

*The indwelling of God's Holy Spirit.*

**Acts 1 v 8 & John 16 v 7 – 14 – Infusion fulfils Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit to all who believe in Him; for they shall receive power to be God's witnesses.**

**2 Corinthians 5 v 17 – 21** "So, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old is gone, the new has come! This comes through God, reconciling us to Himself through Christ. He has given us the ministry of reconciliation, so we may bring others into harmony with Him. God does not count men's sin against them. He has sent us as ambassadors for Him. So, we implore you, in Christ: be reconciled to God. God caused Him, Who had no sin, to become sin for us, so that we may become the righteousness of God."

# Jesus' Baptism

## **Matthew 3 v 11 – 17 : The Baptism of Jesus**

i) **Approved** by God

**Mark 1 v 11** "And a voice came from heaven, saying, 'You are My Son, whom I love. I am well pleased with you.'"

ii) **Announced** His ministry

**John 1 v 32 – 34** "John the Baptist testified, 'I am not He, but one stands here who will baptise with the Holy Spirit. This is the Son of God.'"

iii) **Acquainted** Himself with sin

**1 Peter 2 v 24** "He bore our sins in His body, on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live unto righteousness; for by His wounds you have been healed."

**2 Corinthians 5 v 21** "God allowed him who had no sin, to be made sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."

**Philippians 2 v 8** "...He humbled Himself, and became obedient to death; even the death on a cross."

iv) **Advocated** the practice of baptism to His disciples

**Matthew 28 v 19** "Go, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, even to the end of time."

If my baptism is a picture-language testimony of what Jesus Christ has done for me, then:

i) I am testifying to **God's approval of my redemption**;

ii) I am testifying to **my availability for His service**;

iii) I am testifying to the fact that **Christ has borne my sins** and brought me salvation;

iv) I am testifying that **I am willing to be obedient** to His will in my life.

**Galatians 2 v 20 – 21** "Having been crucified with Him, it is no longer I that lives, but Christ who lives in me... by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me."



## **Baptism – The “Naaman” Principles**

It's all about Grace – a love shown to us that is totally undeserved, and a recognition by us that, **Romans 5 v 8** "... even while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

- I have been Sick in my sin
- I have been Searching for the answer
- I know I must be obedient to the Solution
- I have been Sad as I've counted the cost
- I have had a Stigma of shame
- I believe in Christ's perfect cleansing (Seven)
- I testify to Christ's Salvation

**2 Kings 5 v 1 – 15a** - Naaman

### **Sickness: Can I go on sinning?**

**v 1** "Now Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his master, and highly regarded, because through him the Lord had given victory to Aram. He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy."

**Romans 6 v 1 - 2** "What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? Certainly not! We died to sin; so how can we live in it any longer?

- *We are all born into a sinful nature and require healing*

**Romans 3 v 23** "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Peter's instructions -

**Acts 2 v 38** "Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins."

Peter had been preaching the Gospel to a crowd. The people asked what they should do to receive salvation from their sins.

**v 41** "Those who accepted his message were then baptised."

*Parallel:*

**Numbers 21 v 6 - 7** "...and many were dying from the bites of the venomous snakes...and they cried out, 'We have sinned against God!'"

**John 3 v 14 – 16** "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life".

## Searching: Where can I find the answer?

**Romans 6 v 2** "...so, how can we live in sin any longer?"

**Acts 8 v 30 – 34** The Ethiopian was reading the Scriptures, Philip asked him if he understood. He replied, "How can I unless it is explained to me?" Philip joined him and, **v 35** "...began with Isaiah, and told him the Good News about Jesus." **v 36 – 38** "...they came to some water, and the Ethiopian asked Philip, 'Look, here is water, why shouldn't I be baptised, now?' So they stopped the chariot, went down into the water, and Philip baptised him there and then." He was reading **Isaiah 53 v 7 – 8** "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter...humiliated, and deprived of justice..." This is a prophecy of Jesus' sacrificial death for us. Receiving this Good News was sufficient for him to Repent and be Baptised.

*Parallel with:*

**John 3 v 14** "As Moses lifted up the serpent on a pole in the desert ..."

**Numbers 21 v 8 – 9** "...and everyone who looked upon it was healed."

The Eurythmics: "Sweet Dreams" - *"Everyone is searching for something"*

- The wise men in **Matthew 2 v 1** "...where is he who has been born King of the Jews?"
- The man with leprosy in **Matthew 8 v 2** "...so Lord, if you are able, make me clean."
- The sick woman in the crowd in **Matthew 9 v 21** "...if I could just touch the hem of His garment, I will be healed."

How hard are we willing to seek for something?

**Matthew 13 v 44 – 46** "The Kingdom of Heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When the man discovered it, he joyfully sold all that he had bought the land."..."Also, it is like a jewel merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found a pearl of great value, he sold everything he had, and bought it."

Where is the answer to our spiritual healing?

**Matthew 6 v 33** "Seek first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, then all these things will be added unto you."

Will we like what we find?

**2 Kings 5 v 9 – 12** "Couldn't he just wave his hands over me...or, if I must wash, surely not the filthy Jordan river, for there are much cleaner rivers where I could wash. Wouldn't they do?... and he went away in a rage."

## **Solution: What is the cost of obedience?**

**Romans 6 v 3** "All of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus, were baptised into His death".

**Luke 9 v 62** "No one who puts his hand to the plough, and then looks back, is fit for service in the Kingdom of God." This was Jesus' retort to the excuses of prospective followers.

Jesus Christ set us this perfect example of obedience:

**Philippians 2 v 7 – 8** " He made Himself as nothing, taking on the nature of a servant, He became man...He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death – even death on a cross!

And even when He faced His ultimate test:

**Luke 22 v 41 – 44** "Jesus prayed, 'Father if You are willing, take this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done.' And an angel of the Lord appeared and strengthened Him. And so, being in anguish, He continued to pray more earnestly, until His sweat was like droplets of blood."

**1 John 3 v 23 – 24** "This is His command: to believe in His Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as He has commanded us. Those who obey His commands, live in Him, and He in them. We know this by the Holy Spirit He gave us."

Namaan's solution:

**2 Kings 5 v 10** "...go and wash seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed". **v 13** "wash and be cleansed".

- The cost of obedience!

## **Sadness: Why would I be sad?**

**Romans 6 v 4** "We were therefore buried with Him, through baptism, into death..."

In human terms, death is sad. It is the passing away of a life. It is the saying "Good-bye" to our old life.

Many came to Jesus with inflated opinions of themselves and who they were, or what they had achieved. He is never impressed!

The Rich Young Ruler – **Mark 10 v 22 – 23** After Jesus explained to the man, the cost of following Him, "...the man's face fell, and he went away sad, because he had great wealth."

The Rich Man & Lazarus – **Luke 16 v 24** "Have pity on me...because I am in agony."

The Parable of The Rich Fool – **Luke 12 v 19 – 20** "God said to him, 'You fool, tonight your soul will be required of you – then you will receive what you deserve!'"

And even Naaman – **2 Kings 5 v 10 – 11**, after he was told to go and wash in the filthy Jordan River, "Naaman went away angry." Why? Because he wanted healing on his own terms. God wants us on His terms.

## **Stigma: What is this stigma of shame?**

**Romans 6 v 6 – 7** "...for our old self was crucified with Him, so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin".

As Christ is not ashamed of us, before His heavenly Father, neither should we be ashamed, anymore, for He has borne our shame.

**Hebrews 12 v 2** "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who, for the joy set before Him, endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

**Mark 8 v 34 – 38** "If anyone would follow Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me. If anyone wants to hold on to their life – they'll lose it; but if anyone is willing to forsake his life for the Gospel's sake, they'll save it...be ashamed of Me, and I'll be ashamed of him."

**Romans 1 v 16** "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation, to everyone who believes."

The stigma of sin makes us enslaved to sin.

We do not sin because we want to, but because we are born to it.

**John 3 v 5 – 6** "Jesus answered, 'I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit'."

**John 8 v 34 & 36** "...everyone who sins becomes a slave to sin...but if the Son sets you free, you will indeed be set free."

Release the chains that bind you!

**2 Kings 5 v 13** "...if you were instructed to do some great thing, wouldn't you have done it? So what's your problem when he says, 'Go, wash and be cleansed!'?"

**Hebrews 12 v 1** "...let us, therefore, throw off everything that hinders us, and the sin that so easily ensnares and entangles us, so as to run the race, with perseverance, which is set before us".

## **Seven: How do I receive God's perfect cleansing?**

**Romans 6 v 6 – 10** "...once and for all..."

*The incomplete jigsaw puzzle or the unfinished airfix model –*

*Don't you just hate it, when that happens?*

**John 19 v 30** this affirmation is recorded: on the cross, Jesus cried out, "It is finished!"

- Did He mean He had failed?
- Did He mean He could do no more?

NO! He meant: – Job done! Complete!

God's perfect plan of Salvation!

Our response should be one of *Full Obedience* to Him.

Jesus gave His final instructions to the disciples in **Matthew 28 v 19** "Go and make disciples, baptising them..." **Mark 16 v 16** "...and whoever believes and is baptised, will be saved." And then to Paul (Saul of Tarsis) after his conversion, in **Acts 22 v 16** "What are you waiting for? Get up, be baptised, and wash your sins away by calling on the name of the Lord."

God's promise to us, if we obey Him -

**1 John 1 v 9** "If we confess our sins, He is **faithful** and **just** to forgive us our sins, and to **cleanse us** from **all unrighteousness**."

**Revelations 22 v 14 & 17** "'Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of Life...Come! Whoever is thirsty, let him come and partake of the free gift of the water of Life."

**2 Kings 5 v 14** "So, Naaman went down into the river and dipped himself SEVEN times in the Jordan, just as the prophet of God had told him to. His flesh was immediately restored, and became as fresh as that of a young boy."

The completeness of God's cleansing - dependent on our obedience.

Five or six was not enough!

God said "Seven", so that was that!

And so, we are commanded to express our Salvation in Christ, by being baptised...

**Romans 6 v 4** "...we are buried with Him through baptism, in order that, as He was raised from the dead, so we are raised in the fullness of New Life."



## **Salvation: How do I confess to Christ's salvation?**

**Romans 6 v 11** "So, therefore, count yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus."

Believe in your heart: Confess with your mouth.

**Romans 10 v 9 – 10** "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord', and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."

**Philippians 2 v 10 – 11** "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

**Romans 12 v 1** "Offer up your bodies as *living* sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship."

Namaan's confession of God's great healing power –

**2 Kings 5 v 15** "And Naaman went back to the man of God, and stood before him. He proclaimed, 'Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel'."

Namaan was healed in his body, but God's healing is all about the cleansing of our sin and the Salvation only He can bring.

The waters of baptism are a "Picture Story" of God's work of spiritual healing in my life.

In being obedient to baptism, I am confessing before others, what God has done in my life:

**Philippians 1 v 20 – 21** "May I not be ashamed, but will have the courage for Christ to be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For, to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

I was dead in my sin, but through Christ, I am now alive in Him.

## **The Act of Believers Baptism**

**Romans 6 v 1 – 14** “We are 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 to may live a new life, in Him.” **v 4**

### **2 Corinthians 5 v 14 – 21**

#### **The Wonder of Reconciliation – in Christ I am a New Creation!**

I want to explain in picture-language, my conversion testimony, in a way that others will understand what Jesus Christ has done for me.

- i) My outward expression of God’s grace (undeserved love). **v 1**
- ii) My rejection of sin and its consequences. **v 2**
- iii) My thanks to God for His Son, Jesus Christ’s death for me. **v 3**
- iv) My relief that Jesus’ triumph over death gives me Life. **v 4**
- v) My confidence that I will live with Him forever. **v 4 – 5**
- vi) My freedom from the desire of sinning. **v 6 – 7**

At my infant Baptism/Christening/Dedication other people made promises, on my behalf, to bring me up in the Christian faith.

Prayers for God’s blessings on my life were made on my behalf.

Ever since that day, those same folk have either:

- been faithful to their promises
- have failed to keep their promises

I was an innocent babe with no understanding of the Christian faith.

**1 Corinthians 13 v 11** “When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a grown-up, I put childish ways behind me.”

As I have grown, I have:

- learned to think and work things out for myself;
- searched and discovered the truths of the Gospel for myself;
- taken responsibilities for the decisions I have made in my life;
- chosen to accept Jesus Christ as my own personal Saviour, (or to reject Him and live my life without His salvation).

I am Compelled – **2 Corinthians 5 v 14** Know what I have to do

I am Convinced – **2 Corinthians 5 v 14 – 15** Know it’s right

I am a new Creation – **2 Corinthians 5 v 17** Know I’ve been changed