



When In Romans: **"SIGNS"**

Pastor Mark Alt

Sunday, March 16, 2025

Introduction:

The believers in Rome were in the midst of a miracle. No longer a Jewish faith only, the Gentiles (all non-Jewish people) were responding to the Good News of Jesus. The Gentiles also believed in the forgiveness of sins through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. And as this miracle called, the Church grew, bringing together former ethnic enemies as brothers and sisters. But many questions arose, including the role of Jewish traditions and whether or not it counted for Jews to be "right" in the eyes of God. While we don't deal with Jewish traditions, traditions can still be a source of confusion for people. So today, let's look at baptism.

Reflection And Discussion:

1. Read aloud Romans 4:1-6 (P.1286, Christian Basics Bible). According to the passage, why can't you earn God's acceptance either by good deeds or a tradition?

Why do you think so many people come to God with the idea we have to earn his love to deserve it? Were any of you raised to think that way?

2. For the Jew, to be circumcised was a sign of your identity as a Jew. For the Christ-follower, baptism is the sign of your identity as a child of God. What does Romans 4:11 reveal about to look at biblical traditions (for believers, there are only two – baptism and communion)?

Today we let's explore what baptism is about:

What is baptism?

"baptize" means to immerse. It symbolizes washing away all my sins through death, burial, and resurrection. It is an outward expression of my inward faith. Why get baptized?

3. Look up Matthew 28:18-20 (P.1116), spoken by Jesus after his resurrection. Knowing what was just covered, why does baptism and a willingness to obey make sense?

Note: following Christ is a learning process.

a) Read aloud Acts 2:40-41 (p.1239). According to this passage, why is it important that belief comes before baptism?

Benefits of baptism:

b) Baptism points me to Jesus' power in my life. Look up Romans 6:2-4 (P.1289). As you look back on your baptism, how can you be strengthened when I face the temptation to fall back into your old ways?

c) Through baptism, I embrace God's plan for my life. Luke 7:29-30 (P.1165). What are some reasons that someone who professes to follow God might not want to get baptized? What does a "yes" to baptism indicate?

d) The idea of a "personal" or "private" faith is actually foreign to the Scriptures. There is a much greater purpose and plan God is pursuing that goes far beyond our personal preferences. Read Ephesians 2:14-18 (P.1348) and Galatians

3:26–28(P.1341) aloud. What is that purpose and plan of God, and why can we rejoice in it? If you are a follower of Christ, have you been baptized?

Personal Reflection:

Take some time to answer and meditate on the following questions:

- Where are you struggling to trust in God?
- What all have you seen God do throughout your life?

Prayer these things today:

1. God, Increase my confidence and trust in You
2. Increase my knowledge of who You are in my heart
3. Help me to remember all You have done in my life
4. God help me to see where my trust is weak
5. Help me learn to trust You beyond what I can understand.

Memory Verse

"But then I recall all you have done, O LORD; I remember your wonderful deeds of long ago."

Psalms 77:11