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**TREASURE YOUR BAPTISM: THE VOICE OF ROBERT CHINO**

*Baptism … now saves you also* (1 Peter 3:21).

The year was 1911. Missionary E. Edgar Guenther and his wife, Minnie, had just arrived at East Fork and were getting settled. One day they heard that an Apache boy was grievously ill up Seven Mile Canyon. Since their saddles had not yet arrived, the two set out on foot and made the four-mile hike up the steep trail. There they found Robert Chino. Robert, the son of the local chief, L-1, had been dismissed from the Government boarding school because he had advanced tuberculosis. Mrs. Guenther reported, “Young Robert fairly drank in the Gospel truths we brought him and after a number of visits asked to be baptized” (M. Guenther 1956:40). Soon thereafter, Missionary Guenther was ready to perform the baptism at the Indian camp, but L-1 suggested a delay. Rev. Guenther turned to the chief and again began to explain the significance of baptism. Robert, however, grew impatient. He exclaimed, **“Explain that to him afterwards when I am gone, but don’t wait until it is too late.”** The baptism took place. Robert died a few days later. At the graveside L-1 hushed the crowd and said that Robert had requested that no one should cry over him since he was going to a better home. Robert was the first Apache baptized on the Ft. Apache Indian Reservation. And THE WORD OF THE LORD GROWS.

**QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED**

1. Were “a number of visits” enough for Robert to understand Christianity and Baptism in order to make an informed request to be baptized?

2. Was Robert showing disrespect toward his father when he insisted on being baptized contrary to his father’s hesitancy?

3. Should Missionary Guenther have followed L-1s request for more time rather than Robert’s request to be baptized that day?

4. Was Robert already a Christian before being baptized? If so, why did he need Baptism?

**BAPTISM BASICS**

1. In everyday usage at the time of Christ, the word “baptism” meant to apply water for the purpose of washing. For example, Mark 7:4-5 reads, “When they [Pharisees] come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they *baptizo* (wash). And there are many other traditions they adhere to, such as the *baptismos* (washing) of cups, pitchers, kettles, and dining couches.”1

2. Baptism takes on a special meaning in Christianity, however.

a. Read Matthew 28:18-19. Who commanded that people be baptized? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

b. What two things must be present for a valid baptism to take place?

1) Read Acts 8:36. What is required? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2) Read Matthew 28:19. What else is required? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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3. What does Baptism accomplish?

a. Read Acts 2:38. Baptism bestows \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

b. Read 1 Peter 3:21 and Titus 3:5. Baptism \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

c. Read Galatians 3:26-27. Through Baptism God makes us his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. For whom is baptism intended?

a. Read Matthew 28:19. Baptism is intended for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

b. Read Acts 8:38. Age wise, Baptism is for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

c. Read Acts 16:15, 16:31-33, and 1 Corinthians 1:16. Age wise, Baptism is for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. Ordinarily

a. Read Acts 8:30-38. Circle one. Ordinarily, in the case of adults, instruction (**precedes or follows**) Baptism?

b. Read Luke 18:15-16. Circle one. In the case of infants, instruction (**precedes or follows**) Baptism?

6. Summary

Baptism works forgiveness of sin, delivers from death and the devil, and gives

eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God

declare … Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Mark, “Whoever believes

and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned”

(Luther 2006:230).

**QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED**

1. Question. Were “a number of visits” enough for Robert to understand Christianity and Baptism in order to make an informed request to be baptized?

a. In the introduction we heard Mrs. Guenther say, “Young Robert fairly drank in the Gospel truths we brought him and after a number of visits asked to be baptized.”

b. Was Robert treated as an infant or adult when it came to Baptism? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

c. Were “a number of visits” enough for Robert to understand baptism and make an informed decision to be baptized? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

d. In what ways does the case of Rev. Guenther and Robert Chino parallel that of Philip and the Ethiopian official (Acts 8:36-38). \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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2. Question. Was Robert showing disrespect toward his father when he insisted on being baptized contrary to his father’s hesitancy?

a. Read Ephesians 6:1-3 and consider what Luther (2006:77) wrote regarding the Fourth Commandment.

Honor your father and mother, that it may go well with you and that you may

enjoy long life on earth [from Exodus 20:12]. *What does this mean?* We should

fear and love God that we do not dishonor or anger our parents and others in authority, but honor, serve, and obey them, and give them love and respect.

b. Now read Acts 2:38-39 and Acts 5:29. Was it God’s will that Robert be baptized?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

c. Finally, consider Robert’s words. **“Explain that to him afterwards when I am gone, but**

**don’t wait until it is too late.** Was it Robert’s intent to disobey his father’s will or, rather,

to receive the stupendous blessings of baptism?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

d. Consider Jesus in the temple (Luke 2: 48-50). Sometimes a parent does not understand.

3. Question. Should Missionary Guenther have followed L-1s request for more time rather than Robert’s request to be baptized that day?

a. Consider the commands of God regarding Baptism as well as the blessings of Baptism.

b. Was Guenther taking Robert’s side against his father or acting in the best spiritual interest of the youth he had been instructing? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

c. Consider this from the introduction. “Robert died a few days later. At the graveside L-1 hushed the crowd and said that Robert had requested that no one should cry over him since he was going to a better home.”

Do you think L-1 soon understood why Baptism was so important for Robert? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. Question. Was Robert already a Christian before being baptized? If so, why did he need Baptism?

a. Was the Ethiopian already a Christian before he was baptized (Acts 8:35-37)? Was Lydia

already a Christian before she was baptized (Acts 16:13-14)?

b. Why then do unbaptized Christians desire Baptism.

1) Do they want the spiritual assurances promised by God in Baptism? See blessings outlined above as well as Mark 16:16? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2) Do they want to be obedient to God’s command in Matthew 28:18-20? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*When the seed of the Word is sown, the Christian fervently desires Baptism. And THE WORD OF THE LORD GROWS.*

CLOSING THOUGHT

Baptized into your name most holy, O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,

I claim a place, thought weak and lowly, Among your saints, your chosen host,

Buried with Christ and dead to sin. Your Spirit now shall live within.

(Christian Worship 294).

ENDNOTE

1The translation used here is from the Evangelical Heritage Version from Northwestern Publishing House.

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