



BAPTISM FOR REMISSION OF SINS

THEOLOGY THURSDAYS

WHAT IS BAPTISM

Gate into the Church and into Christianity

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into His death?. Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ‘For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin’.

Romans 6: 3-6



Baptism is...

SIGN OF NEW LIFE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

- It unites the one baptised with Christ and with his people.

PARTICIPATION IN CHRIST'S DEATH AND RESURRECTION

- Romans 6:3–5
- Colossians 2:12

WASHING AWAY SIN

- 1 Corinthians 6:11

NEW BIRTH

- John 3:5



Baptism is...

- **ENLIGHTENMENT BY CHRIST**
 - Ephesians 5:14
- **RE-CLOTHING IN CHRIST**
 - Galatians 3:27
- **RENEWAL BY THE SPIRIT**
 - Titus 3:5
- **EXPERIENCE OF SALVATION FROM THE FLOOD**
 - 1 Peter 3:20–21



Baptism is...

- **EXODUS FROM BONDAGE**
 - 1 Corinthians 10:1-2
- **LIBERATION INTO A NEW HUMANITY**
 - Galatians 3:27-28
 - 1 Corinthians 12:13



BAPTISM IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Catechumens - "If a catechumen coming into the church has taken his place in the order of catechumen, and falls into sin, let him, if a kneeler, become a hearer, and sin no more. But should he again sin while a hearer let him be cast out." (Canon 5 of the Council of Neocaesarea (315))

Denunciation of the Devil - Cyril writes: "Receive the exorcisms eagerly, whether they be insufflations or imprecations, for this is salutary for you. Consider that you are gold that has been adulterated and falsified. We are looking for pure gold. But as gold cannot be purified of its alloys without fire, so the soul cannot be purified without exorcisms, which are divine words, chosen from the Holy Scriptures."

In regards to non-Christian adults in the olden days, this is not for someone who was born into a Christian family. "You first entered into the vestibule of the baptistery, and, while you stood and faced the West, you were told to stretch out your hand. Then you renounced Satan as if he were present, saying: I renounce you, Satan, and all your pomp and all your worship. "

Cyril explains to us why the renunciation of Satan takes place while the candidate faces the West: "I will explain to you why you stand facing the West. As the West is the region of visible darkness, and since Satan, who has darkness for his portion, has his empire in the darkness, so, when you turn symbolically toward the West, you renounce this dark and obscure tyrant".



BAPTISM IN THE EARLY CHURCH

The profession of faith made while facing the East. East complemented the abjuration made while facing the west. The rite is found in the baptismal liturgy of Milan. “You were turned to the East. For he who renounces he demon turns himself to Christ. He sees him face to face”.

In the Coptic Church:

I renounce you, Satan, with all your impure works, all your evil soldiers, all your wickedness, all your powers, all your despicable worship, all your deceiving and misleading trickery, all your armies, all your principalities, and all the rest of your hypocrisy. I renounce you! I renounce you! I renounce you!

“I accept/Confess you, O Christ, my God, with all Your Holy commandments, all Your life-giving service and works. I believe in one God, God the Father the Pantocrator and his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, our God, with the Holy Spirit, the Life-Giver, The resurrection of the body, and in one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.”





REPENTANCE

The Return to God

‘Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.’
(Acts 4:32)

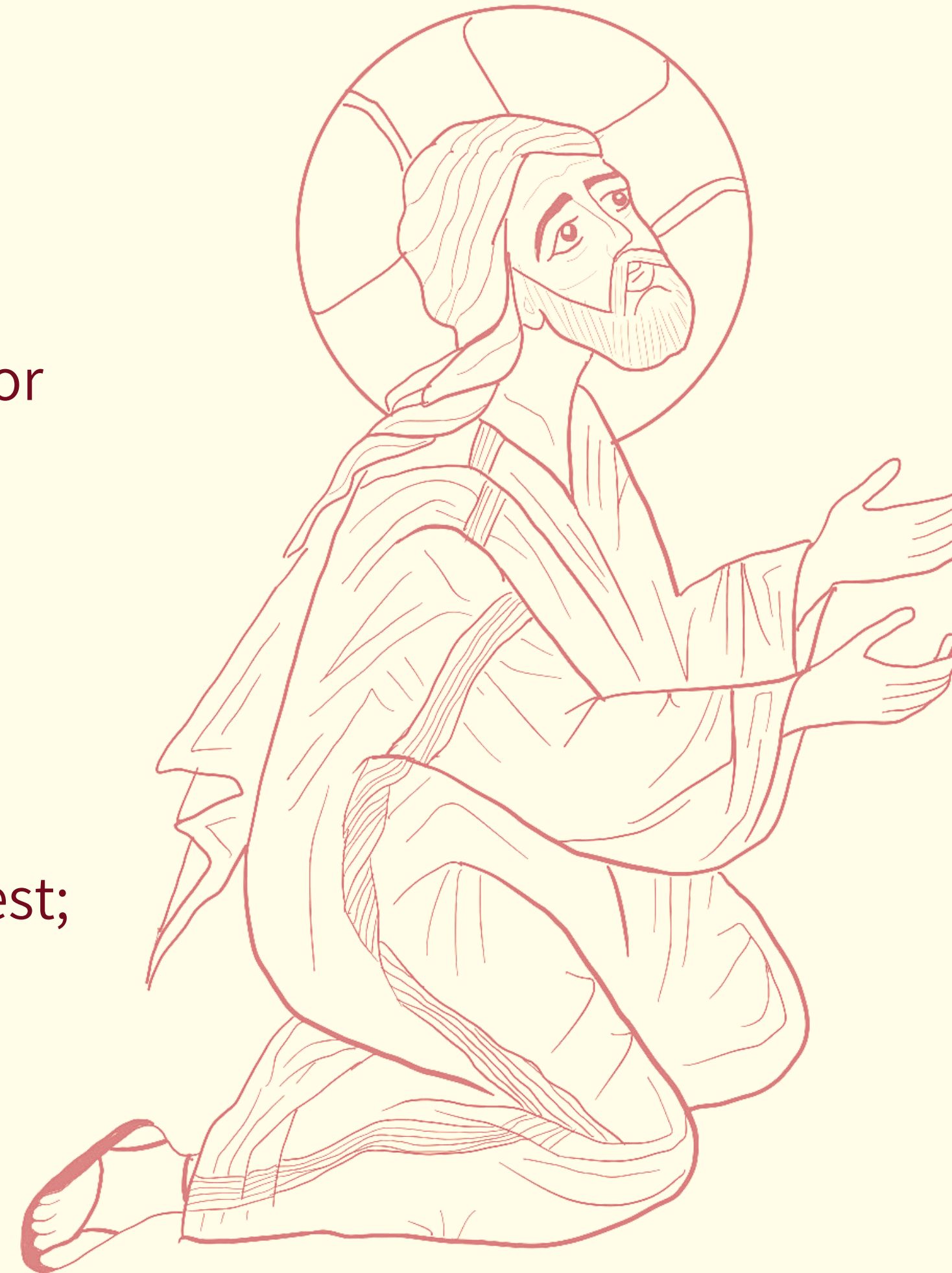
Confession & Repentance

Definitions

Remission: forgiveness of sins; removing ones debt or charge

Forgiveness: stop feeling angry/resentful towards someone for an offence or mistake (or sin)

Absolution: release from the bond of sins by the priest; prayed in every service for all the people



Aim of the Sacrament

FORGIVENESS OF SINS

‘Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.’
(Acts 4:32).

- + It is a continuous change in the life of man, from a life of the body towards the life of the Spirit, and not only it is forgiveness of sins.
- + Garment of Salvation

The Need for Repentance

Illness

- + “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:32)
- + “You are He who sent to me the prophets for my sake, I the sick” (Anaphora of St Gregory)
- + Litany of the Sick, Christ the HEALING of us all
- + Christ the Lord restored us to friendship through His birth... On our behalf He reconciled us to the Father, against Whom we had sinned, and therefore canceled our disobedience, restoring us to fellowship with our maker.” (Irenaus)

Self-Reflection

- + For the sinner understands that he has done wickedly before the Lord; and the deed which he has done comes into his heart, and he repents and does wickedly no longer; rather, he does good abundantly, and humbles his soul, and puts it to torture because it sinned.” (Shepherds of Hermas; 2nd C)
 - + The Prodigal son - “came to himself” (Luke 15:17)
 - + Those who choose what is pleasing to God are, by virtue of the choice, admitted to immortality and fellowship with God (Justin Martyr)
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Faith and Works

Clement of Alexandria describe is 'twofold: that which is done for love, and that which is done through fear. For indeed it is said, "The fear of the Lord is pure, remaining forever and ever." Those who, because of fear, turn to faith and righteousness, remain forever. Fear does, in fact, motivate to abstaining from evil: but love, building up to free action, exhorts to the doing of good.' (St. Clement of Alexandria (150-216)).

Ephraim the Syrian also explains that while we ask for forgiveness, "do not harbour hatred for your brothers when you ask forgiveness of your sins."

Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem". (Luke 24:46-47)

**What happens to us when we
Repent?**

- + Very Difficult moment to live and experience
- + Luke 13:5 "but unless you repent you will all likewise perish"
- + Ambrose of Milan puts it "a propensity (tendency or inclination to behave in a particular way) to virtue, or an inclination to sin." (Freedom of choice)
- + "God does not insist or desire that we should mourn in agony of heart; rather, it is His wish that out of love for Him we should rejoice with laughter in our soul. Take away sin, and tears become superfluous; where there is no bruise, no ointment is required. Before the fall, Adam shed no tears, and in the same way there will be no more tears after the resurrection from the dead, when sin has been destroyed. For pain, sorrow and lamentation will then have fled away." (John Climacus)

+ Sometimes we do not see any outlet, any escape from our sins, and they torment us: on account of them, the heart is oppressed with sorrow and weary. But Jesus looks upon us, and streams of tears flow from our eyes, and with the tears all the tissue of evil in our soul vanishes. We weep with joy that such mercy has suddenly and unexpectedly been sent to us. (John of Kronstadt)

+ Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

When I was a young man (related Abba Serapion), I lived with my spiritual father, and at mealtimes, prompted by the devil, I would steal a rusk (a sweetened biscuit) as I got up from the table, and eat it without my father's knowledge. Because I persisted in this habit, I was utterly overcome by it and was unable to conquer it. Though I was condemned by my own conscience, I was ashamed to speak of it to my father. But through God's love, it happened that certain brethren came to the old man for advice and asked him about their thoughts. The elder replied that nothing so harms a monk and brings such joy to the demons as the hiding of one's thoughts from one's spiritual father. He also spoke to them about self-control. As this was being said, I came to myself and, thinking that God had revealed my past mistakes to the elder, I was pricked with compunction and began to cry, throwing from my pocket the rusk which I had stolen as usual. Casting myself to the ground, I begged for his forgiveness for my past faults, and his prayers for my future safety. Then the old man said: "My child, your confession has freed you, although I was silent. You have slain the demon that was wounding you because of your silence, by expressing openly what you were keeping to yourself..." The old man had not finished speaking when the energy of the demon could be seen coming out of my breast like the flame of a lamp. It filled the room with a nasty smell, so that those present thought that a lump of sulphur was burning... As a result of my confession, the passion of gluttony and the demonic energy left me, and I never again felt any such desire.

Relationship between Baptism and Repentance

- + Repentance begins at Baptism – Ends with union with God
- + Repentance also a *Mystery* (like any other sacrament)
- + Baptism is the first repentance and acceptance of the new life
- + Repentance is continuous renewal of the first Baptism
- + Baptism not supported by repentance, loses its effectiveness
- + **Rev 20.6** 'Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.'