

Holy Baptism 4: What It Indicates

What does such baptizing with water indicate?

It indicates that the Old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Where is this written?

St. Paul writes in Romans chapter six: "We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of God the Father, we too may live a new life" (Romans 6:4).

I must admit, growing up in the Friends Church, I didn't know much about Christians of other denominations. Any noticeable differences were interesting to me. For example, I would see Catholics crossing themselves when they prayed and wondered what it meant and why we didn't do it. Sometimes, I would hear them say, "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" as they made this sign. I figured there must be a meaning to it, but then I would see a movie where a Catholic was seemingly absent-mindedly crossing themselves at the drop of a hat. Was it just a silly superstitious movement? Was it for good luck?

Then, I came upon the Lutheran Church. And I noticed that some, not all, of the people in the worship service would cross themselves at certain points in the service, while saying, "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Then I learned what it was all about. The two things go together. Saying, "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" reminds us of our Trinitarian Baptism, as we were baptized into the Triune name of God. At our Baptism, the sign of the cross was made on our foreheads and hearts to mark us as "one redeemed by Christ the crucified."

What a great thing to remember during a worship service or throughout the day! Through Baptism, Christ has redeemed me by His shed blood on the cross. Because of that I am forgiven and have a new life in Him. Christ, my Lord died on the cross so He could save me from my sins and live in my heart. This is what Baptism indicates.