PREACHING & TEACHING

Baptism Sermon

A baptism sermon framework for the service where the congregation contains more visitors than members and the person in the water is the reason everyone came. Short, built around Romans 6, and written to explain what is happening without turning the moment into a lecture.

12 min preached · 4 segments

Four movements, twelve minutes. Short because the baptism itself is the sermon and this is the commentary.

BEFORE YOU RECORD

- The room is full of people who came for one person and have no idea what is about to happen. Explain the mechanics plainly once, early, without apology. They will be grateful and the members will not mind.
- Twelve minutes. The candidate is often nervous, sometimes cold, and standing. Every minute you add is a minute they are waiting.
- If the candidate gives a testimony, let it be the emotional centre and keep your own material deliberately plainer. Do not compete with it.

01. Say what is about to happen

2 min

[plain mechanics - assume nobody knows]

In a few minutes this person is going into the water and coming out again. Some of you have seen this before and some of you are wondering what you have walked into, so let me say plainly what it is and what it is not.

It is not a magic act and the water is not special. It is a sign, done in public, of something that has already happened privately. Rather like a wedding ring, which does not make a marriage but says one out loud.

[adjust for your tradition - if you baptise infants, the sign is of promise rather than decision, and say so here]

02. The text

3 min

[Romans 6 - the burial language is the point and it is startling]

[read Romans 6:3-4 aloud]

Notice the word Paul uses. Buried. Not washed, not cleaned, not refreshed. Buried. You do not bury something you intend to use again.

Which makes going under the water a strange thing to volunteer for, and makes coming up out of it the entire point.

03. The turn

5 min

[the claim - keep it about the person in the water, not about doctrine]

Every one of us is carrying a version of ourselves we would rather not be. The promise here is not that it gets improved. It is that it gets buried, and something else comes up.

[your material, 350 words - name what this particular person is walking away from if they have given you permission, and nothing if they have not]

04. The close and the invitation

2 min

[low pressure - one open door, no aisle call]

If you are watching this thinking it is not for you, that is fine, and nobody here is going to chase you about it. But it was not for this person either, until it was.

[hand into the baptism itself - stop talking and get in the water]

USAGE

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