

Baptism and Membership Service of Brandon Fish, Casey Hueni, Jon Wesner, Michelle Wesner, Stephanie Scholes, Qayum Khan

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Preacher: Jason Webb

[0:00] There are certain events in our lives that are turning points, that they forever change the way we live, the way we think, the way we react to life.

Having your first baby is absolutely revolutionary. From the day you take that little bundle of joy home, life is completely different.

You used to look at chairs and you used to look at coffee tables as innocent things. Now there are jagged points and devastating heights. Everything is different when you become responsible for that little one.

But there's an event that is even more revolutionary, even more life-changing than that, and that is salvation. And tonight we're here to celebrate the salvation of these four individuals.

They've been born again, and God has given them an entirely new life, a new lease on life. The past has been wiped away, their old selves are dead, and the new are here.

[1:09] They're new people. The old is gone, and the new is here. And so that is what we're celebrating tonight. And they will go into the waters of baptism to show that, that they are dead in Christ and that they have been risen in Christ.

And there's one trait, there's probably many traits, but the one trait that we want to focus on tonight, that marks every new life, and that is prayer. These four here, they used to not pray.

But now I trust that they do. And you'll find a living man not breathing before you find a Christian who is not praying.

Prayer is the Christian's life. Prayer is the sign of the Christian life. And we see that in Acts chapter 9. If you have a Bible, turn there to Acts chapter 9.

I only want to read a few verses, but let me put it into context before I read them. This passage is about Saul, who later became Paul.

[2:19] We know him as the Apostle Paul. And Saul was murderous. He was hateful. And at the same time, he was self-righteous. He was a self-righteous Pharisee.

And Paul, or Saul, was a violent man. He went around kicking down doors and dragging Christians away into jail. And he was going on one such trip to the city of Damascus to throw more Christians into jail.

When the resurrected, living Lord Jesus stopped him in his tracks and blinded him with his glory.

And so that is the context. Now let's look at verse 10. If you have your Bibles, Acts 9 and verse 10. In Damascus, there was a disciple named Ananias.

Did you see the revolutionary change?

[3:40] In Saul's life. In the Greek, it says, For behold, he is praying. Behold, he is praying.

Now Saul, before he met Jesus, used to pray. He used to say his prayers. He was a Pharisee. And that meant he liked to say his prayers. He liked to make long prayers.

He prayed, but not like this. His prayers were heartless before. They were lifeless. They were mere words in his mouth. But behold, he is praying.

Something has happened. He prayed, but his prayers were all a part of his self-righteousness. They were all part of his carefully constructed facade. He wanted others to think him righteous.

He wanted God to look at him and say, Wow, look at Saul. What a man. What a righteous man. And so he said his prayers before because he thought he could get in good with God if he prayed.

[4:46] Saul prayed. But it wasn't central to his life. Prayer was an empty form. It was like a shirt that he put on in the morning.

No matter how tight you wear your shirt, it doesn't become a part of who you are. And Saul, he wore the shirt of prayer very tightly. Really close to him. But it was never a part of who he was.

He never said, I need God. I desperately need God. I need to be close to God. I need to be near to him. He said his prayers before.

But now, behold, he is praying. He's praying. So what happened in Saul's life? What has happened to these four individuals? What has changed about them?

What has changed about their prayer lives? What happens to anyone? When they meet Jesus.

Well, before salvation, prayer was a very lifeless thing.

[5:49] But now, prayer is really coming close to God. It is having real, real dealings with God.

Before we were far away, before you were far away, you were out in left field. You were as far away from God as could be. You were on one lane going one way, and God was in another lane going another way.

But how things have changed. How things change. Salvation does something remarkable for the believer. It brings the believer close to God. We are brought into God.

We are brought into God's family. And God gives us the Holy Spirit, who in another part of the scripture is called the spirit of adoption. The Holy Spirit makes us feel and realize that we are the children of God.

And not just a name. Just not a name that we attach to ourselves. But we really, really are the children of God. And he looks at us as his children.

[6:57] And we look at him as our father. And the spirit that is within us makes us cry out, Abba, Daddy, Father. So now prayer isn't a formal thing.

It's not a professional thing. It's not like talking to your boss at work. It's like talking to a dad that loves you. And God your father draws you close.

And it's like he sits you on his lap. And so you're not in left field anymore. You're not in the wrong lane going the wrong way. You're right there with him.

So salvation. The salvation that Jesus Christ brings opens up the doors. And it pulls us close to God. And so we, you four, ordinary people, ordinary men and women, can actually talk to the maker of the heavens and the earth.

And so we, ordinary people, none of us important, can actually talk to the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. And we can talk to him, not as whimpering servants, not as distant relatives that don't know him, but as his children.

[8:13] As his children. So how else does salvation change the way we pray? Well, now we pray with the realization that we have God's ear. He listens to us when we pray, and he sympathizes with us.

Humans, people like you and me, we're horrible listeners, aren't we? Have you noticed this in yourself? And I'm sure you've noticed it in other people.

You're telling them something that is very important to you. You're pouring your heart out to them, but they aren't listening. They're hearing you, but the whole time they're waiting for you to stop talking so they can start talking.

And your words mean very little to them. And as you talk, they're rolling over and over again in their minds what they want to say to you. And so as soon as you're done talking, they jump in with two feet, and they'll tell you their story and their advice as if you didn't say anything at all.

Well, humans are horrible listeners, but God isn't. When the believer prays, when these four new believers pray, God actually listens to them.

[9:26] He doesn't interrupt them. He doesn't mock them. He doesn't ridicule them. He doesn't interrupt. He doesn't do anything except but listen to you.

And that's an amazing blessing. And it's amazing because the truth is that life is full of sorrows and heartaches.

There are sorrows that no one can shake, that there's no way we can avoid them. We can't ignore them. We can't joke them away.

Our parents disappoint us. Our friends disappoint us. We were counting on them, and they let us down. And worst of all, they don't care. They don't care that they let us down.

And it cuts deep. It cuts down to our very core, and we hurt. Or we're lonely. We're starting a new school.

[10:24] We're starting a new job. And we feel all alone. No one seems to notice us. No one seems to care. We're nervous.

We feel uncomfortable. And no one gives us a second thought. So what do we do? What do we do when life disappoints us, when people disappoint us, when we're all alone?

Well, if God has not saved you, then you must bear up underneath it. Then you must carry the load. But every Christian here, every new believer here, has the great privilege that when they talk to God, he listens to them, and he sympathizes when they pray.

And that is why Saul was praying. Can you imagine how Saul felt? Can you imagine how Saul felt? He just found out that instead of being for God, he was actually fighting against God.

He just found out that he had been wasting his entire life. He was pursuing something that was completely wrong. And can you imagine how he felt?

[11:34] How guilty he felt? Can you imagine his deep sorrow, knowing that he had killed innocent people? And now he's in the house.

He is blind. He is alone. And he is afraid. And he prays. And what does God do? Saul lays out his trouble before the Lord.

And what does God do? He hears and sympathizes with poor blind Saul. And so he sends a message to Ananias to go where Saul was and to restore his sight and to welcome him into the Christian family.

See, the Lord heard Saul's prayer of distress and his heart ran out to him. And this is one of the greatest privileges that the Christian has.

You never have to bear your burdens alone. You never have to face loneliness or rejection or disappointment alone. You're going to face them.

[12:34] Everyone faces them. But you don't have to face them alone. Because when you pray, you come face to face with God.

And he hears you. And he loves you. And he sympathizes with you. Now at this point, you should be asking a question. You should be asking, how can this be?

How can this be? How can these four people come close to God? How can God hear them and listen to them and sympathize with them? Because I know them, you say.

I know them. They're ordinary people. They're just like me. I know their past. So why should God listen to them? Why should God call them his children?

Why should God draw them close when they pray? It's not because they're good people. They're not good people. They're sinners. In a few minutes, each of them will come up here and tell you how they were sinners.

[13:40] Because they just didn't do bad things. They were bad at the very deepest part of who they were. God looked down into their hearts, past what you can see, past what I can see, past what any man can see.

And he did not see love for him. He didn't see goodness. He saw selfishness.

He saw arrogance. He saw rebellion. God had and could find no reason to hear them when they prayed.

And there's no reason that God should listen to them when they pray. There's no reason that God should call them his children and treat them like his child. We have to see that now if we are going to understand salvation.

God didn't owe them anything. They've sinned. And they've sinned again and again. And they've scorned the Lord again and again.

[14:48] And so you should be asking, how can this be? How can God call sinners to himself? How can God hear them when they pray? There's only one answer. And it's Jesus Christ.

The same Jesus Christ. The Son of God who lived 2,000 years ago. He is the answer to this problem. He became a man. He was God and he took on flesh.

And he lived a perfect, spotless life. He never lied. He never stole. He was never selfish. He always loved God with all of his heart, all of his soul, all of his mind, and all of his strength.

And after living a perfect life, something criminal happened. Men wrongfully accused him and they crucified him.

And that means they nailed his body to two beams of wood and they let him hang there until he died. And they committed the most awful crime in all of human history.

[15 : 55] They murdered God's Son. But they only could do it, the Scripture says, because this was the way that God was saving people.

This is the way that God saved these four. This is the way God has saved all of us who know him. It was all planned from the very beginning.

Jesus Christ didn't die for his own sins because he had no sins. He died for others. He died for other people who did not deserve his mercy. And so on the cross, there was blood and there was nails, but there was something more than physical pain.

The Bible tells us that God turned his anger, his righteous anger, his wrath, he turned it on to Jesus Christ, his own Son.

God took the payment that sins deserve and he took it from his Son and the Son gave it gladly. And it cost him his life.

[17 : 00] And on the third day, Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. God raised him to new life. He was raised to be an everlasting Savior for all those who would call on him.

And so now, anyone, anyone who trusts in Jesus Christ, who will look away from what they are and what they do and will say, it is true.

It's true. I'm a sinner. And I just don't do bad things. I am bad. At the deepest levels of who I am, I am bad.

But I see Jesus. And I see him as a Savior. As a Savior for people like me. All who trust in Jesus Christ to save them from their sins are forgiven.

Their sins are washed away. They're washed completely gone. And all those who call on him are brought into God's family. And they're made children of God.

[18 : 13] And all who call out for mercy and say from their heart, God, please accept me. Please accept me. Not for anything in and of myself, but because of Jesus Christ. He pulls them in.

He saves them. He rescues them. And that is what happened with these four. And that is why God hears them when they pray. That is why they can have face to face, heart to heart, real, true dealings with God.

That they can be God's friend. It's all because of Jesus Christ. It is all because of God's love. It is nothing in them. It is everything in God.

Well, we're privileged now to hear from their own mouths the testimonies of God's grace in the lives of these sons and daughters of God who have received His great love and mercy and grace.

The first four that you will hear are being baptized and joining the church tonight. And the last two have been baptized elsewhere and they are just joining the church tonight.

[19 : 23] And I'll tell you the six of their names and then just have them come up one after the other to share of God's grace in their lives. They're Brandon Fish, Casey Heaney, Jonathan Wessner, Michelle Wessner, Stephanie Scholes, and Kayum Khan.

And so, come and share what God's done. Don't be nervous. These are your friends here. They rejoice with you in what God has done. So, Brandon, come and share with us. As most of you know, I was raised in a Christian home with a strong Christian background.

However, I would go to church just to say I went and even sometimes just to see all of my friends. Whenever anything about dying or hell or my need of a Savior was preached about, it would convince me for the time I was at church.

But when I would get home, I would just think about other things. We'd get occupied with whatever I had coming up and just put it out of my mind. I knew I should get saved someday, but I thought I would worry about that later.

I just wanted to have fun while I had the time to. Basically, I just didn't want to put God first, even though I needed to. What really started to convince me was all the death that I and my family experienced in the past few years.

[20 : 30] We lost about four or five from our family alone. It made me realize that death really is real and something we will all have to face. And all of us are going to heaven or hell and there are no second chances.

Especially when I would hear about people my age getting killed, it made me realize I was not as invincible as I thought and was not guaranteed to even live to see the next day. All this really hit me and I started actually listening to what was being taught and I realized I had a huge lack of following

God in my life.

Also, when my grandpa Fish was still alive, he would always tell me and my brother how we needed to be saved. And I think his teaching also helped me understand. Even though he has been gone for nearly three years, a lot of his teaching has remained with me.

He was so excited when he heard Justin was going to be baptized and I know he is now. And I look forward to being reunited with him and all of my family and friends who have gone on before me. I now have a strong assurance of this and thank God for choosing to save me when so many others he left to themselves.

I'm now trying to live more according to what God says and my attitude towards church is no longer just something that I have to do. But I look forward to learning more on how I should live my life in every area. I need work on keeping him first in all of my relationships and I also struggle with pride and trying to look good in front of people and I need to learn to keep him first in all areas of my life. [21 : 47] But I trust he will be with me through everything and will help me in these areas and I thank him for all the great family, pastors, and friends he has given me to encourage me in my walk with him. Okay.

I have been raised in a Christian home and attended Grace Fellowship Church my whole life. I understood from an early age that I was a sinner and that I needed Christ. I always knew that I couldn't save myself so I never attempted to do good things to earn my salvation.

Still in the world's eyes I was a good person. Even though I knew this wasn't doing me any good with God I kept away from what I thought were the really bad sins just to uphold my reputation. I pushed every thought of my sin and the wrath that I knew was inevitable from my mind. I did not allow myself to think about anything that had to do with God or religion. I knew I needed a savior I just didn't want one yet.

I wanted to have fun first and my main interest was myself. I assured myself that later after I had enjoyed what the world had to offer I'd come to Christ. But God had a different plan and for that I'm eternally grateful.

[22 : 59] My mom introduced me to a series of books called The Circle Trilogy. I had no idea that they had anything to do with the story of Jesus' death on the cross and a picture of the fall and of salvation. If I had I probably wouldn't have picked up the first book.

I want to make it clear that these books didn't save me but God was just teaching me. He was working through means showing me things that I already knew but he just made them more real to me.

About halfway through the first book I began to see that through it God was showing me my own sin and how foolish and terrible and selfish it is. I also saw how foolish it was not to come running to Christ immediately.

My need for a Savior was great and there was a great Savior calling me irresistibly to himself. I couldn't think of a single one of the excuses that had kept me from Christ before.

They all seemed feeble and stupid. What was I waiting for? The world had nothing to offer in comparison with eternity. I asked the Lord for forgiveness and to save me from my sins and to help me live for him from that day forward.

[24 : 03] Jesus' death on the cross is my only hope for salvation and it is on him that my assurance rests. The narrow road is not easy and I struggle with sin every day but that's the difference in my life.

I struggle with it and with the help of Christ sin no longer reigns in my life. Every day I have to pray for the renewed desire to live for Christ but I am steadily growing closer to him and learning to love to talk with him through his word and through prayer.

My relationship with my parents has improved greatly and I have a new desire to hear the preaching of God's word. I didn't choose Christ. He chose me before the foundation of the world and not because of anything that I have done or will do but on the basis of his will alone so there's no room for boasting except in Christ.

I don't understand why God has chosen to show me mercy but I'm rejoicing in the undeserved love of our just God and now I can truly join in singing Amazing Grace How Sweet the Sound That Saved a Wretch Like Me.

For as long as I can remember Christianity has always been so clear to me. I grew up in a Christian home with parents who taught me the Bible at such a young age. They never stopped drilling into me our doctrine and what exactly we believe.

[25 : 25] As soon as I was old enough to go to youth conferences I would go away from retreat feeling close to God. I would think I was saved from the retreat until I made my way back to my old ways without even realizing it.

It would not be until I went to another retreat that God would open my eyes to my past sins and I would recognize my rebellion against Him. I would go through this process year after year deceiving myself.

It wasn't until this last December that God really started to do work in me. I had made friends in this world was bitter against my family and had turned my back against God but with all my rebellion against God He had mercy on me.

My dad had told me that he wanted to have a Bible study with me but that just made me more upset and I thought about how it was going to be a waste of my time. However, God used that first Bible study to change my heart.

Christ died on the cross for my sin and opened my eyes to the wickedness within me. Christ showed me that without His love and mercy on me I would be in hell forever.

[26 : 37] From there on forward Christ became my best friend. My family became my closest friends in this world and my encouragement came from my family and church. I tried to find my happiness enjoying the world and sports but I found that in all those things it was meaningless and empty.

It wasn't until God changed my heart that I fell in inner joy like never before. I learned a verse to be so true in my life which reads He who walks with the wise grows wise but a companion of will suffers harm.

Proverbs 13 20 I had been hanging out with the wrong crowd and had grown a cold heart against God but because of His love and mercy on me He changed me. Romans 3 10 through 12 reads as it is written there is no one righteous not even one there is no one who understands no one who seeks God all have turned away they have together become worthless there is no one who does good not even one.

This verse shows me how deprived I am and how impossible it is for me to be saved apart from Christ. God is my love and my life and He has saved me from eternal hell.

My desire to serve the Lord in all I do with the power of the Holy Spirit. I know I cannot do anything on my own and it is only the Spirit who can grow me in Christ.

[27 : 58] God has taught me to love my family and serve others for His glory and I pray every day that Christ would help me to stay strong for His glory wherever I may be. I wage war against so many temptations in this world and without Christ by my side I would give in to every temptation.

I pray that instead the world having an influence on me I would have an influence on the world. Let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in Heaven. Matthew 5, 16. I grew up in a Christian family so I have gone to church for as long as I can remember.

From the time I was very young I was told about the wonders of God. I memorized a lot of scripture and knew the answers to almost every Sunday school question. I had it down pat in my head but it didn't reach my heart.

All the good deeds of church attendance scripture memorization and obeying my parents even though most of it was half-hearted obedience all of that wasn't even close to washing me clean of my sins.

[29 : 12] So the older I became the further away from God I grew. My parents kept on asking me if I wanted to go to heaven and be saved and I generally would want to but I always had a false repentance and felt sorry for a time but before long I was sitting all over again.

When Pastor Aaron came to Grace Fellowship he kept on telling me to trust in Christ to repent and believe but I was blind as to how to trust. I wanted to I didn't want to go to hell but yet I couldn't understand how to trust in someone I couldn't see or hear.

I had grown up in church and all of this was still foreign to me. There was a time when a couple people in church came up to me and urged me to start reading my Bible because without knowing Christ it was very hard to trust in Christ and the Bible was the best place to learn about Christ.

And so I started reading but mostly to tell these people that yes I had read the Bible this week and check it off my list of things to do. But still God kept gently urging me to trust him and him alone.

He showed me through sermons or reminders from a friend or situations at work that my life would have more purpose if I had God with me but still my heart was hard. Then the college and careers started meeting and studying Don't Waste Your Life by John Piper.

[30 : 36] He basically said to not waste my life I would have to stop living for myself and start living for Christ. And God started to open my eyes to see just how much I lived for myself and not for him.

How much I twisted every situation so that I could get the better end of the deal. And I told myself that I wasn't sinning I mean these things I did weren't against God's law but I was still living for myself and not leaving any room for God in my life and that is the sin of idolatry putting whatever it would be in the place that God should be.

Then around Christmas time last year there was a song I kept hearing a lot at work or on the radio and the first line went like this So it is Christmas so what have you done?

Another year over and a new one just begun. God used that song to open my eyes I'm going to be I am 25 and that is 25 years I have denied Christ what is rightfully his.

I have denied Christ my praise my thanksgiving my sorrows my requests I have denied him me and then I realized that it is exactly what faith and trust are being able to believe without having to see or hear and that is exactly what Christ commands us to do.

[31 : 51] Proverbs 3 5-6 says Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding and all your ways acknowledge him and he will direct your paths I saw my unwillingness to trust God as a sin against God I saw my unwillingness to trust as disobedience I saw that I was unwilling to give up what the world has to offer for something far better than anything the world can give me so I bent my knee in obedience to him I trusted in Christ my Savior the only one who can save me from certain destruction and I'm working on giving him more and more of my heart I am humbled every time I look to the stars or see the moon so far away in the sky I can catch just a glimmer just a little glimmer of how big God is and I realize just how small I am but God has chosen me and I rejoice in being able to sing his praise for the rest of my days I was raised by two loving

Christian parents in a Bible preaching church every Sunday I was privileged to sit under godly truthful teaching and preaching from an early age I was convicted by the truth that I heard while I cannot say at what age God saved me and I began to trust in Christ from the time I was 11 the Holy Spirit was convicting me to spend time in God's word throughout my teenage years I was convicted by the truth of the Bible in various areas in my life however I was also caught in the trap of legalistic thinking I compared myself frequently to my classmates at my Christian high school to reassure myself that I was right with God during my junior and senior years I was frequently convicted by my friends testimony both their conscious and unconscious testimony that the fruit of the Spirit did show through in their lives even if they didn't follow the same rules that I had set for myself God was showing me that a life glorifying to him did not consist in only observing a list of regulations but in loving him and seeking earnestly!

to wholeheartedly serve him during my first year at Grace College I continued to grow in faith by God's grace while I was sure that I had been saved for several years I had never asked to be baptized due to a situation in my local church that situation was resolved during my freshman year and I was being convicted more strongly that I needed to be baptized that summer I was baptized and I joined the body of Kemp Road Baptist Church my junior year of college I spent in France where I was far out of the Christian bubble I had lived in until then I was living with a nominally Catholic family the only Christian there one of the only Christians in my class completely different from anything I had known there were many difficult situations that came up leading me to depend wholly on God and on his grace to make it through each day I had never before felt so completely helpless in my own abilities and yet I knew that God was holding and guiding me and this verse really was a source of encouragement to me while I was there I will lift up my eyes to the hills from where does my help come my help comes from the Lord the maker of heaven and earth and that's Psalm 121 1 and 2

I was comforted to know that he never leaves nor forsakes his children during the past year God has given me many more opportunities to practice the lessons I learned in France of complete reliance on him recently he has led me to study his word more deeply and thoroughly especially concerning matters of revelation I am learning that his word is precious above all as it contains his inerrant and complete revealed truth it is my goal to glorify him in all that I do and though I often fail his mercies are new every morning his grace is sufficient for my every weakness I cannot cease to

marvel at his grace I was not raised in a Christian home my parents did go to church but we didn't have any family prayer at home my father didn't lead in that so it was just one day a week we went to church and had fellowship as soon as I left my home at age 18

I didn't go to church anymore for about 10 years so I guess I was cold and God likes either hot or cold but not lukewarm and it was around 2005 when I began to feel some mortification over my two chief sins which were the pride of self-sufficiency and just unbelief that's probably my greatest sin and at that time I was having a conflict with a fellow office mate and I tried everything and everything practical and nothing helped so that's when a fellow student talked to me he's Korean he took the time to share the gospel and tell me that there's another practical solution which is instead of building up these walls of defense to let yourself be pierced just like

[37 : 22] Jesus was pierced on the cross and that was that was really revolutionary for me and the next day I tried that and that really that really helped out so I saw it was not just something you think but actually trusting in God has practical consequences so I started reading my Bible started praying at that time I was a little bit skeptical of what the Bible had to say so I started only believing in Jesus who I guess his foolishness on the cross is greater than the wisdom of men and I really began to believe that I began from starting with the red letters only to actually as infallible to actually believing the four gospels and then seeing that the epistles were not just a bunch of rules but actually they flowed naturally from the gospels so each word breathed by

God is tested by his holy fire and going back to the Old Testament I'm seeing the consistency of it written by different people across thousands of years but still it's talking about the same God and has the same message I'm going to ask the four of you who are being baptized if you would stand here with me and face the congregation going to ask them to affirm some things that they have professed in the presence of you witnesses so if these things are true of you please respond together by saying I do do you confess that you're a hell deserving sinner whose only hope of mercy is found in Jesus Christ and what he has done for sinners do you trust only in his blood and righteousness to save you and realize that the water of baptism does nothing to wash away sin or merit favor with God do you desire tonight to publicly identify yourself as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ and purpose by his grace to turn from your sins and to follow him in faith and obedience for the rest of your life well we praise God for what he has done in your lives how he saved you by his grace and for your willingness to commit yourselves to joining our church as well so I'm going to ask Stephanie and Kayum if you would stand as well and face the congregation we've studied the commitments of members of Grace Fellowship Church together and these six have affirmed their willingness to abide by those commitments and we are asking them now to make them public in all of your presence again if these things are true of you please respond together by saying I do do you commit yourself by the help of God to order your life according to the standard of God's word and to submit to the loving discipline of this church and the oversight of its elders prayers and to do you commit yourself to spread no teaching contrary to this church's confession of faith and to support the ministries of the church by your faithful attendance at its stated meetings do you commit to find your place of service in this body of Christ in accordance with your own spiritual gifts and abilities and cooperate in the outreach of this church and bringing the gospel to our needy world by bearing witness of

Christ praying for the spread of Christ's kingdom and giving do you then commit yourself to this body of believers to love them and seek their good to work and live with them in harmony to encourage and watch over them in the Lord all to the end that Jesus Christ may receive glory in this church now I'd like for the members of grace fellowship church to stand and affirm our commitment to these who are joining our number tonight and if these things are true of you please answer in the affirmative together we will will you welcome these six individuals as members of this church we will will you love them serve them pray for them and help watch over their souls for their building up and growth in grace so that Christ will be glorified in his church we will what we do here tonight may seem strange to enter a tank of water and immerse individuals in it but we are glad to do it in obedience to our Lord's command to baptize those who have been made disciples and so so it's a picture of what happens in salvation we're buried with Christ in his death his burial and his resurrection we die for the old men and were raised to walk in newness of life and so we praise God for his goodness Michelle we've heard your testimony of God's grace in your life your profession of faith in Christ and on the basis of that profession of faith I now baptize you in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit buried in the likeness of his death raised in the

