

A photograph of a wooden altar, likely made of oak, with a central panel featuring a carved cross. The altar is supported by four turned wooden legs. The background is a dark, textured stone wall. The text "A Matter of Life and Death" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

A Matter of Life and Death



Why was Jesus baptized at all?

- One more powerful
- John's perplexity at
- Jesus's perfect obedience



The active obedience of Jesus

- Jesus lives to save us from our sins!
- At his baptism, he fulfills all righteousness
- His (human) life and our human lives.



Union with Jesus

- At our baptisms, we are united to Jesus.
- Our disobedience becomes his; his obedience becomes ours
- Our death becomes his; his life becomes ours

The Great Exchange

Therefore, my dear brother, learn Christ and him crucified. Learn to pray to him and, despairing of yourself, say: "Thou, Lord Jesus, art my righteousness, but I am thy sin. Thou hast taken upon thyself what is mine and hast given to me what is thine. Thou has taken upon thyself what thou wast not and hast given to me what I was not." Beware of aspiring to such purity that you will not wish to be looked upon as a sinner, or to be one. For Christ dwells only in sinners.

The Great Exchange

On this account he descended from heaven, where he dwelt among the righteous, to dwell among sinners. Meditate on this love of his and you will see his sweet consolation. For why was it necessary for him to die if we can obtain a good conscience by our works and afflictions? Accordingly, you will find peace only in him and only when you despair of yourself and your own works. Besides, you will learn from him that just as he has received you, so he has made your sins his own and has made his righteousness yours." (Letter to George Spenlein, 1516).

A Matter of Life and Death

- Baptism is a matter of life and death
- Because Christ is baptized for us, the waters that would drown us become the waters of rebirth

