

BAPTISM

Baptism is one of the first steps of obedience that a “newly born” Christian should take. The definition of Christian is one who has personally repented of his sin and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ to be his Saviour. One is not a Christian who is born into a Christian family, attends a Christian church, or lives in a Christian nation.

Today, there is much confusion and misunderstanding concerning baptism. Many winds of doctrines are floating around which lead many to be deceived. We must realize that salvation is by grace through an act of faith for “...the just shall live by faith.” Any work that we try to add to faith destroys the complete and finished work of Christ through His blood. Once again, by comparing scripture with scripture, we can understand the Lord’s intent on this issue.

I. WHAT IS BAPTISM?

DEFN: “Baptize” From the Greek word “baptizo” which means to make whelmed or fully wet; to immerse.

DEFN: “Immerse” To put under water; to plunge; to dip; to sink; to cover wholly with a fluid.

NOTE: There are two kinds of baptism, one in the spirit and one in the flesh. The Spirit baptism takes place at the time of spiritual birth and the believer is immersed into the body of Christ. The water baptism should take place when a believer realizes the transaction that has taken place between God and him.

- ❑ **1 Cor 12:13** - The Holy Spirit put us into the body of Christ.

NOTE: The Holy Spirit initially “baptized” the church of believers in **Acts 2:1-8** and now subsequently baptizes every new believer into the body of Christ when he or she is converted.

- ❑ **Col 2:12** -The Spirit performs a powerful operation, circumcision of the heart, when a person believes from the heart in the gospel. The gospel is the death, burial and resurrection unto salvation. (**Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 15:1-4**)
- ❑ **Rom 6:3-4** - The Spirit baptizes us into Jesus Christ.
- ❑ **Tit 3:5-7** - The washing of regeneration is the work of the Spirit using the Word of God as the water (**Eph 5:26**).

II. HOW SHOULD WE BE BAPTIZED?

- ❑ **Mark 1:9-10** - Jesus was baptized by immersion.
- ❑ **Rom 6:3-6** - This portion of scripture shows the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Water baptism by immersion best symbolizes this.

NOTE: Only baptism by immersion pictures our identifying with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. As we are immersed into the water, it reveals to others the death of the “old man”. When we are under the water it pictures our life as dead and buried in Christ. As we are raised up by another’s power, we go forth to walk in newness of life.

- ❑ **Acts 8:38** - The eunuch went down into the water to be baptized.

NOTE: The Bible in no way teaches the convenient method of baptizing by sprinkling. Sprinkling is a tradition of man brought about to eliminate the need for a man to humble himself (ie. Naaman in **2 Kin 5:9-13**). It makes void the wonderful picture of identifying with Christ.

- ❑ **Matt 28:19-20** - Believers should be baptized in “the name” of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost - that name is Jesus Christ. One who is baptized in Jesus’ name is declaring to the world that he is Jesus’ disciple.

NOTE: Jesus Christ is the fullness of the godhead bodily (**Col 2:9**) and it is at His name that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess (**Phi 2:10-11**). The name is important!

- ❑ **Acts 2:38** – Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.
- ❑ **Acts 10:48** - Peter commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.
- ❑ **Acts 19:3-5** - The disciples of John were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus once they understood they had been baptized unto John’s baptism.

III. WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

- ❑ **Acts 8:36-38** - They that believe with all their hearts that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
- ❑ **Acts 2:41** - They that gladly receive His Word.
- ❑ **Acts 16:14-15** - Those whose heart the Lord opens.

NOTE: It is a choice of the will of a believer to publicly follow the Lord. He declares to the world that he has trusted Christ.

IV. WHEN SHOULD YOU BE BAPTIZED?

- ❑ **Acts 2:41** - When they gladly received His Word, they were baptized the same day.
- ❑ **Acts 8:12-13** - When they believed His Word, they were baptized.

NOTE: The Bible in no way teaches infant baptism. Baptism is for those who receive and believe His Word. An infant has no understanding at that time to be a believer. This is a tradition introduced by man to avoid the necessary public profession of an adult. It is cute to baptize babies, but supposedly inconvenient and embarrassing to baptize adults. We should be willing to follow our Lord wherever He leads.

NOTE: There is also another teaching that infant baptism washes away original sin. Again, this teaching cannot be found in the scriptures by doctrine or practice.

- ❑ **Acts 9:18** - New born believers (like Saul who became Paul - the apostle) should be baptized.
- ❑ **Acts 16:31-33** - The Phillipian jailer and his whole house were baptized that night after they believed.
- ❑ **Acts 18:8** - Crispus, a chief ruler, and many others were baptized right after they believed.
- ❑ **Acts 16:14-15** - Lydia believed and was baptized. Then she immediately began serving.
- ❑ **Acts 19:3-5** - Disciples of John were baptized again when they realized they were not believers before and were not baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

V. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM?

- ❑ **Gal 3:27** - “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ”, as their pattern of life.

NOTE: Many brothers and sisters have lost their families, their living, and some have even lost their lives, because they took a stand to identify with the Christian faith by being baptized. On the other hand in some nations Christianity has become so commonplace, that the cost and the meaning of baptism has been lessened.

- ❑ **Heb 6:1-3** – Water baptism falls under the “doctrine of baptisms”, pointing to the one true baptism (**Eph 4:5**).

NOTE: The Bible teaches multiple baptisms; baptism of John (repentance) in **Matt 3:11; Luke 3:16; Acts 2:38; 19:2-5**; baptism of Moses in **1 Cor 10:2**; baptism of fire in **Matt 3:11, Luke 3:16; Acts 2:3** baptism of water in **Matt 28:19; Mark 16:16; 1 Pet 3:20-21**; baptism

of suffering in **Matt 20:22-23**; **Luke 12:50**; and baptism of the Holy Spirit in **John 1:33**; **Rom 6:3-4**; **1 Cor 12:13**; all of which point to one baptism – the baptism of the Spirit into the body of Christ at salvation.

- ❑ **1 Pet 3:21** - Baptism is an indication of the willful putting away of the flesh and the answer of a good conscience toward God.

NOTE: Many teach that this verse is declaring that baptism is essential to a believer's salvation, but if you notice closely, Peter states that it is a figure, a picture. Not a work of putting away the filth of the flesh, because only faith in the blood of the Lamb can do that work. But it is an answer of a good conscience toward God because of the outward demonstration of obedience to God. A person who will not get baptized is probably not saved in the first place. A true believer wants to follow the Lord's example of righteousness (right living). See **Matt 3:11-16**

VI. BAPTISM IS COMMANDED - IT IS NOT AN OPTION

- ❑ **Mark 16:15-16** – Christ's followers were commanded to go, preach, and baptize all who believe.
- ❑ **Acts 2:38** – "...Repent and be baptized every one of you..."
- ❑ **Acts 10:47-48** - He commanded them to be baptized.

VII. BAPTISM IS NOT PART OF SALVATION

- ❑ **Mark 16:15-16** - "...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

NOTE: From the first glance, this appears to teach that baptism is a part of salvation. But with close examination, one can see that damnation is based on belief - not on baptism. It does not say, "he that believeth not, or is not baptized, is damned."

- ❑ **1 Cor 1:13-17** - Paul indicates that baptism was not important to salvation in his mind.

NOTE: Many scriptures state "believe and thou shalt be saved." (see index) A believer should follow the Lord in baptism, but baptism does not save him. If baptism were a part of salvation, surely the greatest soul winner in the Scriptures, Paul the Apostle, would have made sure that he baptized every believer. He would have taken a greater stand on baptism. "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel..." **1 Cor 1:17**

- ❑ **John 4:2** - Neither did Jesus baptize His followers.

- ❑ **Acts 10:42-48** - The household of Cornelius was saved and filled with the Spirit before they were baptized.
- ❑ **Acts 22:16** - Calling on the name of the Lord washes away a man's sin, not the baptism. Compare **Rom 10:12-14** and **Rev 1:5**.
- ❑ **Col 2:11-12** – The operation of God removes sins from a believer like a circumcision. Then immersion into the death of the body of Christ takes place through the power of the Spirit.
- ❑ **Tit 3:5-7** - We are saved "...not by works of righteousness which we have done..." Baptism is a work performed by us. People easily trust it above their faith because it is something tangible to see and hold on. The washing of regeneration is referring to the washing away of our sins by His blood. (**Rev 1:5**).

CONCLUSION:

Baptism is an ordinance to be followed by a believer in order to publicly testify to others what took place in his heart. It is a witness of the transforming power of the gospel and identification with the church of Jesus Christ. Many have a zeal for God but not according to knowledge (**Rom 10:2**). Their zeal often focuses on baptism rather than emphasizing faith in Christ. (**Rom 3:22**).

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I. Fifty-seven (57) times in the Bible we are told to believe to be saved.

Genesis 15:6 - And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

Luke 8:12 - Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

John 1:7 - The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe.

John 1:12 - But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

John 3:15 - That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 3:18 - He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 3:36 - He that believed on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life: but the wrath of God abideth on him.

John 5:24 - Verily, verily. I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

John 6:29 - Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

John 6:35 - And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

John 6:40 - And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 6:47 - Verily, verily, I say unto you. He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

John 7:39 - (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

John 8:24 - I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

John 9:35-38 - Jesus heard that they had cast him out: and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

John 10:26 - But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

John 11:25-26 - Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

John 12:36 - While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus. and departed, and did hide himself from them,

John 17:20-21 - Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

John 20:31 - But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

Acts 8:37 - And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Acts 10:43 - To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

Acts 11:17 - Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?

Acts 13:39 - And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Acts 13:48 - And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

Acts 15:7-8 - And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us.

Acts 15:11 - But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

Acts 16:30-31 - And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Romans 1:16 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Romans 3:22 - Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

Romans 3:26 - To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Romans 4:3 - For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

Romans 4:5 - But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Romans 4:11 - And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

Romans 4:24 - But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

Romans 10:4 - For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Romans 10:9-10 - That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romans 10:13-15 - For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

1 Corinthians 1:21 - For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

1 Corinthians 15:1-2 - Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

Galatians 2:16 - Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Galatians 3:6 - Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

Galatians 3:22 - But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

Ephesians 1:13 - In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

2 Thessalonians 2:12 - That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

1 Timothy 1:16 - Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

2 Timothy 1:12 - For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

Hebrews 3:18-19 - And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

Hebrews 4:3 - For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

Hebrews 10:39 - But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

Hebrews 11:6 - But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

1 John 3:23 - And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

1 John 5:1 - Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

1 John 5:5 - Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

1 John 5:10 - He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

1 John 5:13 - These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

II. Nine (9) times we are told to have faith to be saved.

Luke 7:50 - And he said to the woman. Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace.

Luke 18:42 - And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.

Romans 5:1-2 - Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Romans 9:30 - What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.

Galatians 2:16 - Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Ephesians 2:8-9 - For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast.

Ephesians 3:12 - In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

Hebrews 10:38 - Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

2 Peter 1:1 - Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: