

Water Baptism

WHAT IS WATER BAPTISM?

Water Baptism is the joyful and obedient act of identifying with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. Without a proper understanding of Scripture, water baptism is little more than a ritual. The obedient act of following Christ's command to be baptized is a significant step in submission to His Lordship. In fact, this act is an outward expression of an inward possession of faith in Christ. It demonstrates a believer's desire to follow His command and example of obedience to our Father's will.

WHY BE BAPTIZED IN WATER?

Jesus was sinless.

He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.

1 Peter 2:22 NIV

Yet, Jesus was required to be obedient to His Father's command, to be baptized in water.

Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness."

Matthew 3:15 NIV

The Scripture reveals that water baptism shows the fruit of regeneration: OBEDIENCE. As we "DIE" to ourselves, i.e. what we think, what we want, what we feel or desire, we choose to do what our Father has commanded. As we are "BURIED" in water, we fulfill the requirement of obedience which produces righteousness: "right standing with God. As we rise out of the baptismal water, we embrace the hope of the RESURRECTION. Our identification with Jesus' example is proof of our belief in God's Word and of our desire to act upon it. As we submit to the words of our Lord, we understand that this act of obedience to follow Him in baptism is an expression of love.

If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in His love.

John 15:10 NIV

Jesus stressed the significance of our outer actions confirming our inner beliefs.

You are My friends if you do what I command you.

John 15:14 NIV

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

The last words of Christ before His ascent into heaven addressed those He called His "disciples" (learners under discipline).

Go unto all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and is baptized shall be saved...

Mark 16:15-16 NAS

I ask that we love one another. And this is love; that we walk in obedience to his commands.

2 John 1-6 NIV

Baptism, which is like that water, now saves you. Baptism doesn't save by removing dirt from the body. Rather, baptism is a request to God for a clear conscience. It saves you through Jesus Christ, who came back from death to life.

1 Peter 3:21 GWT

Christ's command to His disciples was to make more disciples throughout the world, and that the sign by which they acknowledged one another as part of the body of Christ was through their obedient act of baptism in water.

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved...

Mark 16:16 NIV

Furthermore, we read in Matthew 28:19-20 that "ALL NATIONS" were to be baptized in water. Acts 2:38 states, *EVERYONE* "repent and be baptized."

We also see that upon conversion of a large group (3000 people in Acts 2:41) that ALL converts were baptized. Acts 8:26-39 and Acts 16:33 state that ALL who confessed Christ: ALL OF THE FAMILY, respectively, were baptized in water.

WHEN SHOULD YOU BE BAPTIZED IN WATER?

It is important to understand the urgency placed upon the timing of water baptism in the Word of God. *All references are from the NIV Bible.*

Acts 2:41	Same Day	Acts 8:26-39	Same Day
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Acts 9:17-18	No Delay	Acts 10:48	Same Day
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Acts 16:33	Same Night	Acts 22:16	No Delay
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Other references clearly illustrate that water baptism was performed as soon as the believer was made aware of the command. (Acts 9:17-18; Acts 10:44-48)

HOW SHOULD YOU BE BAPTIZED IN WATER?

The Greek word "BAPTO" is the root word for all words pertaining to baptism. It means to: "dip or immerse, sink under and to cover wholly with water." It is used four times in Scripture whereas "BAPTIZO" which means "to overwhelm or wholly wet, immerse, sink, plunge", and to baptize appears over 80 times in the New Testament. "BAPTISMA" is used 22 times and is translated "BAPTISM." The one who submerges another in baptismal waters or the "BAPTIZER" is taken from the root word "BAPTISTES." It is easy to discern from all Scripture references that immersion or submergence is according to the teaching practices of the New Testament believers.

A further study of Scripture will reveal how much water was required.

Because there was plenty water.

John 3:23

He went up out of the water.

Matthew 3:16

When they came up out of the water.

Acts 8:39

Holding fast to Scriptural accounts, water baptism by immersion is indicated in all references. (See Matthew 3, 6-16; 20:22,23; 28:29; Mark 1:4-9; 10:38-39; 16:16; Luke 3:7-21; 7:29-30; Luke 12:50; John 1:25-33; 3:22-26; 4:1-2). The practice of sprinkling or pouring was adopted for convenience and disease control in 1311 at the Council of Revenna (Catholic Church) and adopted by some Protestants (Anglicans, Lutherans, Presbyterians, and Eastern Orthodox). Yet, a doctrinal basis for this practice is not found in the canonized volume of Scripture. The Orthodox Church continues to baptize by immersion.

NON-BIBLICAL BELIEFS ABOUT BAPTISM

The following "non-Biblical" doctrines have "added to" or "taken away" from the Scriptural truth and the simplicity of the true doctrine of Christ.

The Error of BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD

"Baptism by proxy" for those who have passed from life into eternity without a commitment to Christ with the hope that the deceased can receive salvation by another means is not a Biblical practice. This doctrine is called "baptismal regeneration." (1 Corinthians 15:29) A dead person cannot confess his or her sins, neither can they in any way repent or acknowledge Jesus as Lord.

The Error of BAPTISM INTO A PARTICULAR CHURCH OR DENOMINATION

Believers are baptized *into one body*... the body of Christ after they receive salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ. In 1 Corinthians 3:3-11 Paul addressed the fact that we are all the temple of God, the church: *ecclesia*. Neither the teacher who leads us to Christ nor the group or denomination with whom we fellowship should be exalted in the act of baptism. It is an act of identification with Christ and His eternal Church.

BAPTISM OR CHRISTENING FOR INFANTS

The Scripture clearly states that children are accepted into the kingdom of heaven. 1 Corinthians 7:12-14 states that children are sanctified by their parents' faith until they reach an age where they are accountable and can distinguish and choose right from wrong, and the Kingdom of God from the kingdom of darkness. Jesus said...

Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 18:1-3 NASB

Infant baptism was first mentioned by Tertullian in 220AD where it was viewed as an initiation of faith. By AD400 Augustine appealed for the universal practice of infant baptism to remove original sin. The baptism were done in conjunction with sponsors or God parents who promised to aid in the spiritual training of the children. Prior to that, adult baptism was the rule.

WATER BAPTISM: RITE OR RIGHTEOUSNESS?

The following should serve as a reminder that men throughout time have strayed from the truth of God's Word.

Water baptism is merely a rite or religious ritual, unless it is based on Scripture and is done as an act of faith and obedience to Christ. It is a declaration of one's conversion, and an outward witness of an inward grace.

FAITH IN GOD'S WORD LEADS TO OBEDIENCE

Noah's faith in God led him to OBEY where by he was saved from the flood. Moses' faith in God led him to OBEY and he was saved from the pursuing Egyptians by passing through the Red Sea. Joshua's faith in God caused him to listen and OBEY and the waters (Jordan River) were parted for him to enter into the promised land. Jesus' complete obedience provided the example and the way to new life for all who believe and obey. We identify with Christ when we learn to be obedient to our Father's voice. As we OBEY our Father's command to be baptized in water, we experience the same freedom from bondage as Noah, Moses, and Joshua experienced when they left their old lives behind and entered into a new life. Let us FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS SO THAT WE MAY BE PLEASING TO GOD.

For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Romans 5:19 AKJV

Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? Romans 6:16 NASB 1995

In Conclusion: As soon as possible after you receive Christ as your SAVIOR OBEDIENTLY follow Him in water baptism declaring His LORDSHIP in your life!

THE BAPTISMS OF SCRIPTURE

1. John's baptism: Matthew 3; Mark 1; Luke 3:7:29-30;
John 1:31-33; 3:23-26; 10:40; Acts 1:5; Acts 11:16; 19:3
2. Christ's water baptism: John 3:22; 4:1-2; 1 Peter 3:21
3. Baptism of suffering: Luke 12:50
4. Baptism in the cloud and in the sea: 1 Corinthians 10:2
5. Christian baptism in water: Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16;
Acts 2:38-41; 8:12-16; 36-38; Acts 9:18; 10:47-48; 16:15,33; 18:8;
19:5; 22:16, 1 Corinthians 1:13-17; 1 Peter 3:21
6. Baptism into Christ and into His body: Romans 6:3-7;
1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:11-13; Romans 6:1-10
7. Baptism of the Holy Spirit: Matthew 3:11; 14:20; 22:23;
Mark 1:8; 10:38-39; Luke 11:13; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; 7:37-39;
Acts 1:15; 11:16; 19:2-3

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES ON BAPTISM

Utilize www.biblegateway.com to study these passages in the various translations.

Ephesians 4:5	Matthew 3:15	1 Peter 2:22
Mark 16:15-16	Acts 2:38	Acts 2:41
Acts 8:26-39	Acts 16:33	Acts 9:17-18
Acts 10:44-48	Acts 22:16	John 3:23
John 3:4-5	Ecclesiastes 12:13-14	Romans 6:4-6
1 Peter 3:7	2 Corinthians 5:17	Genesis 22:16-18
1 Peter 3:21-22	Matthew 3:16	Matthew 3:6-16
Matthew 20:22-23	Matthew 28:19	Mark 1:4-9
Mark 10:38-39	Luke 3:7-21	Luke 7:29-30
Luke 12:50	John 1:25-33	John 3:22-26
Matthew 15:3	Ephesians 2:6	Romans 4:9-13
2 Corinthians 3:21	2 Corinthians 9:2	1 John 1:31-33
John 4:1-2	John 15:10	John 15:14
1 Corinthians 15:29	Matthew 19:13	Matthew 18:1-3
Matthew 18:10	1 Corinthians 7:12-14	1 Corinthians 3:4-11
1 Corinthians 12:12-13	2 Peter 2:5	Matthew 15:9
Galatians 2:20	Colossians 2:12	2 Corinthians 5:7
Genesis 17:4-6	Romans 6:7-10	

Solomon, the wisest man of all times, recorded these words:

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: fear God and keep His Commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 KJV

Jesus answered Nicodemus, "I can guarantee this truth: No one can enter God's kingdom without being born of water and the Spirit.

John 3:5 GWT



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