

Water Baptism

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Water Baptism  1

Jesus said TO BE BAPTIZED

Some of Jesus' final instructions to His disciples, and to us, were to make disciples, baptize them, and teach them. *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20*

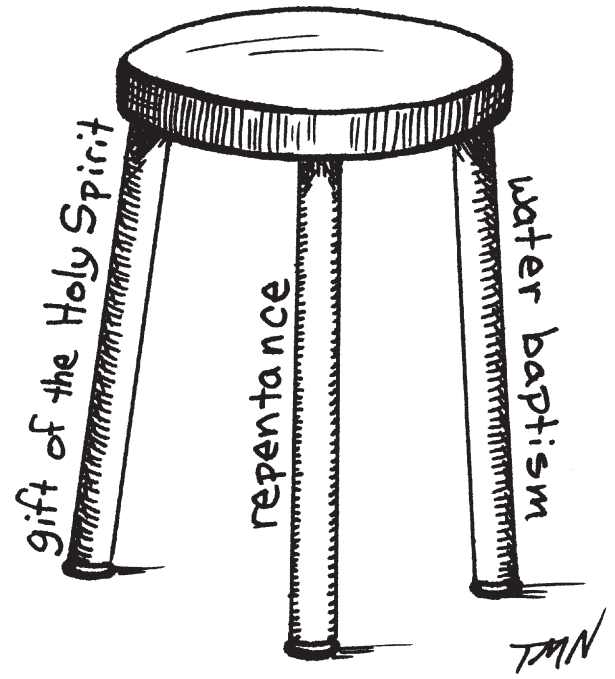
Baptism held great significance for the New Testament apostles. The apostle Peter was invited to the house of a man named Cornelius to tell him the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. *"While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, 'Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.' So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." Acts 10:44-48*

As soon as Cornelius responded to the message, Peter directed him to be baptized in water. To be baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ" is a sign that you totally accept and totally identify with Christ's sacrifice on your behalf. You are proclaiming the end of all efforts to earn your way to heaven by being good enough.

Acts 2:37-38 records the people's response to the first sermon given by the apostles after they were filled with the Holy Spirit. *When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

Peter gives three basic truths upon which the Christian life is built. List them below.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Like three legs of a tripod, these three truths (repentance, baptism, and receiving the gift, or filling, of the Holy Spirit) provide a strong foundation for your walk with Christ. The tripod won't stand if any leg is missing.

Note that repentance must always precede being baptized. If you have not repented of and turned from directing your own life apart from God's rulership, then being baptized in water will serve no purpose. The physical act of baptism does not save you. Water baptism is an outward action that testifies of an inner change of life, a change that is initiated by repentance and developed through ongoing obedience to Christ as His follower.

◆➔ **Read Matthew 3:13-17.**

What does this passage reveal about the amount of significance God places on baptism?

Why do you think Jesus was baptized? To be obedient to the Father? To receive strength to withstand the temptations that were sure to follow?

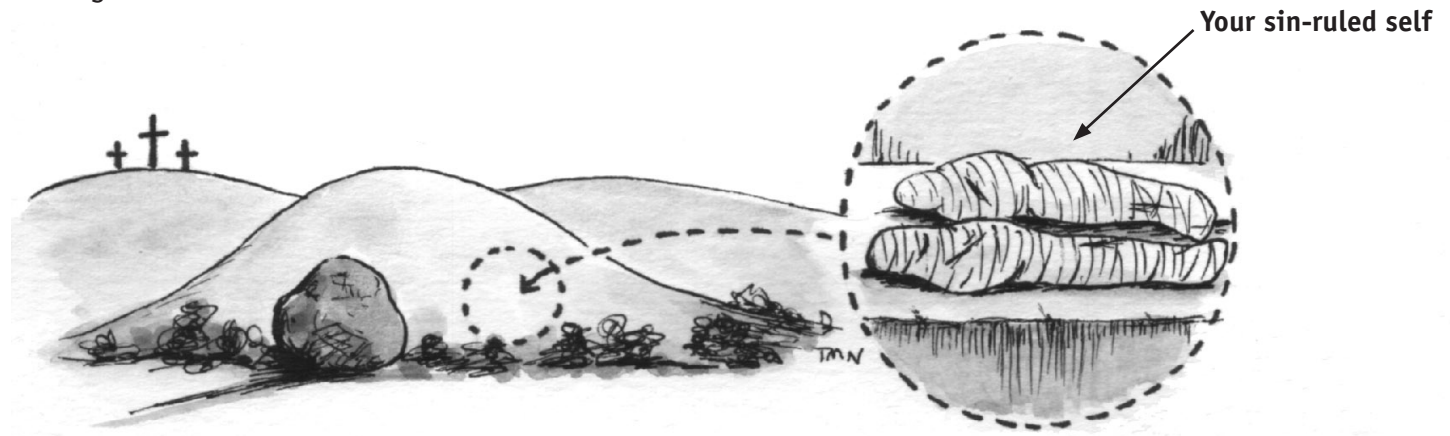
Romans 6:1-14 (studied later) implies that water baptism is critical for a victorious, temptation-overcoming life with Jesus. Your obedient "yes" to the command to be baptized sets the stage for a life of total obedience to Jesus, your Master and Lord.

baptism illustrates a SPIRITUAL REALITY

You Don't Have to be Ruled by Sin and Selfishness Because What Happened to Jesus, Happened to You A Study of Romans 6:1-14

When Christ died on the cross, He paid for the forgiveness of your sin – your independent self-rule and all the wrong things you did as a result. He also paid for your freedom from being ruled or mastered by sin any longer. When you repented, you accessed that forgiveness **and** that freedom. Baptism shows how that happened. *What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. Romans 6:1-4*

You are immersed into Christ. What happened to Christ, happened to you. When He died and was buried, your old way of living, ruling your own life and being ruled by sin, died with Him. What do you do with a dead body? You bury it! This is the first thing that is illustrated in water baptism. The “old self” is dead and buried. *For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin (the sin-ruled you) might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—Romans 6:6*





When Jesus was raised from the dead, you were raised with Him to a new life. This is the second part of baptism -- coming out of the water. This illustrates your resurrection as a new person. You come out of the water with the freedom to live a new life of righteousness, not by your own strength, but by God's resurrection power! *Now if we died with Christ (the sin-ruled you), we believe that we will also live with him (new*

*life ruled by God). The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. **In the same way**, count (consider, realize) yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Romans 6:8, 10-11 (emphasis mine)*

When He was resurrected by the power of the Holy Spirit, a new you was resurrected – a you that is no longer ruled by sin
UNLESS YOU ALLOW IT BY YOUR CHOICES.

*Therefore **do not let sin reign** (rule) in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, **but rather offer** yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and **offer** the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. **For sin shall not be your master**, because you are not under law, but under grace (His pardon and power to do what is right). Romans 6:12-14 (emphasis mine)*



what if you sin after YOU ARE BAPTIZED

1 John 2:1-2 and 1:9 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

According to Romans 6:13, the rest of your life is a process of choosing to offer yourself more to the control of God and less to slavery to sin again. *Do not offer the parts of your body to sin,... but rather offer...the parts of your body to God.* And you have the freedom to do that since the slavery to sin was buried with Christ and you now live in the resurrection condition with Him.

When you come up out of the watery grave of baptism, you are recognizing the fact, and proclaiming it by this action, that you will depend completely on God's resurrection power to help you do what is right. You bury your good intentions in the baptismal grave with the sin-ruled nature. You are resurrected out of the baptismal grave putting your faith in and relying on **His** power to live the new life of righteousness. *...having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your **faith in the power of God**, who raised him from the dead. Colossians 2:12 (emphasis mine)*

How do you access that power?

Do the next thing God tells you in the Bible or by His voice in your inner self (an impression or "hitch"). He might say, "Don't go to that bar, don't associate with that person, throw away those magazines." And when God shows you sin in your life, repent quickly. Then, offer yourself again to God as an instrument of right living. Walking with Jesus is daily offering yourself more to Him and less to sin.



same cloth, NEW COLOR

Jesus affirmed the necessity of this burial of the old self when He said, *“Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.” Mark 16:16*

“Baptized,” or immersed, in this passage means to be dipped into liquid so as to take on the qualities of that liquid, much like a piece of cloth takes on the qualities of a dye. The cloth is still there, but it looks like the dye – it has been changed. Thus, in baptism you immerse the old cloth colored by the old self-ruled character and come up out of the water taking on the character of Jesus. As you daily offer yourself to Jesus to do what He says, He will work the beautiful color of His character more and more into your character.

Old Testament view of BAPTISM AT THE RED SEA

In Exodus 13:22-14:31 is the story of the parting of the Red Sea and the deliverance of Israel from the Egyptian army. *For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. 1 Corinthians 10:1-2*

The passing of Israel through the Red Sea marked a new life for the Israelites. The Egyptian Pharaoh and his army (their enslavement to evil, a type of the sin-ruled self) perished under the water, but the righteous came through victoriously in the glory of God.

After this baptism, they learned the law of God and how to please Him – they were discipled! Upon the completion of their initial discipleship, they were ready to cross the Jordan River and tear down the works of the enemy. In other words, they were ready to minister and fulfill God’s purposes for their lives.

But all this began with repentance (turning away from Egypt) and baptism (crossing the Red Sea). Note that, until they crossed the Red Sea, their enemies pursued them and would have continued unless they were destroyed under the water.

the example of the first CENTURY BELIEVERS

Look up these passages from the book of Acts and note what happened.

Acts 8:12-13

Acts 8:26-40

Acts 9:17-19 (verses 1-19 for the context)

Acts 16:32-34 (verses 23-34 for the context)

Acts 18:8

Acts 19:1-7



preparation for WATER BAPTISM

When the religious people came to John the Baptist for baptism, listen to what he told them. *But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. Matthew 3:7-8*

As you are baptized, what fruit will you bring as proof of your repentance? Here is how this works. Ask Jesus what area of your life He desires you to repent of. When He speaks to you, write down that area below, repent, and bring this note with you to your baptism as fruit of your repentance.

Jesus spoke to me about changing this area of my life:

Questions you will be asked at your baptism:

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?

Do you renounce Satan and all his works and all his ways?

Do you promise to follow Jesus Christ and be faithful to Him until He returns for you?

what do you do if you were BAPTIZED AS A CHILD?

Repentance is a prerequisite for baptism. Since a small child is incapable of this, infant baptism must be seen as an act of faith to dedicate the child to God.

In 1 Samuel 1:11, childless Hannah prayed for a son in these words: *“O LORD Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant’s misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head.”* God answered her prayer for a son, and she kept her part of the bargain and presented Samuel to be raised by the temple priests. God honored her dedication, and Samuel became a great prophet.

If your parents had you baptized as a child, they were dedicating you to God. God has not forgotten neither that act nor the prayers prayed for you at that time. Now, as an adult, if you are ready to fully repent and follow Jesus, publicly declaring your death to sin, self-rule, and your intention to be loyal to Jesus, then baptism is for you. It is not a rejection of what your parents did for you, but it is ratifying their faith and making it your own.

Sources

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Dick Schroeder, University Christian Fellowship (Chi Alpha) at Montana State University, Bozeman.

list of SCRIPTURES

➔ General References

Matthew 3:7-8	fruits of repentance
Matthew 3:13-17	Jesus baptized
Matthew 28:18-20	make disciples, baptize, teach them to obey
Mark 16:16	believes and baptized, saved
Acts 2:37-38	repent, be baptized, receive the gift of Holy Spirit
Acts 8:12-13	people believed and were baptized
Acts 8:26-40	Ethiopian believed and was baptized
Acts 9:17-19	Paul believed and was baptized
Acts 10:44-48	Gentiles receive the Holy Spirit and are baptized
Acts 16:32-34	jailer and family believe and are baptized
Acts 18:8	Corinthians believed and were baptized
Acts 19:1-7	believers baptized into the name of Jesus
Romans 6:1-4	baptized into His death, buried with Him, raised with Him
Romans 6:5-6	old self crucified with Him, no longer slaves to sin
Romans 6:8, 10-11	count self dead to sin, alive to God
Romans 6:12-14	do not offer body to sin, offer self to God, sin not your master
1 Corinthians 10:1-2	forefathers baptized into Moses in cloud and in sea
Colossians 2:11-12	raised with Him through faith in power of God
1 John 1:9, 2:1-2	confess sins, forgive us, if any sin, Jesus our defense