

I. **WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?**

A. Because our Lord Jesus Christ was baptized!

Matthew 3:13-16a Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now...And Jesus...was baptized.

B. Because Christ commanded it of all disciples!

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore and teach (disciple) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

C. Because the early church followed Christ's example and command!

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent (be saved) and be baptized every one of you.....

Acts 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about 3,000 souls.

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Acts 8:37b-38 (Ethiopian Eunuch) I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.

Acts 10:47-48 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost (been saved!) as well as we? And he **COMMANDED** them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.

Acts 16:30b-34 ...Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and to all that were in his house... And (he) was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

Acts 18:8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

D. Because the Apostle Paul taught its importance and meaning!
Romans 6:1-5; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12

II. WHAT DOES BAPTISM MEAN?

Baptism is the outward picture of your conversion (salvation). Baptism cannot save you. Your faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord is what does save you. Nevertheless, the two are seen as linked together in the New Testament.

“Conversion is spiritual, whereas baptism is merely physical. Conversion is a new birth imparted from above; while baptism is administered by the hand of man. Conversion through faith in the blood is a powerful soul-renewing work. Baptism is an OUTWARD PICTURE only, devoid of soul-saving efficacy. Conversion saves the soul – baptism cannot save anyone.”
(Baptism, The Heaven Drawn Picture by P. M. Masters)

A. Baptism is a picture of obedience.

The Bible says, “Repent...and be baptized.” Baptism shows that here is a person who has obeyed God by repenting and who is obeying God by being baptized. It also shows a man who shall be willing to obey God in all of his life.

Christ was baptized “to fulfill all righteousness.” We are baptized to demonstrate our obedience also.

B. Baptism is a picture of forgiveness.

When I repent, I’m forgiven for all of my sins from birth to the time of my conversion. Baptism becomes, then, a picture of the washing away of all of my sins through the blood of Jesus Christ. His blood bought my forgiveness, the water is a picture of that forgiveness.

C. Baptism is a picture of new life.

II Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away, behold all things are become new. BAPTISM IS a heaven drawn picture of the dramatic transformation, which we call conversion (salvation)!

Romans 6:3-9 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life...Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him...

Colossians 2:12 Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God...

Baptism is a picture of burial of the old life. Christ was buried in the grave and we are buried in the waters of baptism.

Baptism is a picture of new life or a different life. Christ rose from the grave and we rise from the water, thereby picturing the change that occurs in our life when we are saved. It is a picture of new birth, new life, a new heart, and a new start – with Christ. It is a picture of a new citizenship having passed from the kingdom of darkness (Satan and Hell) to the Kingdom of God's dear Son.

"...identification with Christ's death is the focal point of baptism. It is not a washing only, but also the putting to death of the old man...baptism means that we die to ourselves and become new creatures." (Same booklet as listed under Part II above).

D. Baptism pictures identification with Christ.

Christ was baptized not because he had sinned or because he had been saved, but because it was necessary that he 1) lead a perfect life, 2) identify Himself with His people, and 3) carry out Himself everything He commands of His people.

He was baptized and so I am baptized. CAN ANY BORN AGAIN BELIEVER HOLD BACK FROM BAPTISM – WHEN THE LAMB OF GOD LED THE WAY?

III. WHEN SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

You should be baptized very soon after you are saved. Notice again the verses listed on the first page. They were baptized the same day or night they believed. We ought to be baptized soon as well. Salvation and Baptism go hand in hand together.

IV. IS IT IMPORTANT THAT I AM IMMERSED?

YES IT IS – AND FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS!

A. The Greek word for baptism is (Baptizo) which means "to dip".

Dr. Robinson, Presbyterian, in his New Testament Lexicon, says: "Baptizo – to dip in, to sink, to immerse"

Hastings Bible Dictionary – “The actual meaning of the word is Immersion.”

Thayer’s New Testament Lexicon – “To dip, immerse, submerge.”

Martin Luther... “Baptism is called in the Greek Language baptisimos, in Latin mesio, which means to plunge something entirely into the water, so that the water closes over it.”

John Calvin..”The word baptize signifies to immerse and it is certain immersion was the practice of the ancient church.”

Robertson’s Thesaurus – “Baptizo, immerse.”

Liddell and Scott, The Standard Greek Lexicon of the World – “Baptizo, to dip under, over head and ears, overwhelm. Baptisis, dipping. Baptisma that which is dipped. Baptistees, one that dips. Bapto, to dip under, to dip in. Baptos, dipped.”

Professor Anthoon, an Episcopalian and author – “The primary meaning of baptize is to dip, or immerse; and its secondary meaning, if it ever had any, all refer in some way or other to the same leading idea, sprinkling and pouring are entirely out of the question.”

B. Christ was immersed.

Matthew 3:13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him.

Jordan was a river which runs through the heart of Palestine where Jesus ministered. There is no doubt he was immersed in the river itself by immersion.

C. In any other place where water is mentioned, it is always a body of water or much water.

Acts 8:37b-38 I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch and he baptized him.

D. There is not one place in the Bible that says anyone should be sprinkled or poured.

E. Only immersion satisfies the pictures of obedience, forgiveness, new life, and identification with Christ!

1. Christ was baptized (immersed), I shall follow him obediently.
2. When I was saved, my sins were all forgiven. Immersion pictures my sins being carried away or washed away in the blood of Jesus Christ.
3. When I go down into the water (burial) that pictures me dying to myself and the death of my old sinful life. When I come up out of the water (resurrection) that pictures the new life I live in Jesus Christ. (Sprinkling cannot possibly give this picture but immersion fits it to an exact T.)

V. WHAT IS THE VALUE OF BAPTISM FOR THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE CHURCH?

FOR THE INDIVIDUAL: "It helps him to crystallize his own testimony and to express it. It impresses his experience of salvation upon his mind in such a way that his gratitude rises and assurance is strengthened. He realizes that what has been an inward, unseen transaction between himself and the Lord must now be expressed and lived out before the eyes of the world. He pledges himself to follow the Lamb and to be always identified with Him." (Ibid, p. 12)

FOR THE CHURCH: Baptism keeps conversion before us. Many visit our churches, but baptism reminds us that some of these choose to follow the Lord even as we have. Baptism also holds conversion before the church and before the seeker as a regular demonstration of God's grace. "It is a great sifter (rightly used) and proclaims that a man can and must be sure he is saved before he can truly call himself a Christian." (Ibid, p. 13)