



The Discipleship Project of Horizon Central

Level #1 Series #4 Study #3

Topic: Baptism

What is Baptism? In the Bible, baptism is a practice which Christians are instructed to observe. The purpose of which is to signify by outward symbolism what Christ has accomplished in a believer's life through faith in Christ. As true believers, we are both instructed and commanded to submit to it as expression of our faith in Christ. **Mathew 3:13-17, Matthew 28:19**

Why do you need to be Baptized?

1. Act of Obedience: In direct response to Jesus' command that Christians everywhere are to "make disciples" and then "baptize" those who believe. Therefore, everyone who becomes a Christian needs to be baptized out of obedience to God.
Mark 16:15-16, John 14:15
2. Statement of Faith/Public Testimony: Water baptism is an outward statement of one's belief in Christ's atonement for our sins. Baptism is a means to make a public statement of your faith. In the New Testament, we see baptism practiced publicly. It was a very powerful and meaningful way to fulfill Jesus' promise. **Matthew 10:32, Acts 2:37-41, Acts 10:47-48**
Those who are publicly baptized "confess before men" their life's commitment to Him as their Lord and Savior. Therefore this would exclude infant baptism, as an infant is unable to make such commitment and confession. It does however include those who have personally put their faith in Jesus Christ, have eternal life from God and are able to communicate that fact to others.
3. Symbolic connection with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection: Jesus' ultimate sacrifice has become our greatest victory, for those who believe. The forgiveness of sins was made possible through Christ's death (shed blood), burial, and resurrection. When we are baptized, we are symbolically identifying with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.
Romans 6:3-4, 2Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 2:12 This symbolism is better represented through baptism by immersion. The action of being immersed in the water pictures dying and being buried with Christ. The action of coming out of the water illustrates Christ's resurrection.

Thayer's Definition: *baptizō*: 1) to dip repeatedly, to immerse, to submerge (of vessels sunk) 2) to cleanse by dipping or submerging, to wash, to make clean with water, to wash one's self, bathe...

According to this definition the practice of immersion would then be the most fitting.

What Baptism cannot do

1. Baptism Cannot Save: Salvation comes through faith alone, and not works **Luke 23:40-48, John 3:13-18, Ephesians 2:8-9**, Baptism gives evidence through public action that a person has already been saved.
2. Baptism Cannot Cleanse From Sin: The cleansing of sins takes place when we believe and accept Christ and ask Him to cleanse our sins **Galatians 2:16, Ephesians 1:7, 1 John 1:9** Baptism may witness to our cleansing, but the water itself is powerless to cleanse from sin.
3. Baptism Cannot Magically Free Us From Sinful Habits: Self-control, moral purity, holiness and much more are all benefits of receiving Christ and allowing the Holy Spirit to influence and change us. **Romans 6:8-14, Galatians 5:22-25**