

BAPTISM TALK

Baptism is Important

- Jesus was baptized.
- Baptism is part of the Great Commission.
- The apostles demonstrate the importance of baptism by their example in the book of Acts.

Arthur Wallis, in **Living God's Way**:

In non-Christian lands, people don't always take a lot of notice when a person of another religion professes to believe in Christ, but when he follows this by being baptized the opposition breaks out. Everybody understands that baptism is the outward sign that you mean business.

As you read the NT epistles you will find that nowhere are believers exhorted to get baptized. It is taken for granted that this happened when they were born again. We don't come across unbaptized Christians in New Testament churches.

Clearing Some Confusion

Infant Baptism

- The only babies baptized in the New Testament were "babes in Christ." Baptism in Scripture always follows repentance and faith.

Mark 16:16 "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

Acts 2:38 And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

- It was after a person became a disciple (a follower of Jesus) that he was to be baptized.

Matt. 28:19 "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."

We never find the order reversed.

Baptism is by Immersion

- The Greek word, means literally to dip, immerse, or submerge.

John 3:23 Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptized.

Mark 1:10 Jesus "came up out of the water."

Acts 8:38-39 so did Philip and the Eunuch

What Does It Mean?

1. I've Been Initiated

Not into a denomination, but "into Christ" (Rom. 6:3)

And thus into his body, the church.

Baptism is the visible sign of a believer's union with Christ and his church.

2. I've Been Sealed

Just as circumcision was a mark of Abraham's relationship with God, so baptism marks the believer.

Baptism should confirm and strengthen your faith.

3. I've Been Cleansed

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Acts 22:16 "And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name."

Eph. 5:25-26 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word.

Heb. 10:22 Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

The new birth and baptism belong together. We must not separate them.

4. I Confess Christ

The new birth can take place in the privacy of your own room, but you can't have a "private baptism." In Bible times it was done in rivers and city pools. It's no "hush-hush" affair. It's like an enlisted soldier putting on the uniform.

5. I Am United With Christ

I am united with him in his death and resurrection.

Picture the pool as your grave. Picture your life up to this point as a corpse. Bury it. Then be "Raised with Christ to live a new life."

What Should I Expect?

You will still have problems, will struggle with sin. But baptism is more than a symbol. It is more than "an outward sign of an inward grace." It is a spiritual transaction. God's grace flows through our obedience. Something happens. You should expect something. Peter is able to say, "Baptism saves us. Not as a washing of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a clean conscience." (1 Peter 3:21)

Look for the Holy Spirit

- Matthew 3 Jesus' baptism
- Acts 2:38 Pentecost

Tertullian, about AD 160-200

Therefore, blessed ones whom the grace of God awaits, when you come up out of that most holy bath which brings about new birth and for the first time raise your hands within your Mother, the church, with your brothers, ask the Father, ask the Lord to make you subject to the riches of grace, the distribution of the gifts.

Baptism Scriptures

Matthew 3:13-17

Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him. But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?"

But Jesus answering said to him, "Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness."

Then he permitted Him. And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

Matthew 28:16-20

But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated. And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him; but some were doubtful. And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Acts 2:36-41

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ-- this Jesus whom you crucified."

Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself." And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!"

So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

Acts 8:26-40

But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, "Arise and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is a desert road.

And he arose and went; and behold, there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure; and he had come to Jerusalem to worship. And he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah. And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go up and join this chariot."

And when Philip had run up, he heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

And he said, "Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this:

"He was led as a sheep to slaughter;

And as a lamb before its shearer is silent,

So He does not open His mouth.

In humiliation His judgment was taken away;

Who shall relate His generation?

For His life is removed from the earth."

And the eunuch answered Philip and said, "Please tell me, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself, or of someone else?"

And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him. And as they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?" And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch saw him no more, but went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus; and as he passed through he kept preaching the gospel to all the cities, until he came to Caesarea.

Acts 16:25-34

But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them; and suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's chains were unfastened. And when the jailer had been roused out of sleep and had seen the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here!" And he called for lights and rushed in and, trembling with fear, he fell down before Paul and Silas, and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household." And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household. And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household.

Romans 6:1-11

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.