
WATER BAPTISM

When we come to Jesus and repent of our sins, we enter into what the Bible calls the “born again” experience. We experience a “new birth” and receive a new heart. Jesus comes to dwell in our hearts by faith. We become partakers of eternal life, for eternal life is in the Son. When we depart from this life, we shall go to be with the Lord

1. What are three vital elements of the Christian life? (Acts 2:38)

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

In our previous studies we have discussed the atonement of Jesus and God’s provision for man’s sins. We have discussed what true repentance and submission to the Lordship of Jesus means. We come now to our next truth, water baptism, in which we experience a burial of our old nature and a rising to walk with Christ in newness of life. Water baptism in itself is not effectual for salvation.

2. What did Jesus Himself say? (Matt. 28:19)

Let us now examine additional Scriptures concerning the significance of water baptism.

3. For what purpose was our old sin-loving nature crucified with Him? (Rom. 6:6)

a. _____

b. _____

“We know that our old (unrenewed) self was nailed to the cross with Him in order that (our) body, (which is the instrument) of sin, might be made ineffective and inactive for evil, that we might no longer be the slaves of sin.”
--Romans 6:6 (Amplified Version)

4. What provision did Jesus make for the putting off of the sin-loving nature? (Col. 2:11)

5. What is the circumcision of Christ? (Col. 2:11-12)

This circumcision, made without hands, is a supernatural work of God. In a sense, in the waters of baptism, God supernaturally takes His scalpel and cuts away from our life the bondage to sin and buries it. A tremendous deliverance and victory takes place.

6. What was circumcision a sign of under the Old Covenant? (Gen. 17:10-11)

7. What happened to those who were not circumcised and why? (Gen. 17:13-14)

a.

b.

8. With whom did God establish this covenant of circumcision? (Gen. 17:19)

9. From whom are we descended as the children of promise? (Rom. 9:6-8)

10. Who did Paul say were the true circumcision? (Phil. 3:3)

11. How did Moses, prophetically speaking of the New Covenant, describe this true circumcision? (Duet. 30:6)

Let us look at another Old Testament example. After forty years of wandering, the generation of disobedient Israelites, whom God had originally brought out of Egypt, died in the wilderness. When the Lord rolled back the waters of the Jordan River just as He had done at the Red Sea, this new generation walked through the Jordan River and into the promised land.

12. What was the first thing that they did? (Josh. 5:2)

13. Why did they do it? (Josh. 5:6-7)

14. What did the Lord say that He did when they were circumcised? (Josh. 5:9)

Before the Israelites could go up and possess the promised land, they had to be circumcised so that the reproach of Egypt might be rolled away from them. That circumcision was a sign in their flesh of their covenant with God. So also, under the New Covenant, before we can go up and possess our promised inheritance, we must receive the circumcision of Jesus, made without hands, in putting off the “body of the sins of the flesh.” Through this circumcision we are uprooted from the world, of which Egypt is a picture, and the reproach of the world is rolled away from us.

15. What then is circumcision in the New Covenant? (Col. 2:11-13)

Circumcision is the natural sense of cutting away the unclean part, the foreskin of the man. In the spiritual sense, circumcision is a cutting away of the whole body of sins, the sin-loving nature. Even more, baptism is a burial and resurrection, a total dying of the old self by union with Christ, a real and present rising again by participation in His risen life.

Another beautiful picture of water baptism is found in the Old Testament. It is a type and shadow of the meaning of baptism under the New Covenant. The Israelites had been held in bondage in Egypt for many years. They had been enslaved to Pharaoh, the cruel king. When the Lord brought them forth from bondage in the Exodus, He parted the Red Sea before them. The water was like a wall on either side of them as the Israelites

passed through to the other side. Pharaoh and his armies, who were pursuing Israel, followed them into the water. The Lord, however, caused the water to roll back together cutting the Egyptians off and causing them to drown.

The ones who held Israel in bondage and slavery in Egypt, who were pursuing her in her new relationship with God, were buried in the waters of the Red Sea. Israel was left alone on the other side of the water free from slavery, free to be servants of their God. If the sea had not buried the Egyptians, the treat of slavery would have followed them in to the promised land. Not only would Israel have had to fight her enemies in the promised land, but she would have had to fight the one who was trying to bring her back into bondage. Those who have come to faith in Christ and are identified with Him through water baptism have been made free from the power and bondage of sin and have pressed on into the promised land able to meet and conquer their enemies head on.

16. In fact, what does Paul say about Israel's experience at the Red Sea? (I Cor. 10:1-2)

17. When believers are baptized, they are following Jesus in what experience of His? (Rom. 6:4)

a.

b.

18. If we have been united with Him in the likeness of His death, what shall we also be? (Rom. 6:5)

19. Jesus partook of our flesh and blood and died. Why did He do this? (Heb. 2:14-15)

a.

b.

As He hung on the cross, Jesus became sin on our behalf (II Cor. 5:21). The purpose of this was to bring us to God the Father. Jesus died on the cross to make a perfect atonement for man's sinful and lost condition. On the third day He arose from the dead and triumphed over Satan, thereby providing for man's salvation. Because we receive His life when we make Jesus Lord, our relationship to God is made alive and we also live in fellowship with God. Likewise, as we partake in water baptism, we share Jesus' burial and resurrection. Because we now share the resurrection life of Jesus, sin no longer has dominion over us.

Now that we have established the Scriptural meaning of baptism, let us look into the Scriptural application of it.

20. How did the people act who received the Word of God? (Acts 2:41)

21. What did the people of Samaria do after they believed Philip's teaching? (Acts 8:12)

22. What did the Ethiopian eunuch desire after he had heard the message of Philip about the Messiah? (Acts 8:35-36)

23. In what way, or by what method, was the eunuch baptized? (Acts 8:38-39)

The baptisms throughout the New Testament, including the baptisms of John, were all done by immersion—the people all went down into the water and came up again. The water represents the grave where the burial takes place.

24. What did the Philippian jailer do after believing Paul's message? (Acts 16:29-33)

25. When was he baptized? (Acts 16:33)

26. When were those who heard Peter's message baptized? (Acts 2:41)

Notice the immediacy of all the baptisms recorded in the book of Acts. Likewise, there should be no delay in the baptism of believers today.

27. In what name did Jesus tell the disciples to baptize? (Matt. 28:19)

28. In what name did the disciples baptize? (Acts 2:38; Acts 8:14-16; Acts 10:45-48; Acts 19:5)

We read in Colossians 2:9: *"For in Him all the fullness of Deity swells in bodily form."* Jesus' disciples understood this; for having His command, they went everywhere baptizing new believers. They were baptizing in the name which is above all names, in the name which all authority of heaven and earth is invested, and that name is Jesus. In the name of Jesus, demons are cast out, the sick are healed, and the lame walk.

29. Into who are we baptized? (Rom. 6:3)

30. Many believers have gone through the motions of baptism, yet have not experienced a genuine New Testament baptism. What have they experienced? (Acts 19:3-4)

In the Old Testament, an account is given of Naaman, the captain of the army of the King of Syria, who had leprosy. He went to Elisha, the prophet of God, to ask for healing. Leprosy in the Scripture is a type of the "body of sins of the flesh" or of the bondage of the power of sin because there is no cure for this disease apart from the mercy of God. The whole flesh is infected, and the end of it is death.

31. What did Elisha tell him to do? (II Kings 5:9-10)

32. What was his response? (II Kings 5:11-12)

Likewise, many people are insulted by God's command for water baptism, thinking it is silly and ridiculous.

33. What was the servant's advice to him, and what did he do? (II Kings 5:13-14)

Likewise, we must become as little children and obey the simple things that God asks us to do. His ways are far above our ways. We must lean not to our own understanding. We must be careful lest we only desire to do great feats for God yet are not willing to humble ourselves to God's way of doing things.

MEMORY VERSE: Colossians 2:11-12

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