

BAPTISM

Aaron Orendorff (New Life Church Oregon City)

What is baptism?

Baptism is a visible symbol of both the believer's spiritual union with Christ—particularly in His death, burial and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:21)—and with Christ's body, the church (1 Cor. 12:13). As a symbol of this union (and not merely a "sign"), the mode of baptism should be immersion unless such an administration is physically impossible (Matt. 3:16; Mk. 1:5, 10; Jn. 3:23; Acts 8:39; Rom 6:3-4). When a believer is baptized "into the name of Jesus Christ" they are acknowledging Jesus' exclusive and unrivaled lordship over their lives. Baptism is not a work or ritual that "saves" us (Eph. 2:8-9); instead, it is a normal and obedient part of a person's initial experience of salvation that testifies, "I am no longer my own. I now belong to Jesus" (Rom. 6:1-5; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:11-12; 1 Pet. 3:17-22)

Why get baptized?

Baptism is both commanded and modeled throughout the New Testament as the *immediate* response to personal faith in the gospel (i.e., conversion). When we look at the pages of the New Testament, there's no such thing as an un-baptized Christian.

Matthew 3:16-17 ¹⁶ And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; ¹⁷ and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

Matthew 28:19-20 ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

Mark 1:5 & 10 ⁵ And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ¹⁰ And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opening and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.

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

John 3:23 John [the Baptist] also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized.

Acts 2:38-41 ³⁸ And Peter said to them, "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. ³⁹ For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." ⁴⁰ And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." ⁴¹ So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

Acts 8:34-38 ³⁴ And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” ³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶ And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” ³⁷ ³⁸ And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.

Acts 16:30-33 ³⁰ Then he [the Philippians jailer] brought them [Paul and Barnabas] out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” ³¹ And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” ³² And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. ³³ And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family.

Acts 18:8 Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.