

Water Baptism

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Scripture References

Acts 19:4	Acts 10:48, <i>NIV</i>
Luke 3:21	Acts 16:15, 30-33, <i>NIV</i>
Mark 1:9	Acts 18:8, <i>NIV</i>
Matthew 28:19, 20, <i>NIV</i>	1 Corinthians 12:13
John 14:15	Romans 6:1-5, <i>NIV</i>
Ephesians 2:8, 9	Colossians 2:12, <i>NIV</i>
Luke 23:39, 40	2 Corinthians 5:17, <i>NIV</i>
Acts 8:12, 38, 39, <i>NIV</i>	Matthew 3:16
Acts 9:18, <i>NIV</i>	Acts 2:41

Summary

*Being baptized by water, also called the baptism of repentance, is a major event in a Christian's life. It is a public declaration that a person has repented of their sins. If we are wondering if this is important, we must consider the example Jesus—who was perfect and sinless—set when He was baptized in the Jordan River. Although it is not required for salvation, believers are baptized to demonstrate their love for Jesus. Faith in Christ and in His finished works initially saves us; being baptized by water afterward is a public display of trust that we have **already** been saved. Being dunked in water as we celebrate our baptism symbolizes the submersion and death of our old lives and the birth of our new lives in Christ. Baptism shows the world our permanent identity as God's righteous children, and confidently affirms that we are blessed and forgiven of our past.*

A. New Christians get water baptized to publicly demonstrate their commitment to Christ.

1. We must ask ourselves what the significance is of water baptism. We read about this type of repentance in the Book of Acts.
 - a. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus (Acts 19:4).
 - b. Water baptism originated with the apostle John, who came to be known as John the Baptist. John even baptized Jesus at the beginning of His ministry.
 - c. Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened (Luke 3:21).
 - d. If Jesus, Himself, chose to be water baptized, we should follow suit as Christians.
2. Baptism is an act of obedience and faith, but also an act of love.
 - a. And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan (Mark 1:9).
3. 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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age (Matthew 28:19, 20, *NIV*).
 - a. This establishes water baptism as a doctrine. We receive this as a commandment from Jesus, Himself.

- b. As believers, we are baptized out of love for Jesus.
- c. If ye love me, keep my commandments (John 14:15).

B. Baptism is not required to get into heaven but is a declaration that we are already saved.

1. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast (Ephesians 2:8, 9).
 - a. Water baptism is *not* required for salvation; genuine faith in Jesus and in His finished works is all we need. If it was a requirement, it would be considered a work necessary to be saved.
 - b. Not being water baptized does not keep us out of heaven. The thief on the cross received the promise of paradise even without baptism because he believed.
 - c. And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? (Luke 23:39, 40).
 - d. Baptism does not make us believers; it shows that we are *already* believers. It does not save us; only our faith in Christ Jesus can do that.
2. In the early church, the apostles made sure to keep Jesus' commandment of water baptism.
 - a. But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women (Acts 8:12, *NIV*).
 - b. Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized (Acts 9:18, *NIV*).
 - c. So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ... (Acts 10:48, *NIV*).
 - d. When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us...He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized (Acts 16:15, 30-33, *NIV*).
 - e. Crispus, the synagogue leader, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptized (Acts 18:8, *NIV*).
3. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13).
 - a. Baptism connects us to the body of Christ and gives us a sense of being joined with other believers in a communal journey toward the goal of perfection in Him.

C. Water baptism symbolizes the death of our old lives and the birth of our new ones.

1. What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his (Romans 6:1-5, *NIV*).

- a. Baptism is a declaration that we are followers of Jesus Christ. It is a public confession of our faith and our commitment to Him, and the next step after being saved. Being baptized is a practical demonstration of a spiritual reality that has taken place in our lives.
 - b. Baptism is a symbol of our new lives as Christians after having buried our old lives. Similar to wearing a wedding ring to announce to the world our commitment to our spouse, water baptism is the outward symbol of the commitment we have made in our hearts that must be followed through and lived out on a daily basis.
 - c. Having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead (Colossians 2:12, *NIV*).
 - d. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! (2 Corinthians 5:17, *NIV*).
2. When we were stuck in our old, dead, sinful lives and incapable of responding to God, He brought us back to life. Believers experience the same type of resurrection as Jesus Christ.
 - a. We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life (Romans 6:4, *NIV*).
 3. All the baptisms we see in the Bible were by immersion; we follow this example, and this is the norm for all believers. The only requirement for water baptism is that we believe in Jesus.
 - a. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him (Matthew 3:16).
 - b. And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing (Acts 8:38, 39, *NIV*).
 - c. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls (Acts 2:41).

Category: faith

Keywords: water, baptism, baptized, repentance, repented, sins, faith, trust