

# THE NEW LIFE

## BAPTISM - REVELATION'S NEW LIFE FOR A NEW MILLENNIUM

## WHAT IS BAPTISM AND WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

Have you ever wanted to start over in life? Do you want that feeling of a brand new, fresh start? The Bible tells us how this is possible. **Baptism is a symbolic act that is thoroughly covered in the Bible.** We will look at the new life— a fresh start that is freely available through Jesus.

## JESUS' BAPTISM

Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan river to be baptized by John. But John said to Him, **"I need to be baptized by you, so why are you coming to me?"** **Jesus replied, 'It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires.'** **So John agreed to baptize Him" (Matthew 3:13-15).** Jesus is immersed in the water and, as Jesus comes out of the water, His ministry begins.

Baptism is a crucial part of the Christian life. Not only was Jesus baptized as an example to us, but He also strongly admonished His people to be baptized, presenting it as **a symbol of our willingness to accept the Gospel of Jesus.**

## BAPTISM IS A PROCLAMATION

The book of Revelation reveals a God of incredible love who never forces our allegiance or coerces our will. He invites us to come to Him freely. He says in **Revelation 22:17, "Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely."**

Jesus is pictured as the Lamb who dies to gain our ultimate freedom. God is calling people to be faithful to Him. He is calling them to lovingly keep His commandments. Jesus invites them to publicly acknowledge and proclaim their loyalty to Him.

How do we take a stand? Jesus instructed His disciples in **Matthew 28:19, 20: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen."** **Through baptism we declare our allegiance by proclaiming we are with Jesus!**



# SPRINKLING OR POURING WON'T DO

The Bible declares that there is only one true method of baptism in **Ephesians 4:5**, *"One Lord, one faith, one baptism"*. If so, then there is only one biblical method and we certainly cannot go wrong by following Jesus' example! What example is this? We find glimpses of it in **Mark 1:9**, where it reads, *"It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan."*

**Matthew 3:16, 17** also paints a beautiful image of the interaction between God and His son, Jesus, following His baptism:

*"When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'"*

When Christ was baptized, He went down into the water and came up out of the water. Jesus' baptism was by full immersion!

The whole person must be immersed, because the whole person has sinned.

We need a lot more than sprinkling. We want to be totally cleansed. In fact, the Greek word "baptizo" or "baptize" means "to dip", "to immerse".

**Romans 6:3-4** says, *"Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."*

How can sprinkling or pouring convey this message? When you go into that water, you are saying, "Lord, I want my old life to be buried and I want a new life in Christ."



# ACCEPTING GOD'S GRACE AND FORGIVENESS

**Baptism is like burying your sins in a watery grave.** So why do we still need to confess our sins? (1 John 1:9) Baptism does not mean you are flawless; it means you are committed. Baptism shows your commitment to Christ, your decision to follow His ways. **Baptism is not the end of the Christian life – it is just the beginning!** Through it, we accept God's mercy and begin again with a clean slate! In Acts 2:38 we find Peter giving instruction and encouragement saying, **"Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins . . ."** Accept the gift of the Holy Spirit's guidance **" . . . and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit"**.

Through baptism, you accept your place in the family of God, which He has called you to since you were created: **"Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them"** (Acts 2:41). How encouraging! Whatever your experience with family in the past, God wants to restore you as His child, along with others who— like you— desire to follow Him every day and call Him Father.

Through baptism, a person is unified with Christ. In Galatians 3:27 it explains that **"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ."** Yes, when you are baptized your sins are forgiven. Not only is your life cleansed, you also receive the Holy Spirit and become part of an international community of faith!

Is this cleansing, this new life, this new identity in Christ something that your heart yearns for? Is the Holy Spirit moving on your heart right now? Is it your desire to say, "Yes Jesus! I want to stand for you" publicly?

***"And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord"***

## NEED PRAYER?

## HAVE QUESTIONS?

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