

WATER BAPTISM

Water baptism symbolizes the believer's total trust in, and total reliance on, the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as a commitment to live obediently to Him. It also symbolizes unity with all the saints (Ephesians 2:19), that is, with every person in every nation on earth that is a member of the body of Christ (Galatians 3:27-28). Water baptism expresses this and more, but it is not an entrance into Christianity. Instead we are baptized because our Lord commanded it and because we obey Him. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).

Before we are baptized we must come to believe that we are sinners in need of salvation (Romans 3:23). We must also believe that Christ died on the cross to atone for our sins, that He was buried, and that He was resurrected to assure our place in heaven (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). We then turn to Jesus, asking Him to forgive our sins and to be our Lord and Savior, and the moment we do that we are born again, our eternal salvation is guaranteed, and we begin to die to ourselves and live for Christ (1 Peter 1:3-5). At this time we are qualified to be scripturally baptized.

At the river, pool or baptismal font, we let ourselves be completely immersed in the water. This symbolizes burial with our Lord; we are baptized into His death on the cross and are no longer slaves to self or sin (Romans 6:3-7). When we are raised out of the water, we are symbolically resurrected—raised to our new life in Christ and to be with Him forever, born into the family of our loving God (Romans 8:16).

The fact that baptism is not a prerequisite for salvation is best seen in the example of a saved man who was not baptized in water, the criminal on the cross (Luke 23:39-43). This self-confessed sinner came to acknowledge Jesus as his Lord while dying on a cross next to Him, and he asked for salvation and was forgiven of his sins. Although he never experienced water baptism, at that moment he was baptized into Christ's death, and he then was raised to life by the power of Christ's word (Hebrews 1:3).

Christians have been commanded to be baptized, and we should do so out of obedience to, and love for, our Lord Christ Jesus (John 14:15). Water baptism is the biblical method of baptism because of its symbolic representation of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.



Referenced Bible verses are available on the back.

New King James verses referenced...

Ephesians 2:19 "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,"

Galatians 3:27-28 "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Matthew 28:19 "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,"

Romans 3:23 "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 "Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,"

1 Peter 1:3-5 "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Romans 6:3-7 "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. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin."

Romans 8:16 "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,"

Luke 23:39-43 "Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us." But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

Hebrews 1:3 "who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,"

John 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments."