

The sacrament of “Water Baptism”

By Pastor Don Nicely



God has provided in his word everything that is necessary to be a strong, vital Christian. It is important that we follow his plan for our life if we are to fulfill his will. One of the first steps after receiving forgiveness of sins is to be water baptized.

Jesus himself was water baptized even though he was without sin so that he would be the complete consummation of the Law of Moses. In the Law of Moses you had to be baptized with water, and he came to fulfill it for man, and not to abolish it. He even carried the practice on into the New Testament church when he gave us the commission of Matt. 28:19 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,*

You must understand that water baptism is more than just a ritual or religious exercise. But instead it is intended to be an essential part of our spiritual formation.

When a believer participates in water baptism he is outwardly affirming the inward commitment that he has made Jesus Christ the Lord of his life. Jesus stressed that it is important that every believer be baptized.

Mark 16:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶*He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.*

Even though it is not necessary to be baptized to receive salvation, we are still commanded by Holy Scripture to participate in this sacred sacrament.

We know that we have come to eternal life when we obey all his teachings.

1 John 2:3 (NKJV) ³*Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.*

Just when should we be baptized?

After you repent of your sins which means to turn away from sin and follow Jesus Christ as the Lord of your life. Now; his word is your guide through life, and not your own common sense.

Then you must believe in Jesus Christ which means to completely trust in his death, and resurrection for your salvation.

Acts 8:12 (NKJV) ¹²*But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.*

Since repentance is necessary before you are baptized- being baptized as a baby is ineffective. Infant baptism is found nowhere in scriptures, in fact the practice came from the Anabaptists to try to keep the pagans from stealing their children, and using them for child sacrifices. To avoid this tragedy the preacher would attend the births of his parishioners, and when the child was born he would then baptize it and this practice would stop the pagans from stealing the child, because they could not offer a Christian baptized baby to their god. The practice was adopted by the Catholic Church, and now even though it is a useless practice it is still being performed today. The Christian church believes in dedicating our children to God, for there are many examples in the

scriptures of this practice, and child dedication is more of a promise by the parents to raise the child correctly than it is for the child.

Since it is impossible for a baby to repent of its sins and believe on Christ we believe that infant baptism is thus useless. But after the child matures and understands about sin and repentance and makes a decision for Christ then they should be baptized at whatever age it takes place.

Let's now discuss the spiritual effects of repenting, believing, and being baptized with water.

When we confess and repent of our sins we die out to the old sinful nature and are resurrected in the newness of life. We are forgiven of all our past, present, and future sins. Our "old man" is crucified with Christ on the cross and we are then circumcised in our heart to have a heart after God's will for our life. If this is not so in your life, then true salvation has not occurred.

Water baptism identifies the believer with Christ's death on the cross, burial in the grave and resurrection from the dead. Just as Jesus willingly chose to die on a cross for us- we must be willing to enter into the waters of his death by baptism. Baptism is the only way to display outwardly that we have been raised to the newness of life. The bible declares...*all of us who have been baptized in Christ Jesus were baptized into his death.*

When we are buried with him in his death through baptism, so also will we be raised with him in the newness of life. For by being united with him through his death seals the fact that we will be raised with him in eternal life.

Romans 6:3 - 5 (NKJV) ³*Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?* ⁴*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.* ⁵*For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,*

Because of the shed blood of Jesus on the cross we are forgiven of our sins. Once we receive this forgiveness of sins we are commanded by God to take it to the nations and share it with others who are without.

Luke 24:45 (NKJV) ⁴⁵*And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.*

Water baptism is an outward sign that our "old man" or sinful nature has been crucified.

Galatians 2:20 (NKJV) ²⁰*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

Colossians 2:11 - 13 (NKJV) ¹¹*In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹²buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.* ¹³*And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,*

How should I be baptized?

Jesus told his followers that we should be baptized in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Matthew 28:19 (NKJV) 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,*

Being baptized in the name of the Lord is an essential part of our baptism in water. When there is an earthly marriage, a bride takes on the name of her groom. So also we Christians take on the name of our heavenly bridegroom in water baptism. All our scriptural examples of water baptism explains that the candidate was immersed in the water and not sprinkled on the head with water- so for this reason we believe biblical baptism is to be submerged in water. The word baptism itself means; “*to be submerged.*” Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River and not the Jordan cup.

Matthew 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶*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.* Have you been baptized yet? If not why don't you see your pastor and ask him to help you fulfill this holy sacrament.