

Water Baptism – Part 2

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?' Jesus replied, 'Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.'" Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.'" (Matthew 3:13-17)

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN BAPTISM? Baptism means to dip, immerse, or submerge. In scripture it means to put into or under the water, so to entirely immerse or submerge. When the Ethiopian saw water, he asked to be baptized *"As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?'" (Acts 8:36)* Philip was the one who was preaching to him the gospel of Jesus and he answered him, *"³⁷ Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' The eunuch answered, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.'" (Acts 8:37)* Then the eunuch complied *"³⁸ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him."* (Acts 8:38) Then in the following verse *Acts 8:39a* we can read, *"³⁹ When they came up out of the water,"* that mean during Baptism the eunuch was immersed under the surface of the water. Our Lord Jesus when he got Baptized according to *Matthew 3:16 a*, we can read the following *"As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water."* That it means that during His Baptism Jesus was under the surface of the water. Therefore it is not acceptable that Baptism will be done by sprinkling of water or by taking shower because the whole body needs to be immersed under the surface of the water.

Romans 6:3-5 tell us the following about baptism, *"³ Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ 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. ⁵ If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection."* Here according to this Scripture those who are undergoing baptism are considered as dead to their old life. Therefore the meaning of baptism is to bury the old life, and immersion in water symbolizes the burial of a dead person body. Therefore in doing baptism only immersion method is the acceptable and the Scriptural procedure. Those who are baptized by sprinkling need to be baptized again properly by immersion under the surface of the water. Water Baptism should be done in the in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit as Jesus commanded us, *"¹⁹ 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."* (Matthew 28:19)

WHAT DOES BAPTISM MEAN?

1- Water Baptism is to bury the old life: *Romans 6:3-5* tell us that in baptism we are burying our old life. Therefore it is the responsibility of those who desire and willing to be baptize to put to death whatever belongs to their sinful nature. *"⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶ Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. ⁷ You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸ But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹ Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator."* (Colossians 3:5-10) Immersion under the water during baptism is to bury an aware person who is willing to put to death his old life. In this way the person is united with Jesus in His death on the cross, and as Jesus resurrected from the death, the baptized person is united with Jesus' resurrection as he rise up from the water after water baptism to live his new life for Christ. *Colossians 2:12,13* tells us the following, *"¹² having been buried with him in baptism and raised*

with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³ When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins." Therefore in baptism the old life (sins) has been dealt with and buried with Jesus.

2- Baptism says that a person has repented of his/her sins: *Acts 2:38* Peter told the Jews on the day of Pentecost that they needed to *"Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins."* Baptism is an outward expression of an inward condition. The physical action is picture of what happens in the spiritual.

3. Baptism symbolizes that a person has been forgiven and cleansed of his/her sins: Baptism is a confession of our desire to be clean from sin of every kind. *Acts 22:16* says, *"And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name."*

4. It is an act of obedience: *Matthew 28:19* *"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,"* tells us that baptism is necessary for those who want to be disciples. In *Acts 9:6* the Lord told Saul that he will be told to what he needed to do, *"⁶ Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."* After he could see again, he was baptized, *"He got up and was baptized."* (Acts 9:18b)

5. We are baptized into Jesus character: We are not baptized into a church or group of people. The important thing is that we are baptized into Christ. *Galatians 3:27* says *"For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."* So baptism is to take the character and the attitude of Christ, *"¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."* (Colossians 3:12-13) Baptism is to dedicate our lives to be under the control of the Holy Spirit and allow him to work on us to produce in us the fruit of the Holy Spirit that makes our attitude and characters similar to Christ.

WHAT ARE THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR BAPTISM?

1. It is necessary to have heard the Word, believe it and accepted the message: *Acts 2:41* says that those who accept the message were baptized. *"Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day."*

2. Conviction: *Acts 2:37* says *"When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?'"* People should get baptized willingly after they are convinced.

3. Repentance: Without repentance water Baptism will not bring salvation in their lives. Those who got baptised without repentance they need to re baptised again after their repentance. Peter clearly stated in his message to the crowd in the day of Pentecost that they need to repent first then after that to get baptised, *"Peter replied, '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.'" (Acts 3:38)*

4. Faith: *Mark 16:16* says, *"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."*

5. Obedience: Not only for water baptism but for all the commands of God.

My dear and beloved: It is my prayer that this message will help you to decide to obey Jesus Christ, who called you to do his will. **My Prayer:** *"Father God in heaven, I come before you in the name of Jesus, Lord I desire to do your will, I repent from my sins _____, take full control over my life in Christ name Amen."*