

THE REALITY OF BAPTISM

Baptism is not a ceremony, symbol, sign, ritual or Christian religious duty.

Baptism, when done by faith, is a real experience that gives you power to walk in a new life!

THE MEANING OF BAPTISM

“Baptism” in the Greek language of the New Testament literally means *to make fully wet, to immerse, to submerge, to overwhelm, to dip*. In the New Testament we are *sprinkled* with the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:2) but we are *immersed and submerged* in water through faith in Jesus Christ.

JESUS COMMANDED BAPTISM

After Jesus rose from the dead He commanded the apostles to, *“Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them...”* Matthew 28:19.

An important part of making disciples is baptism! It was not a

suggestion, but a command of Jesus, the One who has all authority (Matt.28:18).

FAITH IS THE KEY

Jesus is also recorded commanding baptism in Mark’s gospel, *“He who believes and is baptised will be saved”* Mark 16:16a. The order is faith first, then baptism. Faith is what makes baptism a powerful reality.

BAPTISM IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF SALVATION

“He who believes and is baptised will be saved. He who does not believe will be condemned” Mark 16:16.

These are the words of Jesus. If we want to experience the fullness of salvation we must be baptised.

A PICTURE FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

The apostle Paul said that the crossing of the red sea was the baptism experience of the Israelites when they came out of Egypt, *“all passed through the sea, all were baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea”* 1 Corinthians 10:1-2.

The blood of a lamb: While in Egypt, the children of Israel were told to sacrifice a lamb. They would be saved

from death by having the blood of the lamb on the doorposts of their houses (Exodus 12:1-13). They **believed in the blood of the lamb** and were saved from death!

We also are to have **faith in the blood of the Lamb of God** to redeem us (1Pet.1:18-19) – *“we have been justified by His blood!”* Romans 5:9

The water: In order then to enter fully into the new life God had for His people, the Israelites had to go through some water! It was powerful! It was miraculous! It was not a ceremony! All their enemies, the armies of Egypt who wanted them in bondage, were drowned in the sea! (Exodus 14).

It was by **believing in the blood** and then **going through the water** that the Israelites were saved, *“So the LORD [Yahweh] saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians”* Exodus 14:30.

We **believe in the blood of Jesus** and are **baptised in water**. This is our passage into freedom from the bondage to the world – **we are saved by faith and baptism!**

BAPTISM IS THE RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL

When the people were cut to the heart by Peter preaching Jesus on the day of Pentecost, they said, *“What shall we do?”* (Acts 2:37). Peter responded that they were to, *“repent and let every one of you be baptised in the name of the Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins...”* Acts 2:38. Peter was clear. The response was not a formula prayer or a show of hands but *repent and be baptised*. Baptism is the first step of obedient faith as a disciple of Jesus.

[see also Acts 8:12, 35-38; 10:47-48; 16:14-15; 18:8 for numerous examples of baptism being the faith filled response to receiving the gospel]

BAPTISM – DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION – POWER TO WALK A NEW LIFE!

Baptism is an immersion 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”* Romans 6:3-4.

This does not say baptism is a sign or symbol. It is glorious! It is the entry way to *walk in newness of life!* We

believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus and then we enter the experience of His death and resurrection through being immersed!

Through baptism we come to *“know this, that our old man [our sinful old self] was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin”* Romans 6:6.

We believe Jesus died for our sins and then through baptism we realise that **He not only died for us, we also died with and in Him!** Once baptised we can truly say – *“it is no longer I that lives, but Christ lives in me”* Galatians 2:20.

BAPTISM IS INTO A PERSON

Under the Old Covenant the apostle Paul said that the people of God were, *“all baptised into Moses”* 1 Cor.10:2a. The Israelites were immersed into Moses, a person. This meant Moses became their leader, teacher, covering and father. God covered and instructed them in Moses!

BAPTISM IS INTO CHRIST

In the New Covenant our baptism is also into a Person, *“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptised into Christ Jesus...”* Romans 6:3a.

“For as many of you as were baptised into Christ have put on Christ”
Galatians 3:27

Our baptism, as believers in Jesus Christ, is an immersion into Christ Himself. We are now in Him. We are His disciples. He is our leader, teacher, covering and father. God covers and clothes us in Christ. Our identity is in Him!

BAPTISM IS INTO THE BODY OF CHRIST

We are not to be baptised to become members of any particular church, organisation or denomination!

“For by One Spirit we were all baptised into One Body” 1 Corinthians 12:13a.

Baptism is a spiritual experience – *by One Spirit we were all baptised!* And it is *into One Body!* We become members of the Body of Christ through baptism into Christ!

Baptism is a reality!

Baptism is powerful! Baptism is necessary to experience the power to walk in newness of life today!

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