

Baptism

Baptism is derived from the Greek word "baptize" meaning "to immerse".

Never is sprinkling or pouring found in the Bible in relation to water baptism.

Water baptism signifies a burial as well as a resurrection. So according to the example in the Bible, we should baptize the saved by fully immersing them in the water.

It is an outward sign of an inward work, a testimony to the world of something that has happened within the heart. That "something" is a resurrection within your heart to a new life in Christ Jesus.

"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." ~ Colossians 2:12

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." ~ 1 Peter 3:21

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." ~ Romans 6:4

Jesus died on the cross for us, and spiritually took our sins to the grave. He took our punishment upon him, in our place. But he also had the power of God to be resurrected again. So he not only has the power to take away our sins, he also has the power to resurrect our hearts to a new life, free from the old life of sin. Through faith in Christ, one who is saved becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus!

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." ~ 2 Corinthians 5:17

Again, so baptism is part of our testimony to a new life in Christ Jesus. We are buried in the water to symbolize the death of our old life of sin. And we are brought up out of the water to symbolize the new resurrected life we now have in Christ Jesus. We are testifying to what the Lord has already done in our hearts!

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." ~ Romans 10:10

Who are true candidates for water baptism? Only the saved. The command to be baptized is prefaced by the word "repent".

"And saying, repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And this same John had his raiment of camel's hair and a leather girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all region around about Jordan. And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" ~ Matthew 3:2-8

Very religious people came to be baptized, but John the Baptist told them that they were not ready. They first needed to repent of their sins and forsake them. And they needed to prove this to everyone by a new life that they would be living. A life that would include more than outward religion, but that would show they have a new heart. One that had been completely changed.

Peter preached the same message to the many religious Jews on the day of Pentecost.

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." ~ Acts 2:37-38

One of Jesus' final commandments to the Apostles and disciples was for them to preach the gospel and to baptize those

who believe.

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” ~ Matt 28:19

And so this was exactly what they did on the day of Pentecost.

“Then they that had gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” ~ Acts 2:41

The household of Cornelius was baptized after receiving the Holy Ghost.

“Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?” ~ Acts 10: 47

Anyone who has been saved, should get baptized when they have opportunity.

Nowhere in the Bible is there any foundation or teaching that sinners, infants, or unaccountable children should be baptized.

Finally, there are some things water baptism will not do:

- Baptism will not wash our sins away or make us a church member. Only the blood of Christ can wash away our sins, and by faith he does this for us when we repent of our sins and ask him to forgive us.
- Baptism will not reserve for us a place in heaven.
- Baptism is not a channel of divine grace, and will do no supernatural work. Remember it is an outward testimony, telling the world what Christ has already done for us in our hearts.