

What Does the Bible say about Baptism?

What is baptism in the Bible?

The key verse for baptism for the Church is Matthew 28:19-20. There are other sorts of baptism discussed in Scripture. In fact, nine different types of baptism have been delineated from the New Testament. These vary from the ceremonial dipping/washing of utensils for temple worship (Mark 7:4) to Holy Spirit baptism (Matt. 3:11; Acts 1:5, 2:3-4; 1 Cor. 12:13). We will only deal with the passages that relate to our discussion here.¹

- John the Baptist’s baptism Mark 1:4; Matt. 3:11; Acts 1:5; Acts 19:4
- Jesus’ own baptism Mark 1:9
- Believer’s water baptism Matt. 28:19-20

What is believer’s baptism?

Read Matthew 28:19-20.

- a. What did Jesus command his followers to do?

- b. Who does Christ tell us to baptize?

 {A disciple is one who has received Christ and plans to follow Him as Savior and Lord.}
- c. Based on the order of the 2 commands "make disciples" and "baptizing", which should happen first?

d. In each of the following passages, answer these questions:

- **Who** was baptized?
- Were they baptized **before** or **after** they received Christ?

Passage	Who?	Before or After?
Acts 2:41		
Acts 8:38		
Acts 16:14-15		

¹ If you are interested in all nine baptisms in the New Testament, we can get you a copy of them with explanations and verse references. Just ask your study leader to obtain that list for you.

e. In Acts 16:14-15, describe what Lydia was like religiously before she received Christ and was baptized:

f. Would you say then that it is possible for a person to be a worshiper of God all of his/her life and then to receive Christ and be baptized as an adult?

g. What one thing then is the prerequisite to being baptized?

What does it mean?

Baptism is a symbol of our identification with the triune God. It tells others we belong to Christ; we are committed to Christ, and we trust Him alone to wash away all of our sins. Baptism doesn't save us. The thief on the cross went to paradise and he wasn't baptized (Luke 23:42-43).

Even still baptism is very important. It is like the wedding band in a wedding ceremony. The ring is not marriage, but only as symbol identifying the relationship. Baptism is closely associated with our salvation because it is a public symbol of our relationship to the triune God.

What phrases in these verses would indicate that baptism doesn't save us?

Titus 3:5

1 Cor. 1:16, 17

Romans 3:28

Ephesians 2:8,9

2 Timothy 1:9

Luke 23:39-43

When should one be baptized?

How soon after a person receives Christ should he be baptized based on the following verses?

Acts 8:35-38

Acts 9:18

Acts 10:47-48

Acts 16:13-15, 31-34

Acts 18:8

Check the best answer:

the same week
the same month
the same year

How should I be baptized?

Based on the following passages, write out the phrase in each passage that supports either immersion or sprinkling.

John 3:23 _____

Acts 8:38 _____

Mark 1:5, 8,10 _____

Should a person be immersed once or three times?

There are 4 main reasons we practice triune immersion:

1. Matthew 28:19,20 does not say "baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, Holy Spirit." That would be dipping them in one name, one time. But it says, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and (in the name) of the Son, and (in the name) of the Holy Spirit." In the original language, the word "kai" is used, and means "and." It is used before the phrase "of the Son," as well as before the phrase, "of the Holy Spirit." Therefore we are to baptize them once for each name.
2. The word in the original language translated "baptizing" is "baptizo," not "bapto" the normal word indicating to dip. "Baptizo" can be intensive as when it is used for speaking of drowning, or the sinking of warships in battle, and therefore, it carried the connotation of death. However, "baptizo" is also the repetitive form of the verb "bapto," and is used in the Septuagint for the time that Naaman "dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him. . ." (2 Kings 5:14)
3. Single immersion baptism was in existence before Christ's command. But Christ's command to baptize in the three names of the Triune God was something the Jews had never done. It was to emphasize the work of each of the three persons of the Triune God in their Salvation.
4. Church history also affirms the three in one method of baptism. The following citation is from the *Apostolic Canons*, which was written in the 4th century AD:
"If any bishop or presbyter does not perform the three immersions of the one admission, but one immersion, which is given into the death of Christ, let him be deprived; for the Lord did not say, 'Baptize into My death,' but, 'Go ye and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'"²

This early Church statement supports triune immersion and the structure of Matthew 28:19 as discussed above in point 1. Many statements that support triune immersion exist throughout Church history. This one is given as an example.

² Louis S. Bauman, *The Faith*, 1977, p. 42 cited from *the Anti-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 7 p.503.

Can a person be baptized a second time?

Read Acts 19:3-5.

Does this indicate a second baptism? Yes No

Based on this passage and others, the following reasons should be considered for being baptized again. . .

1. I believed in Christ, but I hadn't received Him when I was baptized the first time.
2. I didn't understand what I was doing. It was something I was expected to do at that age.
3. I was an infant, so I don't remember it. It wasn't my faith response, it was my parents.
4. I was forced to.

Why should I be baptized?

Matt. 28:19-20 _____

John 15:4,5 _____

John 15:7 _____

John 15:8 _____

John 15:10 _____

John 15:11 _____

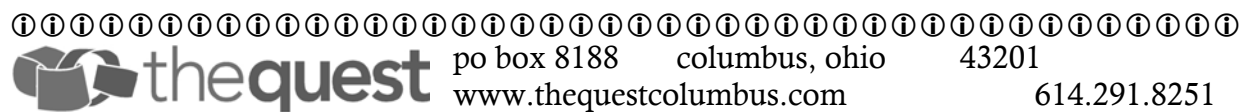
John 15:14 _____

Hebrews 11:6 _____

John 14:15 _____

Based on the above motivations would you be willing to express you love to Christ by obeying Him through water baptism at the next available opportunity?

Your study leader will now gladly have a rehearsal with you, so that you will know what to expect during the actual baptism. Feel free to ask any questions you might have.



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