

WATER BAPTISM

Greek: *Baptizo* - to dip (as used in Luke.16:24, John.13:26 & Rev.19:13)
Study Matthew. 3:13-17 [JESUS IS BAPTISED BY JOHN]

A) WHY THE PRACTICE OF WATER BAPTISM?

1. Because Jesus was baptised (Matthew. 3:13-17). Jesus was sinless but he identified himself with those he came to save (Hebrews. 2: 14&15).
2. Because it fulfils all righteousness (Matthew.3:15).
3. Because Jesus commanded it (Matthew. 28: 19&20; Mark. 16:16)
4. Because Jesus and His disciples practised it during Jesus' lifetime (John. 3:22,26; John. 4:1&2)
5. Because Peter taught this on the day of Pentecost (Acts. 2:38)
6. Because it was practised at the very beginning of the Christian church life (Acts. 24:41)
7. Because you justify God and accept His counsel by submitting to it. (Mark. 7:28 - 30)
8. Because it was practised during Phillip's early ministry in Samaria (Acts. 8:12,16) ; the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts. 8:35 - 39) ;
9. Because it was practised for Paul (Acts. 9:18); for Cornelius' household (Acts.10:47 & 48) and by Paul and Silas:- the Philippian jailer and his family (Acts. 16:33); Lydia's household (Acts. 16:15);
10. Because it symbolizes your union with Jesus; your death, burial and resurrection with Jesus to newness of life, Rom. 6:3,4; you put off the old man to put on the new man in Christ, Col. 3:12,13.
11. Because you put on Christ as a garment, Gal. 3:27; and have assurance that your sins are washed away enough to call upon the name of the Lord. Acts 2:38; 22:16.
12. Because it is an appeal to God for a clear conscience, 1 Pet. 3:18-22.

B. WHO SHOULD BE BAPTISED?

All and only true disciples of Jesus must be baptised as soon as possible after conversion as a foundation for discipleship (Mk. 16:16; Matthew. 28:19). Even after receiving Holy Spirit baptism, Peter commanded Cornelius and his household to be water-baptised (Acts. 10:47). There is no evidence or indication of water baptism by/of anyone prior to genuine conversion or confession of such (Acts. 8:36; Acts. 10:47).

- a) Jesus commanded it (Mark. 16:16)
- b) The apostles taught it (Acts. 2:38)
- c) The early disciples did it, after they received the Word (Acts. 2:41)
'Believe and be baptised' was the form (Acts. 2:38; Mark. 16:16; Acts. 8:36)
 - Note: There are no Bible grounds for infant baptism since faith in Christ demands a personal decision (Rev. 3:20).

C. HOW SHOULD A BELIEVER BE BAPTISED?

The Greek words, *Bapto*=to dip; *Baptizo*=to cause to be dipped and *Baptisma*=the process of immersion, submersion and emergence.

- There is also no ground for sprinkling and other forms of baptism.
 - Water baptism should be by immersion in water
1. Jesus (in Matthew. 3:16), He came 'up out of the water [Jordan]'.
The Holy Spirit is actively involved in baptism (1 Cor. 12:13).
 2. Ethiopian Eunuch (in Acts. 8:38) 'they both went down into the water' and 'they were come up out of the water'.
 3. John the Baptist (in John. 3:23) 'he baptised in a place because there was much water there.'
 4. By immersion, we symbolize the – death, burial and resurrection of Jesus - Col. 2:12, 13
 - planted together in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus for newness of life - Rom. 6:3, 4
 - death, burial, resurrection, newness of life - Colossians. 3:1-3
 - Putting on Christ as a garment - Galatians. 3:27
 - serves as an appeal to God for a clear conscience - I Peter. 3:21
 5. Baptismal formula: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, (Witnessed by the God-head), And in the Name above every name: the Name of Jesus.
This is the format according to Matthew. 28:19&20; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 1:13,17.

(It does not matter whether the baptism is done forwards, straight, down or backwards. It must just be an immersion).

D. WHEN SHOULD A BELIEVER BE BAPTISED?

As soon as possible after confession of genuine faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Ethiopian Eunuch, Acts 8:35-39.
- Philippian jailer and his household, Acts 16:30-33.
- Cornelius and his household, Acts 10:44-48.

E. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF WATER BAPTISM?

(Colossians. 2: 12, 13; Romans. 6: 1-23)

1. A public confession of personal faith in Jesus
2. A public confession of personal surrender to Jesus
3. A public act of consecration to God
4. A public commitment of one's entire life to the Lord Jesus Christ
5. A testimony of sincere purpose to live fully for the Lord Jesus Christ
6. A covenant before God and man
7. A voluntary surrender of one's life to the will of God
8. A demonstration of the fact that the old life is finished and of one's intention to live a new life.

F. WHEN SHOULD A PERSON BE BAPTISED AGAIN?

Normally, water-baptism is done once and is valid throughout your Christian life. In some cases however, there is the need for rebaptism.

1. If the initial baptism was infant baptism.
2. If the mode of baptism was wrong, for example: sprinkling instead of immersion.
3. If the believer falls back into apostasy and sin and disobedience - idolatry, adultery, occultism, etc. involving denouncing Jesus as Lord or swearing allegiance to some other power that negates your initial commitment to Jesus. In such cases, your conscience condemns you and you find it difficult to forgive yourself.
4. If the baptism is not complete as a baptism of regeneration (like in Acts. 19:1-7 where the believers were baptised with John's baptism of repentance).

G. WHERE SHOULD WATER BAPTISM BE DONE?

Anywhere there is enough water to cover the person.

- May be a river (Matthew. 3:13-17)
- May be just any pool of water in a wilderness (Ac. 8:36-38)
- May be where there is much water (John. 3:23)

H. OLD TESTAMENT TYPES OF BAPTISM IN THE BIBLE

1. Noah's Flood - (I Peter. 3:18-22)
2. Crossing of the Red Sea - (I Corinthians. 10:1,2)
3. Circumcision - (Colossians. 2:12,13).

CONCLUSION

Every believer in Jesus Christ should be baptised. The early church valued water-baptism so much that they even baptised people on behalf of those new converts who died in persecution before they had the opportunity to be baptised. 1 Cor. 15:29.

To refuse baptism is to withdraw your discipleship and to reject your salvation.

Everyone who has been previously baptised and has returned to a life of sin and disobedience, should be baptised once again.

Scriptures to be read and studied prayerfully, prior to following the Lord Jesus Christ in water baptism are:

Matthew. 3:13-17	Matthew 28:19	John. 3:22,23	John. 4:1,2
Acts 2:38-40	Acts. 8:12,16	Acts. 8:35-39	Acts. 9:18
Acts 10:46-48	Acts 16:14,15	Acts. 16:33	Acts. 18:8
Acts 19:5	Acts 22:16	Romans. 6:3,4	I Corinthians
1:13,17			
I Corinthians 10:1,2	I Corinthians 15:29	Galatians 3:27	Colossians. 2:12
I Peter. 3:18-21			