

Baptism (Summary)

I. The Importance of Baptism

1. "The baptism which John proclaimed" (Acts 10:37; see also Luke 3:3).

At the beginning of the New Testament age, the [first thing](#) God did was to send John the Baptist to proclaim baptism. John was the [first servant](#) sent by God at the beginning of the New Testament, and the baptism preached by him was God's [first message](#) in the New Testament. The practice of baptism is man's way to begin to enjoy the blessings of the New Testament.

2. "It is fitting for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15).

The Lord Jesus also needed to be baptized. Although He was the Son of God who came to be our Savior, He still kept God's ordination for men [because He was a man](#). According to His humanity, it was fitting for Him to do this. Before God, He fulfilled all righteousness.

3. "The Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the counsel of God for themselves since they had not been baptized by him" (Luke 7:30).

If a person is not baptized, he rejects the counsel of God for himself. This is very serious. The Pharisees and lawyers who rejected and opposed the Lord Jesus did this; how can we, who receive the Lord today, be like them in this matter?

4. "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

Baptism is [a necessary step](#) a person must take [to enter into the kingdom of God](#).

5. "Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He spent some time with them and baptized"; "Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John" (John 3:22; 4:1).

The Lord Jesus, through His disciples, baptized people in order to accomplish God's will, to be according to God's procedure, and to fulfill God's righteousness.

6. "Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19).

After His resurrection, He commissioned His disciples to go out into all the inhabited earth to preach the gospel to people and to baptize them. His [last command before His ascension](#) shows that baptizing people is an important matter that we must carry out when we preach the gospel to people and when we disciple them.

7. "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).

Here the Lord said that baptism is [a necessary step in a person's full salvation](#).

8. "What should we do, brothers? And Peter said to them, Repent and each one of you be baptized upon the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:37-38, see also v. 41).

On the day of Pentecost many heard Peter's word and were pricked in their hearts, so they asked Peter what they should do. He told them to [repent and be baptized upon the name of Jesus Christ](#) for the forgiveness of their sins and to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. When they heard his word, they were [immediately baptized](#). This also shows the importance of baptism.

9. "The eunuch said, Look, water. What prevents me from being baptized?" (Acts 8:36).

The Ethiopian eunuch spoke this word to Philip, who had preached the gospel to him. This proves that Philip not only preached the gospel but also baptism.

10. "Now, why do you delay? Rise up and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name" (Acts 22:16).

This was Ananias's word to the newly saved Saul (who later became Paul). This word shows that the early disciples placed much emphasis on baptism. Ananias knew that Saul had met the Lord on the road to Damascus, that the scales had fallen off his eyes through the laying on of his hands, and that he had

received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (9:17-18), yet Ananias still wanted Paul to be baptized and even [hurried him to be baptized](#). If baptism is not important, and if the disciples did not emphasize baptism, why did Ananias hasten Paul to be baptized?

11. **“Can anyone forbid the water so that these would not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit even as we? And he charged them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ” (Acts 10:47-48).**

Although the household of Cornelius visibly received the Holy Spirit, Peter still wanted them to be baptized. Does this not prove that baptism is important?

12. **“He took them with him in that very hour of the night and washed their wounds. And he was baptized immediately, he and all his household” (Acts 16:33).**

When the Philippian jailer and his household received the Lord, Paul and Silas, still wounded from being beaten, [immediately baptized them](#).

13. **“When they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 19:5).**

The day Paul came to Ephesus, he asked the disciples what baptism they had received, because he was concerned about the baptism of the Holy Spirit. When he discovered they had received only the baptism of John, he solemnly told them that [the baptism of John was over and that people should be baptized into the name of the Lord](#). When they heard this, they were [immediately baptized](#). Paul did not merely find out with what baptism they had been baptized, but he also told them [with what baptism they should be baptized](#). Although they had received the baptism of John, they were immediately baptized again when they heard about baptism into the Lord’s name. This proves that they thought baptism is very important.

II. The Relationship Between Baptism and Salvation

1. **“Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5).**
2. **“Rise up and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name”; “Repent and each one of you be baptized upon the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 22:16; 2:38).**
3. **“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ”; “All of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death”; “Buried together with Him in baptism, in which also you were raised together with Him” (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3; Col. 2:12).**
4. **“He who believes and is baptized shall be saved”; “Which water, as the antitype, also now saves you, that is, baptism...through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (Mark 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21).**

There are different parts to the Lord’s salvation; some parts are obtained by our faith, and some are participated in through our baptism. [Faith](#) is the [inward](#) aspect by which we inwardly receive the Lord’s salvation; [baptism](#) is the [outward](#) action by which we outwardly apply the Lord’s salvation. If we have only faith without baptism, we can receive only one aspect of the Lord’s salvation; that is, we will have only a partial salvation and will not utilize or apply all aspects of the Lord’s full salvation. If we want to participate in all aspects of the Lord’s salvation, if we want to be fully saved, [we must believe and be baptized](#).

III. The Meaning of Baptism

A. Into Christ.

“baptized into Christ Jesus” (Rom. 6:3)

B. Into Christ’s death to be buried and raised together with Him.

“Baptized into His death...buried therefore with Him through baptism into His death”; “Buried together with Him in baptism, in which also you were raised together with Him” (Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12).

C. The testimony of a good conscience.

“Baptism, not a putting away of the filth of the flesh but the appeal of a good conscience unto God” (1 Pet. 3:21).

Baptism is not a ceremony or ritual for becoming a church member; rather, it is a practical procedure, a definite step in faith. By such a step [we enter into Christ and are joined to Him, obtain full salvation in Him, and have a silent testimony to His salvation from our good conscience.](#)

IV. The Meaning of the Word Baptism

Baptizo is the Greek word used here and in other places in the New Testament; it means [“to dip in or under, to immerse, or to sink.”](#)

V. The pattern of baptism.

1. “Having been baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water” (Matt. 3:16).
2. “They both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water” (Acts 8:38-39).

VI. The Type of Baptism

1. “Entering into which [the ark], a few, that is, eight souls, were brought safely through by water. Which water, as the antitype, also now saves you, that is, baptism...through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 3:20-21).
2. “All our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea” (1 Cor. 10:1-2).

VII. The Ones Being Baptized

1. “He who believes and is baptized” (Mark 16:16).
2. “When they believed...the gospel...and...the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized” (Acts 8:12).
3. “What prevents me from being baptized? And Philip said, If you believe from all your heart, you will be saved. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:36-37).
4. “They heard, believed and were baptized” (Acts 18:8).

VIII. The One Baptizing

1. “Jesus Himself did not baptize, but rather His disciples” (John 4:2).

When the Lord was on earth gaining disciples, He did not baptize; rather, His disciples baptized. Baptism is not based on one's office in the church; rather, [any saved believer can baptize](#) someone in his status as a believer.

2. “Go...baptizing them” (Matt. 28:19).

The Lord's command to preach the gospel to the nations and to baptize the nations [was given to the disciples, not to the apostles.](#) Therefore, whoever preaches the gospel has the authority to baptize.

3. “A...disciple...named Ananias” (Acts 9:10, see also vv. 17-18).

When the Lord chose Paul to be an apostle, He did not send an apostle to baptize him; He sent a disciple named Ananias. This also shows that as long as one is a disciple, he can baptize others; one who baptizes does not need to hold any office in the church. Furthermore, when Paul went to Damascus, the church there may not have been officially established, so the Lord sent a disciple named Ananias to baptize him. This tells us that [in any place where there is a church, any of the saints can baptize people together with the whole church, but in a place without a church, any of the scattered disciples can baptize.](#)

4. “They both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him” (Acts 8:38).

[Whoever has the authority to preach the gospel can also baptize.](#) In places where there are no churches, the believers can baptize those to whom they preach the gospel.

5. “I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius” (1 Cor. 1:14; see also Acts 18:8).

The apostles sent by the Lord or those with spiritual offices can baptize people, [but in places where there are brothers, it is best to be like Paul and not baptize so many](#); rather, we should allow the brothers to baptize lest there be an improper result.

IX. The Time of Baptism

- 1. “Those then who received his word were baptized” (Acts 2:41).**
- 2. “When they believed...they were baptized” (Acts 8:12).**
- 3. “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he ordered the chariot to stand still, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch” (Acts 8:37-38).**
- 4. “He took them with him in that very hour of the night and washed their wounds. And he was baptized immediately, he and all his household” (Acts 16:33).**
- 5. “Why do you delay? Rise up and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name” (Acts 22:16).**

As soon as people receive the gospel, they should [immediately go into the water to be baptized. This is according to the Lord’s will and the pattern of the Bible, and it results in great spiritual benefit](#). However, it requires faith and the power of the Holy Spirit. [It requires us to preach the gospel in power, and it requires us to baptize people in faith](#). If we lack these two things, we are only imitating the black and white letters of the Bible and do not have the spiritual reality.

X. The Place of Baptism

- 1. “As they were going along the road, they came upon some water, and the eunuch said, Look, water. What prevents me from being baptized?” (Acts 8:36).**
- 2. “John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and people came and were baptized” (John 3:23).**

If baptism is only a ritual sprinkling or a ritual dripping, he would have needed only a little water. It would not have mattered how much water was in a particular place. Any place would have been fine. In order to submerge people in water, however, he needed [a place with much water](#).

XI. The Correction of Baptism

- 1. “He said, Into what then were you baptized? And they said, Into John’s baptism. And Paul said, John baptized with a baptism of repentance, telling the people that they should believe into the One coming after him, that is, into Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 19:3-5).**

[If a person is not baptized properly, his baptism can be corrected](#). In those days the baptism of repentance had ceased and was inadequate, so anyone baptized in that way needed a correction. Today there are rituals of sprinkling, dripping, infant baptism, baptism before one properly believes, and baptism before one has contacted the Lord in spirit. All of these are improper, and anyone baptized in such a way should correct it. When it is corrected, it should be carried out by faith in order to receive all the spiritual realities of baptism.