

Matt. 28:16-20

¹⁶But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated. ¹⁷When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some were doubtful. ¹⁸And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹"Go and as you go make **disciples** of all the nations, **baptizing them** in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰**teaching them** to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

- ➔ **Make disciple** – The Greek term is *matheeteusate* (*maqhteusate*, 2nd person, plural, aorist, active, imperative of *maqhteuw* - intransitive: to be a disciple, follow as a disciple, Matthew 27:57; transitive: to make a disciple of, to train in discipleship, Matthew 28:19 and Acts 14:21; passive: to be trained, disciplined, instructed, Matthew 13:52).
 - ➔ **Baptizing them** – The Greek here is *baptizontes autous* (*baptizontes*, nominative, plural, masculine, present, active, participle of *baptizoo*, *to dip, immerse*; *aujtu*", personal pronoun).
 - ➔ **Teaching Them** – The Greek is *didaskontes autous* (*didaskonte*", nominative, plural, masculine, present, active participle of *didaskoo*, *to teach*; *aujtu*", personal pronoun).
- I. **What does the term "baptize" mean?** The term "baptizing" translates the Greek word "*baptizo*". According to W. E. Vine, "it was used among Greeks to signify the dying of a garment, or the drawing of water by dipping a vessel into another." [Vine's, pages 96 and 97.] Baptism as an act consists of the process of [immersion](#), [submersion](#) and [emergence](#).

1. What would the disciples have envisioned when Jesus told them to *baptize* disciples? [Immersion in water](#).

II. ARE THE TERMS "BAPTIZE" AND "BAPTISM," AS FOUND IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, USED EXCLUSIVELY OF THE BELIEVER'S BAPTISM IN WATER?

- No!
- A. **Baptism into Moses (1Cor. 10:1-6)** – Israel was immersed in Moses' leadership and thereby brought into [union](#) with him, but they were not all right with God.
 - B. **Baptism of John (Matthew 3:1-12)** – John's baptism was an act of preparation in anticipation of the coming Messiah. It was an outward [expression](#) of inward repentance.
 - C. **Baptism with fire (Matthew 3:11-12)** – It is a reference to the fiery character of the Spirit's operations upon the soul—searching, consuming, refining, sublimating. The baptism performed by John was external and presupposed an interior change of heart, but the baptism imparted by the Messiah would reach the inner most part of one's being.
 - D. **Baptism in suffering (Mark 10:35-39)** – This is an immersion into suffering for the gospel and the fulfillment of God's will.
 - E. **Baptism into the Body (1 Cor. 12:13)** – This is a work of the Spirit whereby we are [placed](#) into the Body of Christ.
 - F. **Baptism "in" or "with" the Holy Spirit (Mt. 3:11-12 and Acts 1:5)** – This is an immersion into the person of the Holy Spirit, which results in [empowerment](#) (Acts 1:8).

2. How does believer's baptism differ from the baptisms listed below?

The Baptism	The Candidate	The Element	The Baptizer
Believer's	The Believer	Water	Discipler
In Spirit	The Believer	The Spirit	Jesus
Into Body	The Believer	The Body	The Spirit



II. WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

- A. According to Mark 16:16, Acts 8:12, 35 and 37, [believers](#) should be baptized.
- B. According to Matthew 28:19, [disciples](#) should be baptized.
- C. According to Acts 2:41, those who [receive](#) the Word should be baptized.

3. The idea of an unbaptized Christian is foreign to the New Testament.

Agree Disagree Please support your answer.

III. IS WATER BAPTISM ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION?

- A. We are saved by [faithing](#) the grace provision of God, not by works. (See John 3:16, 6:47, 8:24, Acts 16:30, Romans 10:9, 10 and Ephesians 2:8-10.)
- B. Believing [precedes](#) water baptism. (See Acts 8:12, 36-37 and 10:44-48.)
- C. The Gentiles at Cornelius' house were filled with the Holy Ghost [before](#) they were baptized in water. (See Acts 10:47. Also see John 7:39 and John 14:16-17.)
- D. Paul's statement in First Corinthians 1:17 strongly implies that water baptism is [not](#) a part of the gospel, therefore it is not essential to salvation. (See 1Cor 1:17, Romans 1:16 and 1Cor 15:1-4.)
- E. We are baptized "with a view to" the remission of our sins or [because](#) our sins have been remitted. The blood, through faith, is the agent by which our sins are remitted, not the waters of baptism. Yes, but Acts 2:38 says, "...Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (NASB). The word "for" translates the Greek term *eis*, which has two different primary meanings: "purpose" and "result." As in English, I may say I am going to the store for a loaf of bread, expressing purpose. Or, I may say I am going to jail for stealing that bread, an expression of result. Similarly, Acts 2:38 may also be legitimately translated "be baptized because of the remission of sins." If Acts 2:38 is meant to be a salvation formula, then "the gift of the Holy Spirit" cannot be received until after one has been baptized. The Gentiles at Cornelius' house were filled with the Holy Spirit before they were baptized in water (Acts 10:47). This harmonizes the verse with the many verses that make faith the only condition of salvation. (See Matthew 26:28, Colossians 1:14, Hebrews 9:22, Leviticus 17:11, 1John 1:7, 1Peter 1:18.) Water baptism is the outward sign of repentance and forgiveness of sins, not the means.

4. Is water essential to salvation? If someone comes to faith in Christ while hospitalized and dies in their hospital bed before being baptized in water, will they go to heaven?

IV. WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

- A. It is the [command](#) of Scripture. (See Matthew 28:19 and Acts 10:47-48.)
- B. Failure to do so is a [rejection](#) of the counsel of God. (See Luke 7:30.)

V. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BELIEVER'S OR WATER BAPTISM?

- A. It declares the believers communion with Christ's death, burial and resurrection. It is a picture statement of regeneration through union with Christ. (See Colossians 2:12.)
 - 1. **Immersion (death)** - The penalty for sin, death, was paid for by Jesus when He died on the cross. Jesus' death not only frees us from the penalty of sin, but also from the power of sin. Thus, those coming to the waters of baptism should do so in faith, declaring that Christ's death has cancelled their debt and given them freedom from the power of sin. (See Romans 5:6-8, Galatians 2:20, 1 Peter 3:18, Romans 6:6, 1 Cor 15:3, Hebrews 9:28, 1 Peter 2:24, Romans 6:11.)



2. **Submersion (burial)** – We do not bury the living, but the dead. Burial is the putting away of that which *is* dead.
 3. **Emersion (resurrection)** – For that which is dead to be raised there must be a work of the Spirit. (See 2Cor 5:17, Ephesians 2:1, Colossians 2:13 and 1Peter 3:18.)
- B. It identifies the believer.** With regard to this Ryrie wrote, "Christian baptism is identification with the Christian message and the Christian groups." (Ryrie, page 1448.) The person being baptized is identifying themselves with the message of the Gospel, the person of the Savior and the company of the redeemed.

5. Have you been baptized in water since believing in Christ? If not, why not?

VI. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BAPTIZED IN JESUS' NAME?

Acts 2:38 (NKJV) – Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Also see Acts 3:6, 4:10, 4:18, 5:40, 8:12, 9:27, 16:18, Colossians 3:17.)

The phrase "in the name of Jesus" is a reference to authority. It is like saying, "stop in the name of the law." We baptize believers in and by Jesus' authority. We cast out devils in the and by Jesus' authority. We lay hands on the sick in and by Jesus' authority. He has given us the command and the authority to baptize. (See Matthew 28:19, 1Cor 5:4, 2Thess 3:6 and Acts 16:18.) A simple paraphrase of Peter's command might read, "In the name of Jesus Christ, be baptized every one of you."

Being baptized by the authority of Jesus Christ, to a Jew, meant giving up Judaism and accepting Jesus as Lord. By doing so, he forfeited all his rights and privileges as a participant in Judaism. To this day, orthodox Jews who convert to Christianity are often considered dead by their families.

VII. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BAPTIZED ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 28:19?

Christian baptism should be done with a view towards or in light of what the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have accomplished in salvation history and in their individual lives. Believer's baptism is done under divine sanction and in acknowledgement of all that the Triune God has accomplished.

There is nothing in scripture to suggest that Jesus intended the command of Matthew 28:19, to become a liturgical formula. Also, there is no scriptural evidence demanding that we speak anything over the Baptismal candidate. Neither is there any scripture to support the view that Jesus is the name shared by the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

VIII. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF ACTS 22:16?

- A. **This is not a doctrinal statement, but a testimony concerning Paul's conversion.**
- B. **In Acts 9:17-18, Ananias called Paul, "brother Saul" before baptizing him in water.**
- C. **F. F. Bruce, in his book "The Acts of The Apostles," suggests that this was a confession of faith in Jesus Christ.**

IX. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF FIRST PETER 3:20-21?

- A. **It was not the water that saved Noah and his family, but the ark.** Noah was saved by being in the ark when the waters covered the earth. The waters of baptism are a type of the judgment of God, not of salvation. It is by means of Jesus, our ark, that we are saved from the penalty of sin. (See Romans 6:23.)



- B. **Water baptism does not provide "a good conscience toward God," it is "the answer of a good conscience toward God."**

X. **WHAT ABOUT JESUS STATEMENT IN JOHN 3:1, 5?**

- A. **It is wrong to automatically assume that the water here is the water of baptism.** There is no mention of baptism in this passage. If baptism were essential to entrance into the Kingdom, then surely Jesus would have said so.
- B. **The water in verse 5 refers to the water associated with physical birth.**

XI. **WHAT ABOUT MARK 16:15-16?**

The emphasis is not on baptism, but on believing. Please note that the last phrase of verse 16 states, "he that believeth not shall be damned." Not being baptized is not what damns someone, but not believing in Christ does. Those who believe and are saved should be baptized.

XII. **DOESN'T ACTS 22:16 INDICATE THAT PAUL'S SINS WERE WASHED AWAY BY THE WATER OF BAPTISM?**

Charles Ryrie, in his book *Basic Theology* (p. 337) gives a concise but sound explanation of this verse.

The verse contains four segments: (a) arise (which is a participle, arising), (b) be baptized (an imperative), (c) wash away your sins (another imperative), and (d) calling on the name of the Lord (another participle). To make the verse teach baptism as necessary for salvation necessitates connecting parts 2 and 3 be baptized and wash away. But rather than be connected to each other, each of those two commands is actually connected with a participle. Thus the verse should be read this way: *arising, be baptized; wash away your sins, calling on the Lord*. The verse correctly understood does not teach baptismal regeneration.

6. Does one have to believe in Jesus and be baptized in water in Jesus' name to be saved? Please support your answer from Scripture.

Bibliography

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2. Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *The Ryrie Study Bible* (IL: Chicago, Moody Press, 1976).
3. W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (NJ: New Tappan, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1966).
4. Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Basic Theology* (IL: Wheaton, Victory Books, 1986).

Suggested Reading

1. Myer Pearlman, *Knowing The Doctrines of the Bible*, Gospel Publishing House, Springfield, Missouri, 1937.
2. Gregory A. Boyd, *Oneness Pentecostals & The Trinity*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1992.

