

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT: BAPTISM

Definition: A pictorial, identifying ordinance administered by a Scriptural church to a person, who has been saved, and desires to follow Jesus Christ. It is the first public act of obedience to the Lord by the believer.

I. THE METHOD OF BAPTISM.

A. THE WORD "baptizw" (BAPTIZE) MEANS "TO DIP OR IMMERSE".

1. This was a common word used primarily in the garment-making business.
 - a. The word "baptize" means to "completely submerge" the garment in the dye.
 - b. Clothes were not sprinkled with dye, but totally submerged.
2. Three examples in the New Testament where the word, *Abaptizo* was correctly translated as *Adip*:
 - a. John 13:26.

Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have DIPPED it. And when he had DIPPED the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.
 - b. Luke 16:24.

And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may DIP the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.
 - c. Revelation 19:13.

And he was clothed with a vesture DIPPED in blood: and his name is called the Word of God.
3. John the Baptist immersed repentant believers in water.

- a. John 3:23.

And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, BECAUSE THERE WAS MUCH WATER THERE: and they came, and were baptized.@

4. John the Baptist immersed Jesus Christ.

- a. Matthew 3:16.

And Jesus, when he was baptized, WENT UP STRAIGHTWAY OUT OF THE WATER: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:@

- b. Mark 1:9-10.

And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

AND STRAIGHTWAY COMING UP OUT OF THE WATER, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:@

- B. IMMERSION, THEREFORE, IS THE PROPER MODE FOR SCRIPTURAL BAPTISM.

1. The specification, in the Bible, setting forth one method of baptism excludes all other methods.
2. It is no small matter to alter, or treat with disrespect, a picture of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- a. Romans 6:3-5.

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

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.

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:@

- b. Jesus was not sprinkled with death, he was totally immersed in death.
- 3. It should be noted also that the Catholic church commonly practiced immersion well into the "dark ages."
- 4. Dr. John Penn, instructor at the Missionary Baptist Seminary, illustrated the process of error by using the acronym, IACTDL:
 - a. I, or IDEA of a better way.
 - b. A, or ACTION based upon the idea.
 - c. C, or CUSTOM, when the action is repeated.
 - d. T, or TRADITION, when the custom persists.
 - e. D, or DOCTRINE, based upon tradition.
 - f. L, or LAW, as though based on the Word of God!

II. WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

A. ONLY SAVED PEOPLE ARE PROPER CANDIDATES FOR SCRIPTURAL BAPTISM.

- 1. Jesus spoke of baptism in the Great Commission.
 - a. Matthew 28:18-20.

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the

Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.@"

b. It is of great benefit to note the order of these instructions given to His "church."

(1) "Teach all nations," or more literally, "make disciples."

(2) "Baptizing them" (those who have become disciples).

(3) "Teaching them (disciples) to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

2. John the Baptist did not baptize all who requested the ordinance at his hand.

a. Matthew 3:4-8.

And the same John had his raiment of camels hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round 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:@"

3. This was the practice of the first "church."

a. Acts 2:37-42.

ANow when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, 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 every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

THEN THEY THAT GLADLY RECEIVED HIS WORD WERE BAPTIZED: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles= doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.@

b. Acts 8:12.

ABut WHEN THEY BELIEVED Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, THEY WERE BAPTIZED, both men and women.@

4. Neither unbelievers, babies nor others not possessing the mental capacity to make such a commitment, may receive Scriptural baptism.

B. BAPTISM DOES NOT SAVE OR KEEP SAVED.

1. Many today do not understand this concept and they attempt to bend the Scriptures to fit their thinking.

- a. Acts 2:38, Acts 10:43. (Written by the same man!!)

AThen Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.@"

- b. Mark 16:16.

AHe that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.@"

2. The Holy Spirit of God is the one who "seals" a believer, not baptism.
3. Clearly, those who have trusted Jesus Christ as their savior will be led by the Holy Spirit to make a commitment to follow Him as Lord.
4. Baptism is a sign of the commitment of a believer, not a component of salvation.
5. Salvation is obtained only by the grace of God through faith without works whatsoever.

- a. Ephesians 2:8-9.

AFor by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Not of works, lest any man should boast.@"

- b. Romans 4:3-5.

AFor what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.@

6. Allow Scripture to identify the difference between salvation and baptism.

- a. Galatians 3:27.

AFor as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.@

- b. Romans 6:3.

Aknow ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?@

- c. Romans 5:1-2.

Atherefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.@

7. Therefore, faith is the access for the believer to get into Christ, and baptism is his public identification with Him.

III. WHO HAS THE AUTHORITY TO ADMINISTER SCRIPTURAL BAPTISM?

A. JOHN THE BAPTIST.

1. John the Baptist was the only individual authorized to administer this ordinance.

- a. John 1:32-33.

And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

And I knew him not: BUT HE THAT SENT ME TO BAPTIZE WITH WATER, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.@"

b. Mark 11:29-31.

And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me.

And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?@"

2. The responsibility of John the Baptist was to prepare people for the Lord.

a. Mark 1:1-4.

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God:

As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.@"

3. All of the apostles had been baptized by John the Baptist.

- a. Acts 1:21-22.

**¶Wherefore of these men which have
 companied with us all the time that the
 Lord Jesus went in and out among us,**

**Beginning from the baptism of John, unto
 that same day that he was taken up from
 us, must one be ordained to be a witness
 with us of his resurrection.@**

4. The authority for John to baptize died with him.

**B. ONLY SCRIPTURAL "CHURCHES" HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO
 ADMINISTER SCRIPTURAL BAPTISM.**

1. Jesus Himself gave this authority to His "church."

- a. Matthew 28:18-20.

**¶And Jesus came and spake unto them,
 saying, All power is given unto me in
 heaven and in earth,**

**Go ye therefore, and teach all nations,
 baptizing them in the name of the
 Father, and of the son, and of the Holy
 Ghost:**

**Teaching them to observe all things
 whatsoever I have commanded you: and,
 lo, I am with you always, even unto the
 end of the world. Amen.@**

2. Yet, this authority was given to this "church" of Jesus Christ, and by extension, to all future New Testament "churches" of Jesus Christ.
3. Any "church" that does not meet the criteria of a Scriptural "church" does not have the authority to administer Scriptural baptism.
4. It does make a difference by what authority a believer is baptized.

- a. The proper authority was given to His "churches" by Jesus Christ, as shown in Matthew 28:18-20.
- b. A powerful example of this truth is found in Acts 19:1-6, which states:

And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,

He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

- 5. This teaching has caused real Baptists much suffering in the past.
- 6. May the "churches" of Jesus Christ ever uphold this beautiful ordinance without compromise until the Savior returns.