

Baptism

Hebrews 6v1-2 NLT

“So let us stop going over the basic teachings about Christ again and again. Let us go on instead and become mature in our understanding. Surely we don’t need to start again with the fundamental importance of repenting from evil deeds and placing our faith in God. You don’t need further instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.”

Water baptism is the next priority for the believer



You don’t need further instruction, our instruction and direction comes from the word of God

The New Testament reveals 4 types of baptism

- The baptism in water of John the Baptist
- The baptism in water of the born again believer
- The baptism of the Holy Spirit
- The baptism of suffering

Today we’re going to look at what the Bible says about the first two.

The foundations we look at it’s important to remind ourselves of them they are what we build our faith on.

Many have been baptised, don’t switch off. As we look through the scriptures they will strengthen our foundations and understanding.

We are called to disciple others, let’s ensure we are helping to build strong foundations in others.

Was baptism an event that occurred in the past or is it truly a foundation. A momentary whisper which occurred for a moment or a daily shout of victory?

Baptism gets its meaning and its importance from the death of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in our place and for our sins, and from his triumph over death in the resurrection that guarantees our new and everlasting life.

Baptism has meaning and importance only because the death and resurrection of Jesus are vital for our rescue from the wrath of God and our everlasting joy in his glorious presence.

We are not talking about religious ritual here. We are not focusing on church tradition here. We are talking about Jesus Christ and his magnificent work of salvation in dying for our sins and rising for us. Talking about baptism means talking about how Jesus taught us to express our faith in Jesus and salvation through him.

There are 99 references of Baptism in New Testament. Here are a couple:

Matthew 28:19-20 ESV

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Acts 22:16 ESV

"And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name."

Colossians 2:12 ESV

"having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead."

Acts 19:1-5 ESV

"And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

The apostle Paul identified the baptism by John was separate to that of Jesus.

Mark 1:2-4 ESV

"As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'" John appeared, baptising in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins."

Preparing the way

Period of transition

For over 400 years from the time of Malachi to Jesus' birth, there was no record of God speaking to his people. Known as the silent years. The baptism of John provides a link between the dispensation of the law and the prophets and the dispensation of Grace through the life and message of Jesus. It brought an end to the one and a beginning of the other.

Period of preparation

"I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

Matthew 3:11 ESV

A more literal translation of Matt 3:11 ("I baptize you with water for repentance"), is, "I baptize you in water into repentance". John's Baptism involved REPENTANCE and CONFESSION of sins. In Matt 3:7-8 John was looking for fruits worthy of repentance. John refused to baptize many of the Pharisees and Sadducees, until he could see that they had truly repented from the heart, by observing their life and whether there was change. This helps us to understand that John was looking for the heart that was already living in a spirit of repentance as a result of his preaching. The act of Baptism by John was the seal that gave the individual an assurance of forgiveness. This shows that the experience of repentance and remission of sins was not dependent upon being baptized, but that Baptism was the outward act of obedience to God to publicly declare that the inward experience had already taken place. Therefore a change of heart and life-style before the act of Baptism - "I baptize you with water for repentance".

Baptism of the born again believer

Different to John's baptism, as Paul points out in Acts 19:1-5

The difference being, that John's was preparation not permanent. A heart repentance and experience of forgiveness that resulted in lives being changed for the better, but it did not bring a resting peace and victory over sin which comes through the promise of the Holy Spirit, and can only come through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

What does baptism signify?

1. Identification with the death and resurrection of Jesus
Romans 6:1-11

2. The fulfilment of all righteousness

3. approval by God the father

4. confirmed by the Holy Spirit

5. prelude to ministry

Baptism is much more than a symbolic act but a powerful statement

A statement that echoes through eternity.

Why be baptised?

Following Christ:

In order to understand the reason for being water baptised, it is important to carefully consider what the Bible says about it... Jesus himself was baptised. He was not a sinner, yet he humbled himself in obedience to identify with us and give us an example to follow.

At this time, Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised by John in the Jordan. The moment he came out of the water, he saw the sky split open and God's Spirit, looking like a dove, come down on him. Along with the Spirit, a voice: "You are my Son, chosen and marked by my love, pride of my life." Mark 1:9 MSG

An Act of Obedience:

Water baptism is an act of faith and obedience to the commands of Christ.

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

A Public Declaration:

Baptism declares that you are a follower of Jesus Christ. It is a public confession of your faith in, and commitment to, Jesus Christ. It is the next step after salvation through repentance and faith and is an important foundation for the Christian life.

A declaration to Satan

We are finished with every work of darkness, and we are released from the grip it has on us.

Are you a believer, but not yet baptised?

Acts 22:16

Today make that choice to talk to someone, find out when you can be baptised!

Already baptised?

Is your life living as a powerful statement of what baptism is? A powerful daily shout that the old has gone, dead to sin, we are alive in Christ, freed from the grip of Satan, sharing in victory with Christ. Let your life be a powerful testimony of what your baptism symbolises.