

# Do I Need To Be Baptized?

Well, Yes!

Jesus has ordained baptism as this special ceremony that brings a sinner into the body of Christ. In baptism we declare our faith in Jesus as the Christ, the resurrected Son of God.

Jesus rules a kingdom. For those who desire to be a citizen of the kingdom of heaven, baptism is the oath of citizenship.

So, the answer to the question in our title is, "Yes." Every human old enough to know they have sin in their life and need a Savior, must be baptized to be saved.

This lesson grows out of a sermon from a couple of weeks ago called, *The Design, Mode, and Subject Of Baptism*. That lesson focused on what we call the age of accountability.

Children are born innocent and without willful sin. So, when does a person need to be baptized?

Little children are declared without sin by Jesus, *"unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."* he says in Matthew 18:3.

Modern Jews become accountable to know and observe the Law of Moses at age 13 for boys and 12-13 for girls.

In the Old Testament, an Israelite was ready to be a soldier at 20 (Numbers 1:45).

The book of Isaiah tells us a child reaches a point, *"when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good."*-Isaiah 7:15 (see link below for more on this issue).

## The First Century Question Of Baptism

In the time of Jesus & his apostles, it was not a debate or question.

To become a Christian,

You had to be born again of water and the Spirit.

Baptism was a burial into Christ's death

Your sins were forgiven in baptism.

To be saved, you had to believe and be baptized.

But false doctrines and unbiblical practices have confused the issue in the religious world.

- **Faith-Only Teaching**

Calvinism (or faith-only teaching) declares that God chooses the saved and the damned. Once he makes his choice, God gives a sign of his election by sending the Holy Spirit to change us from totally depraved and sinful to completely pure in motive.

The reason our faith-only friends are confused about baptism is because they think it has no power. Once God has chosen you, you can not fall away, so whether you are baptized or not is irrelevant to being saved.

God is not a respecter of persons. The Lord clearly teaches we must believe God raised Jesus from the dead, turn and confess him as Lord and be baptized to receive the promises of forgiveness and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

- **Infant Baptism, Sprinkling, and Pouring**

The practice of sprinkling or pouring as a substitute for immersion as baptism and the tradition of sprinkling infants became almost universal by the 1500s.

So on one hand, you have people who were sprinkled when they were infants, who grow up thinking they have been baptized.

On the other hand, you have people who were sprinkled as adults, who also think they have done all God asks.

## **The Modern Question Of Baptism**

But when most people ask the question today, it is not because they have not been immersed and refuse baptized.

It is because they have been taught that when they were sprinkled, it was baptism or baptism doesn't matter because God elected them for salvation.

## **Who Needs To Be Baptized?**

- 1) The never baptized
- 2) Those who were sprinkled/poured as believing adults.
- 3) Adults who were sprinkled or even immersed as infants.
- 4) Those who were immersed without faith or repentance.
- 5) What about those immersed as believers by false teachers?

Preacher-man, I need book, chapter, & verse! These questions have to do primarily with the mode of baptism and what is necessary before baptism.

- **Two Key Points**

Baptism is immersion. Sprinkling and pouring are not immersion. Sprinkling and pouring do not count as baptism

A person must believe in Jesus and repent and turn to God as part of baptism. Infants are not capable of faith or repentance.

Let's look through our list of who needs to be baptized.

- 1) The never baptized. If you know you are in sin. If you have never confessed Jesus as your Lord, and you know in your heart God raised him from the dead. Put your faith in him and be baptized.
- 2) Those who were sprinkled/poured as believing adults.

### **Baptism Is A Command**

**Acts 2:38** “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

**Acts 22:16** “Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.”

**Matthew 28:19** “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,”

**John 3:7** “Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’”

### **Baptism Is Baptism**

#### **Acts 8:38**

And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.

#### **John 3:23**

John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized

**Baptism** (GK-*baptisma* or *baptizō*) = consisting of the processes of immersion, submersion, and emergence (noun); to dip, used among the Greeks to signify the dyeing of a garment.-Vine's Expository Dictionary

Sprinkling or pouring at any age is not baptism. If you have not been immersed, submerged, and emerged, you are among the unbaptized.

**Infants Can Not Believe, Repent, or Confess**  
(plus they have no sin to forgive)

- 3) Adults who were sprinkled or even immersed as infants.
- 4) Those who were immersed without faith or repentance.

**Romans 10:9–10**

because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Infants have not believed and repented, they need baptism  
Adults who have not believed or repented, need baptism.

**Hebrews 11:6**

And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

**Acts 26:20**

but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.

Infants are guiltless. Infants can not believe, repent, or confess.

## What About Those Baptized By Denominational Preachers?

5) What about those immersed as believers by false teachers?

The easy answer here would be to say no, they are unbaptized and not Christians.

Must they know their baptism is “for the forgiveness of sins?”

Can I be a Christian in a church that doesn’t say, “church of Christ” on the sign?

### **Mark 16:16**

<sup>16</sup> Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

### **I Peter 3:21–22**

<sup>21</sup> Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup> who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

### **Acts 2:38–39**

<sup>38</sup> And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”

If a sinner obeys God because he understands the command to be baptized is from God; the Lord will take care of the promises. Salvation, forgiveness of sins, and the sealing with the Holy Spirit are promises God delivers on when a sinner submits to baptism as the obedience of faith.