

## WATER BAPTISM

If you take a trip to Israel and tour the ancient land where Jesus lived and ministered, you'll discover that the world of the Bible included the concept of ritual bathing. Men and women would wash ceremonially to cleanse themselves from the dirt and defilement of the outside world. Jesus and his disciples came preaching and calling people to be baptised in water to symbolize the cleansing that takes place through their faith. In the Great Commission, Jesus would command his disciples to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19)

1. What happened to those who accepted Peter's message? Acts 2:41

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2. What did the men and women who believed Philip's message do? Acts 8:12

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3. After hearing the good news about Jesus, what did the Ethiopian eunuch want to do? Acts 8:35-36

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4. Jesus told his disciples to go and make disciples of all nations. What did he say to do with those disciples? Matthew 28:19-20

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v. 20 \_\_\_\_\_

The New Testament uses four different illustrations to help us understand the significance of water baptism:

- burial and resurrection (Romans 6:4-5)
- the Israelites crossing the Red Sea when they escaped from Egypt (1 Corinthians 10:1-2)
- circumcision (Colossians 2:11-12)
- the flood (1 Peter 3:20-21)

5. Paul compares Christian baptism to a burial. In order to be buried, a person must first die. What must we die to before we can be baptised? Romans 6:1-4

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6. The Israelites' passing through the Red Sea is a picture of baptism for us. Why were the Israelites fleeing from the Egyptians? Exodus 2:23, 3:7,9

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7. What happened to the Egyptians? Exodus 14:22-28

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In the same way the Israelites were in slavery to the Egyptians, we were all slaves of sin. The Israelites were freed from their bondage by passing through the Red Sea. Baptism pictures the freedom from sin that Jesus purchased for us on the cross.

8. Paul says baptism is like circumcision not done by human hands, but a circumcision done by Christ. What is put off during this spiritual circumcision? Colossians 2:11-12

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9. What did Peter say the flood water symbolized? 1 Peter 3:21

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10. What is baptism a pledge of? 1 Peter 3:21

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Peter teaches that it is not the “removal of dirt from the body” that slaves us. In other words, it is neither the *act* of baptism nor the *water* of baptism. Rather, it is “the resurrection of Jesus Christ” that saves us. Once again we see the Scriptures teaching that we are saved but what Jesus did (his death and resurrection), not by what we do (water baptism). Peter goes on to say that baptism is the pledge of a clear conscience.

Each of the Bible’s pictures of baptism show the old life being put away and a new life emerging. In baptism we publically display what Jesus did through his death and resurrection. We also show that we have identified with this. By obeying his command to be baptised, we identify with the power of the cross and resurrection to deliver us completely from the power and authority of sin.

“And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptised and wash your sins away, calling on his name.” Acts 22:16

**Application and Reflection**

What did you learn from this lesson? How will you apply it to your life?

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