

Baptism: It's More Important Than You Probably Think

~It is a command

The **first specific command** in Scripture that God gives to the new believer is baptism. It is an element of the Great Commission, “*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*” (Matt. 28:19). Baptism was commanded **immediately** after salvation, as in the case with Cornelius and his household, “*And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord*” (Acts 10:48). Matter of fact, the longest period of time between salvation and baptism as recorded in Scriptures was only **three days** - that was for the Apostle Paul. His reason for taking so long to be baptized is that he was blinded for three days! (Acts 9:9, 18). What's your excuse?

~It is for believers only

Baptism was never practiced on babies. One must be a believer before he can be legitimately baptized. “*See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*” (Acts 8:36, 37). If a person is baptized before they are saved, it doesn't count - they are just a wet sinner!

~It makes a powerful statement

When we are baptized, we **outwardly** demonstrate to the world what **inwardly** happened in our hearts when we got saved. We openly identify with Jesus Christ. Baptism **pictures** the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. “*Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death...for if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection*” (Romans 6:4,5). Further, baptism also pictures our death to sin, washing away of sin by Christ's blood, and now a new life in Christ “*...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*” (Romans 6:4).

~It is to be Biblically accurate.

The **only mode** of baptism practiced in the Bible was **immersion**. The only mode that accurately pictures death, burial, and resurrection is immersion. A dead body must be completely covered with dirt — not just have a cup full of dirt poured or sprinkled on it. The word baptism is transliterated from the Greek ‘**Baptizo**’ which means to immerse; to submerge. “*...They went down both into the water...and he baptized him.* (Acts 8:38)

~It pleases God

When we obey God in this matter, he is pleased. At Christ's baptism the Father spoke from Heaven, “*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*” (Matthew 3:17). In Acts 19:1 - 17 we find some men who were baptized **incorrectly** (without understanding) being **rebaptized**. The Spirit of God showed His approval by coming upon them. If you need to be baptized Biblically, please talk to me today and take this important step of obedience.

Pastor Dave Harness Sr.