

"Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas; besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of non-effect."  
1 Corinthians 1:13-17

You may choose anyone you wish to baptize you. More important to God than this choice are your faith and obedience.

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#### What about baptizing children?

Undoubtedly the concern of Christian parents for the spiritual well-being and eternal destiny of their young children, particularly in the event of an early death, has led to the acceptance of infant baptism in some circles. While Jesus Himself demonstrated that there is no other group of people more important to God than the very young, it is beyond the clear teaching of the Bible to baptize babies.

There is not a single example of infant baptism in Scripture. In every passage that teaches about the act we find that adults are being ministered to.

"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" Matthew 28:19-20

The apostles were being instructed to baptize those who could understand and obey the teachings of Jesus. Babies would simply be unable to do this.

"Now 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 Ghost." Acts 2:37-38

Peter was teaching that baptism follows repentance. Repentance presupposes an understanding of holiness, sin, regret and commitment, requiring a level of maturity not to be found in infants.

"And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." Acts 16:32-34

### Must a person be baptized to be saved?

The Bible teaches plainly that it is proper faith that saves one from sin, not baptism. Note that the following references explain what is necessary for salvation but do not mention baptism.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God.” Ephesians 2:8

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” John 5:24

“But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” Romans 10:8-9

The apostle Peter specifically called baptism a “figure” (meaning a picture or a representation) of our salvation in 1 Peter 3:21.

The life-saving gospel is that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became man and died for the sin of the human race. He was raised bodily from the grave three days later and became the only satisfactory substitute for us in the sight of God. Believing these things and taking Christ as Lord saves a person’s soul.

### [1] The baptism of John

“John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach for the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.” Mark 1:4-5

Jesus’ cousin John preceded the preaching of the gospel and became well known for his baptizing of thousands of Jews. He stood as a connecting link between the Old and New Covenants. John preached repentance from sin and a return to righteous living in order to prepare oneself for the salvation of Messiah and the coming kingdom of God.

“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.” Acts 19:3-5

Upon the death and resurrection of Our Lord, the baptism of John became unnecessary and ineffective. Moreover, those who had previously submitted to John’s baptism were baptized again when they came to understand and accept the complete gospel of Christ.

## Re-Baptism

Some people see value in being baptized more than once. Often this is done at times of recommitment or in an attempt to experience again the joy and emotion of one's initial baptism. This is another example of a practice that has developed apart from scriptural teaching and examples. While harmless if done in simple sincerity, the danger lies in thinking there is grace to be obtained merely by going through the ritual. All the grace we need is available from our heavenly Father any time we want to ask according to His Word;

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."  
Hebrews 4:16

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## Conclusion

Water baptism is one of the only rites Jesus commanded His followers to observe. It is simple yet filled with rich symbolism that honors our Lord and blesses the one who submits to it. May you experience the joy and encouragement that the saints have found through the ages as they have identified themselves with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in water baptism.

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## What is baptism?

Christian baptism is an act that follows a person's conversion to Christ. The word 'baptism' in the New Testament is from the Greek root *bapto* which means to make fully wet. Hence, from the earliest days of Christianity, a person being baptized was completely immersed in water.

This immersion and the subsequent rising out of the water are immensely symbolic according to Scripture.

"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Colossians 2:12

"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." Romans 6:4

Both these passages refer to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Savior. They speak of baptism as an outward way of identifying with these events in the life of Christ.

*A Christian identifies with the death and burial of Jesus Christ.* The Bible says that a believer is crucified with Christ and that the old man is reckoned dead, judged and punished in Him. Descending beneath the surface of the water in baptism represents a spiritual burial for the believer, just as the dead body of Christ was laid in the tomb beneath the surface of the earth. At baptism,





Calvary Chapel Harrisburg – West Shore [www.ccharrisburg.org](http://www.ccharrisburg.org)

28 N. Locust Point Rd, Mechanicsburg PA 17050- 717-461-9050

