



## DBS TEACHING GUIDE FOR WATER BAPTISM

Rather than focusing on one passage (like a typical DBS study), we will look at multiple to help gain a deeper understanding of water baptism.

Discuss the passages section by section, allowing space for questions and conversations along the way, and then use the 'deeper context' to help provide context and clarity to the conversation.

---

### I. MODE (METHOD) OF BAPTISM

**Key Passage:** Mark 1:5, 9-10; Acts 8:36-39

- From these passages, how did they practice the act of baptism?

---

### II. MEANING OF BAPTISM

**Key Passage:** Romans 6:1-6; Colossians 2:11-12

- What does water baptism mean (or symbolize) from these passages?

---

### III. THE NEED FOR BAPTISM

**Key Passage:** Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:37-42

- Who and when should someone follow through with baptism?

---

### IV. WHO AND WHEN SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

**Key Passage:** Acts 2:37-42; 8:35-38

- Have you been baptized?
  - If so, share your story.
  - If not, and you are comfortable doing so, share why.

\*Parents, see note in **deeper context** in regard to discipling your children about baptism

# DEEPER CONTEXT

---

## I. MODE (METHOD) OF BAPTISM

- Our typical method of baptism is through immersion, which means to be completely submerged
  - The Greek word **baptizō** means to “plunge, dip, immerse” something in water
    - This is the word used in every New Testament instance of someone being baptized, which is why this is our method
  - Even when the term **baptizō** is not used in scripture, there are other descriptions that infer immersion
    - “*up out of the water*”
    - “*they both went down into the water...they came up out of the water*”
- 

## II. MEANING OF BAPTISM

- It is important to understand what the act of baptism is symbolizing
  - It primarily symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of our Savior
    - This passage from Romans affirms that as you go down into the water, it is a picture of going down into the grave and being buried (with Christ) and as you come up out of the water, it is a picture of being raised with Christ so, “*we too might walk in the newness of life.*”
    - *Side note: if/when someone is sprinkled, they miss out on this incredible symbolism*
  - Baptism also symbolizes the washing away and cleansing from sin as well (see **Acts 22:16; Titus 3:5**)
  - When you understand what the act of baptism is about, you begin to understand why it is such a momentous and celebratory occasion, not only for the one being baptized, but for every follower of Jesus who knows them and their story
- 

## III. THE NEED FOR BAPTISM

- Even though these verses (and others like **1 Peter 3:21**) clearly do not make baptism *optional*, it is equally important to understand baptism is not mandatory in regard to salvation
  - For instance, when Peter says, “*baptism now saves you,*” he explains what he means
  - “*not the removal of dirt from the flesh,*” → not as an external, physical act that removes our dirt because that is not what saves us
  - “*but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*” → what saves us is the internal, spiritual transaction between God and the individual, which is symbolized by the ceremony of baptism
- The Roman Catholic Church believes baptism is essential for salvation and that the act itself causes regeneration (which is a primary reason for the practice of infant baptism)
  - They believe the church bestows saving grace on its people (therefore the lack of faith in infants, or anyone for that matter, is replaced by the faith of the Church)
- If baptism, or any other practice (i.e. speaking in tongues, etc) is necessary for experiencing saving grace from God, then salvation would come from faith plus works...which is unbiblical
  - This Catholic view was a primary reason for the Protestant Reformation, when Martin Luther spoke up to teach that salvation relies on faith alone (see **Ephesians 2:8-9, Galatians 1:6**)
- Although baptism may not be necessary for our salvation, it is absolutely necessary to be obedient to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (delayed obedience is still disobedience)
  - *Spoiler alert:* no one living today can use the thief on the cross as your excuse

---

## IV. WHO AND WHEN SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

- It is our belief and practice that baptism is (outward) act of obedience for a follower of Jesus who has already experienced (inward) justification by grace alone, through faith alone
- Although our culture has, in many ways, watered down the practice of baptism, the pattern in the Bible is that only the people who give a believable profession of faith in Jesus should be baptized
  - “*Believable*” → their life has demonstrated reasonable evidence of pursuing and becoming like Jesus
  - This is commonly referred to as “*believer’s baptism*”
- If you believe you have experienced the grace of God, which means something like:
  - You have a profound belief (“*pierced to the heart*”) in the Creator of the universe
  - You have realized your personal sin and rebellion against Him
  - You have repented and confessed your sins to Him
  - And have surrendered your whole being to His Son Jesus Christ (who came to live and die, be buried, and be raised to life again as a sacrifice for your rebellion)
- Then, as exemplified throughout the New Testament, following through with *believer’s baptism* should be one of your next steps

### Parents

- As a parent who longs for their son or daughter to pursue Jesus, it can be easy for us to expedite the process, which ultimately does not help our children
- Biblically speaking, there is no age requirement for baptism, so here are a few ways you can help:
  - Be in constant prayer for your kids to personally experience the amazing grace of God
  - Observe any convincing evidence of genuine *spiritual life* in them, along with some degree of understanding of what it means to trust in Christ
  - Lean on others in your faith community who you can trust to share honest feedback about any *spiritual life* in your son or daughter
  - Feel free to reach out for more resources, prayer, guidance, etc

### Should I be baptized again?

- If you believe you were improperly baptized (i.e. as a baby, before you truly surrendered to Jesus, etc):
  - Spend some time in prayer and in the Word
  - Ask as many questions as you need to
  - When you are ready, reach out to someone in your Microchurch, one of our elders, and we will be happy to walk you through the process
- If you believe you were properly baptized as a surrendered follower of Jesus (at the time), but have grown spiritually in ways that now lead you to wonder or even believe you need to be baptized again:
  - Going through the act of obedience again is biblically permissible, but also not necessary
  - If you are seeking spiritual refreshing or renewal:
    - Meditate on what your baptism meant when it originally occurred
    - Consider confessing of sin and/or repentance (to God or others if need be)
    - Practice the *renewing of your mind* (*Romans 12:2*)
  - If you would like to proceed with being baptized again and/or simply have other questions, reach out to one of our elders to help walk you through the process

If you would like to proceed with pursuing baptism, please click the link below & fill out the brief form:

<https://northstarpulaski.org/baptism-signup>