

Baptism in the Bible

I. General

A. In the KJB, “**baptize**” (in its various forms) is used 100 times in 76 verses and “**John (the) Baptist**” is used another 15 times in 15 verses.

B. The English word “baptize” is a *transliteration* of the Greek word “baptizo” and can represent the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

II. Motivation for this Study

Today when you ask people the eternally important question: “Are you 100% certain you are saved and will go to Heaven when you die?” the answer you most often get is “I was baptized when I was ___ years old.” (**Big Problem!!**)

III. Questions Answered in this Study (“tradition” → Mark 7:1-13; 2 Thess. 2:15, 3:6)

A. **Doctrinally**, is Jesus’ post-resurrection commission given: 1) to the church to preach the Gospel of the Grace of God **or** 2) to the eleven apostles to proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom? - Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:19-23; Acts 1:8 (Contrast with Romans 16:25-26; Eph. 3:1-9)

B. **Is it scriptural** to teach that a new believer’s first act of obedience is to get water baptized?

C. **Is it scriptural** to teach, imply, or suggest that **not** having been water baptized proves a person is rebellious, disobedient, out of the will of God, disqualified to serve the Lord, and/or was likely never saved in the first place?

D. **Is it scriptural** to teach that water baptism is the believer’s first step of faith?

E. **Is it scriptural** to teach that water baptism is a prerequisite to serving the Lord in a local church?

F. If water baptism is **not required** for salvation (as Baptist churches correctly teach), **is it scriptural** (or even a good idea) to **require** a believer to get water baptized in order to become a member of a local church?

G. When a local church **requires** water baptism in order to become a member, are people being led to believe water baptism is **somehow connected** to their salvation?

H. Is water baptism a **spiritual** event or a **physical** event? (**FACT** → Nobody in the Bible is ever placed into a **spiritual body** (KoG) by **physical means**!)

I. **Where does the KJB** teach that water baptism symbolizes anything?

J. **Where in the KJB** is water baptism shown to be an ordinance of the Church?

IV. Uses of the various forms of the word “baptism” in the Bible

A. Baptism unto Moses. - 1 Cor. 10:1-2; Ex. 14:21-31

B. Baptism for “the dead” (a cultic practice *for individuals!*). - 1 Cor. 15:29

C. Baptism of the lost into unquenchable fire. - Matt. 3:11-12; Luke 3:16

D. Baptism into physical suffering / death. - Matt. 20:22-23; Mark 10:38-39; Luke 12:50

E. Water baptism. - Matt. 3:1-6 (v.6→FM). 11-17, 21:25; 28:16-20; Acts 1:5,22, 2:38-41, 8:5-17, 26-40, 9:17-18, 10:34-48, 11:1-18; 13:14-30, 16:14-15, 25-34, 18:4-8, 24-28, 19:1-6, 22:6-16; 1 Cor. 1:10-17; Heb. 6:1-6; 1 Pet. 3:21

(Parallel passages in the other 3 gospels: **Mark** 1:4-9, 11:30; 16:16; **Luke** 3:3,7,12,16, 21, 7:29-30, 20:4; **John** 1:25-33, 3:22-26, 4:1-2, 10:40)

F. Holy Ghost (Spirit) baptism. - Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5, 11:16; Rom. 6:3-4, 1 Cor. 12:13, Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:4-5; Col. 2:9-12

CONCLUSIONS

1. Since **1)** the Kingdom of Heaven was “**at hand**” (still being offered) until the stoning of Stephen in Acts 7, **2)** Paul was **not** converted until Acts 9 (~A.D. 35), and **3)** the revelation of the mystery of salvation through the Gospel of the Grace of God **could not** be in full force until **after** it was revealed to Paul, it would seem clear that Jesus’ post-resurrection commission to his remaining eleven apostles was to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, **not** the Gospel of the Grace of God. Today, in the Church Age, we apply Jesus’ commission **practically** to exhort believers to preach the Gospel of the Grace of God. - Rom. 1:15; 1 Cor. 1:17-18; 9:16-18; 2 Tim. 4:2

2. In the gospels (M/M/L/J), water baptism is connected with the Gospel of the Kingdom. Nearly all water baptisms referenced in the **transitional** book of Acts (at the inception of the Church) appear to be a “hold-over” practice from the pre-Calvary preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom. It is worth noting the apostolic sign gift of healing was still in effect in Acts 28:7-9. (1 Cor. 1:22; Mark 16:17-18)

3. Water baptism is not found in the Pauline epistles, except for Paul explaining that he had only baptized a very few people and that Christ had not sent him to water baptize, but rather to preach the gospel (Gospel of the Grace of God). - 1 Cor. 1:11-17

4. Except for item 3. above, **all** references to “baptism” in the Pauline epistles are **Holy Spirit** baptism, **not** water baptism. (See underlined references in IV. F. above)

5. Since water baptism is **not** required for salvation in the Church Age under the Gospel of the Grace of God, a **dispensational understanding** of water baptism is essential when contemplating the water baptism of any believer.