

# What God Says...

## Baptism a requirement for salvation?

Updated 30.5.2017

### **NOTE:**

When people read the Bible, God's inspired Word - His message to mankind, many people may have different reference points depending on the teachings and traditions they grew up with through parents, school, church, and friends. Before you read this particular article it may be advantageous for you to read through the article on [God's Word](#) first.

In regards to baptism, there have been written countless volumes about why, how, where and when to point out one's particular belief and opinion. The following is simply pointing to what God says to us through His Word;

First of all the meaning of the word Baptism or to Baptize;

### **Baptize;**

From Strongs Greek Concordance: 907 *baptizo bap-tid'-zo from a derivative of 911; to immerse, submerge; to make whelmed (i.e. fully wet); used only (in the New Testament) of ceremonial ablution\*, especially (technically) of the ordinance of Christian baptism:--Baptist, baptize, wash. \* A washing or cleansing of the body*

911 *bapto bap'-to a primary verb; to whelm, i.e. cover wholly with a fluid; in the New Testament only in a qualified or special sense, i.e. (literally) to moisten (a part of one's person), or (by implication) to stain (as with dye):--dip.*

### **Baptism;**

908 *baptisma bap'-tis-mah from 907; baptism (technically or figuratively):--baptism.*

There are over 80 references to baptism in the New Testament.

## **Baptism pictured in the Old Testament:**

God's word tells us that the Old Testament **happened to them** and were **written for us**:

*I Corinthians 10:11: Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.*

Water was primarily used for drinking and for cleansing in different sacrifices and ceremonies and when we go back in the context of this scripture (read 1-11) we see that water played an important role both in a natural way and pointing to spiritual truth;

*I Corinthians 10:1-4: Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were **all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea**; And did all **eat the same spiritual meat**; And did all **drink the same spiritual drink**: for they drank of that **spiritual Rock** that followed them: and **that Rock was Christ**.*

*Acts 3:22: For Moses truly said to the fathers, " The Lord your God shall raise up a Prophet to you from your brothers, **One like me**. You shall hear Him in all things, whatever He may say to you.*

Moses as an Old Testament picture of Jesus, brought the Israelites from bondage in Egypt to freedom in the promised land. The passing through the Red Sea for the Israelites was a literal and physical leaving of the old life of bondage in Egypt and entering into freedom on the other side of the sea. They entered the parted water and passed over to the other side. The Egyptians tried to overcome them but was drowned in the sea when it closed in. The Israelites were safe on the other side beginning their journey to the land of freedom and abundance. The New Testament tells us that this was a physical example of what happens in the spiritual world when someone believes and is baptized. Another parallel is when Jesus went to the cross and died for our sins. Using that, God shows us the perfect picture of what happens when someone becomes a Christian and is baptized;

*Romans 6:3: Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*

*4: 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**.*

5: For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

6: Knowing this, that **our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed**, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

7: For he that is dead is freed from sin.

8: Now **if we be dead with Christ**, we believe that **we shall also live with him**:

The old life of sin and bondage (in Egypt) is buried (dead in the water) and as Christ was raised from the dead, we rise to a new life in Him.

*II Corinthians 5:17: Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: **old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.***

Now, that is pretty clear language and easy to understand. So we see here three pictures that portrays the same message and the fulfillment of Jesus' "mission statement":

1. In the Nation of Israel
2. In the atonement of Jesus Christ
3. In the life of a believer

*Luke 4:18: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the **gospel to the poor**; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach **deliverance to the captives**, and **recovering of sight** to the blind, to **set at liberty** them that are bruised.*

When Jesus started his mission on earth he came to John to be baptized and he said;

*Matthew 3:15: .....Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us **to fulfill all righteousness.***

He symbolically showed what **would take place** and when we are baptized we look back and identify with what **did take place** - Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. We are immersed in water (death and burial of the old life) and rising (out of the water) to a new life in Christ. It's a public testimony of our conversion from the old to the new.

John was baptizing unto repentance;

*Luke 7:29: And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But **the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.***

The self righteous Pharisees and lawyers were steeped in traditions of men and their own laws and regulations (man's opinions and reasonings) and **rejected God's word against themselves by not being baptized**. In other words they did not want to repent.

Jesus talked of a baptism that he would be baptized with and it was his literal death, burial and resurrection:

Jesus called his coming death, burial and resurrection a "baptism". His was the real deal. We publicly confess our faith in that, through baptism in water symbolizing his "baptism".

*Luke 12:50: But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how distressed I am till it be accomplished!*

*Mark 10:38: But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?*

*39: And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:*

On the day of Pentecost after they had been filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter was preaching;

*Acts 2:38: 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 2:41: Then **they that gladly received his word were baptized** and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls .*

*I Corinthians 12:13: For by one Spirit are we all **baptized into one body**, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*

Likening the circumcision (without hands) of the heart, with Baptism, calling it the "circumcision of Christ":

*Col. 2:9: For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.  
10: And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:  
11: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:  
12: **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.**  
13: And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;  
14: Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;*

### **Why have some people that have been saved not yet been baptized?**

There are only three possible reasons other than a physical preventative situation, similar to hanging on a cross. I believe first of all because it is not preached clearly as a commandment by Jesus ( Matt 28:19 and Mark 16:16) and people do not take it seriously. In the early church it was as natural as "salt and pepper". You believed and were baptized - period. Since when did we start personal preference and/or time delayed action. Now we do not preach baptism, we have classes for "candidates" that "wish" to be baptized. The second reason is plain disobedience toward God because their heart is not right with God and the third because they have not yet been born from above - they are simply not saved.

We were attending a Church in Calgary back in the 70's where they had an altar call every Sunday night. Those who got saved were baptized that very night. Sounds biblical to me:

*Acts 2:41: Then **they that gladly received his word were baptized** and **the same day** there were added unto them about three thousand souls .*

Why do people wait? Why hesitate? Sounds like they're listening to the creature: "Has God really said?" - rather than the Creator. In other words - "it's probably not that important". In other words they have a higher regard for their own reasoning, from whatever source that might be, than they have for God and His word.

Baptism was usually the immediate step after believing. It was the immediate action that followed belief;

Acts 8:12: But **when they believed** Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, **they were baptized**, both men and women.

Acts 16:33: And he took them **the same hour of the night**, and washed their stripes; and **was baptized, he and all his, straightway**.

Acts 18:8: And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing **believed, and were baptized**.

Acts 19:5: **When they heard this, they were baptized** in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 22:16: And now **why are you waiting? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord** .

Philip obviously communicated the right message to the eunuch, because as soon as they passed a body of water he requested to be baptized, right there:

Acts 8:36-38: And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; **and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what hinders me from being baptized ?** And Philip said, If you believe with all your heart, you may. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: **and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him** .

From the above scripture it appears that any place where there is enough water with or without other people present qualifies for a place of baptism following belief. The Eunuch obviously wanted to be obedient according to what Philip had taught him from the Word.

Paul who had persecuted the church came to Ananias who prayed for him:

Acts 9:18: And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and **arose, and was baptized** .

The Holy Spirit poured out on the gentiles, before they were baptized;

Acts 10:47: Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And **he commanded them to be baptized** in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to

tarry certain days.

Other references:

*Acts 16:15: And when **she was baptized, and her household**, she besought, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.*

*Romans 6:3: Know ye not, that so many of us as were **baptized** into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*

*Romans 6:4: **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.***

*I Corinthians 10:2: And **were all baptized** unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;*

*I Peter 3:21: **The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us** (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but **the answer of a good conscience toward God**;) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:*

*Mark 16:16: **He that believes and is baptized shall be saved** ; but he that believes not shall be damned.*

It seems like the most natural thing to do was to get baptized as soon as you had believed. There was no waiting period, no special classes, no lingering - You got saved, you were baptized right away. Why? Because that's the commandment Jesus gave them before he left. It is part and parcel of the act of believing. Why wait? Is the message not clear enough?

Peters sermon on the day of Pentecost, which started the fulfillment of the Great Commission, has never changed; "**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.....Then they that gladly received his word were baptized.**

We have never been called to save anyone, but to make disciples, and an integral part of that is baptism.

*Matt 28: 18-20: All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and **make disciples of the 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 I have commanded you**; and lo, I am with*

*you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.*

A Word of CAUTION:

What is the qualification to be baptized? - Repentance towards God!

*Acts 2:38: Then Peter said unto them, **Repent, and be baptized every one of you** in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins*

What is repentance?

*II Corinthians 7:10: For godly sorrow worketh **repentance to salvation** not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.*

BAPTISM in and of itself is NOT A TICKET TO HEAVEN....

The act of Baptism is not a ticket to heaven unless your heart is right with God, having repented first. Simon the sorcerer believed and got baptized but he had not repented. His heart was not right with God.

*Acts 8:9: But there was a certain man, called **Simon**, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one:*

*10: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God.*

*1: And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.*

*12: But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.*

*13: Then **Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized**, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.*

*14: Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:*

*15: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:*

*16: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)*

*17: Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.*

*18: And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,*

*19: Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.*

*20: But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.*

21: *Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for **thy heart is not right in the sight of God.***

22: ***Repent therefore of this thy wickedness,** and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.*

Here is a scripture you won't hear many sermons on;

*Mark 16:16: **He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;** but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

Now, that does sound like you have to be baptized to be saved, does it not? Is that not what it says? Then what about the thief on the cross? He did not hear a typical sermon, yet he witnessed God at work and was actually the very first convert, dying beside His Savior for crimes he had done. He knew that Jesus had not done anything deserving of death. He also knew that Jesus did not belong here, he was from a different Kingdom. He had heard; *"Father forgive them for they know not what they do"*. His only words to Jesus were; ***"Remember me when you come into your kingdom"***. He did not have chance to get baptized, yet Jesus said to him; *"Assuredly, this day you will be with me in paradise"*. So is that a contradiction then? Not at all, because it really has nothing to do with the practical application of being immersed in water, **but it has everything to do with obedience.**

Obedience to God's Word is the essence of everything. That of course cannot happen unless faith is involved. The underlying foundational question to be asked is this: Do you believe the first ten words in the Bible?:

***"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."***

Do you believe that;

*Hebrews 11:6: **But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.***

And....

*Isa 55:11 **So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.***

Jesus said that it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than one tittle of God's law to fail (Luke 16:17).

To avoid repeating myself here, please go to [God's Word](#) and find out if you absolutely unconditionally believe that or not. Then come back, and you may just look at what God says here with a different understanding.

God says that the pharisees rejected the counsel of God against themselves, not being baptized by him (John). They rejected what God said for them to do through John - "**repent and be baptized**".

God has provided the way and He says; *Walk in it*. When we do not, we reject his counsel. Jesus said that the evidence of us loving him is that we keep His commandments. As a matter of fact if we don't, He says we do not know Him;

*John 14:15: **If ye love me, keep my commandments.***

*I John 2:3-5: And **hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.** He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.*

So, the obvious question is; will those that are not baptized not go to heaven? Human reasoning does not play a part here. What matter is faith in what God says. He's the one that is speaking. Perhaps people who are not baptized do not see it as necessary? How would you like to say to almighty God, the creator of the universe that what He says is not important? If we do that, then we have elevated ourselves above God, and I only know of one that tried that and the end is not good. Read more about how to respond to [God's Word](#).

Salvation is not about doing rituals, but faith and relationship with Jesus Christ. Jesus says we have a relationship with Him **if we keep his commandments**. God says that faith without works is dead. If we have a relationship with Jesus it will show in our obedience to His commandments.

Some will say that this smacks of legalism, but stop to think about it - if you love somebody, don't you want to please them? If it is true in the natural, shouldn't it be even more in the spiritual for Jesus who gave His life for me so that I will be righteous before God? ***If you love me, keep my commandments...***

**It is a matter of our WILL and of OBEDIENCE!**

He has commanded us to do two physical things symbolically and that is communion and baptism. They are not rituals, but rather testimonies to his atonement that people who have been born from above identify with.

The question remains; If for reason of doubt you have not been baptized, maybe there are other things that God says you don't believe either?

Remember, it was the devil who put doubt in Eve's heart by asking; **"Has God said?"** Are you listening to the creature rather than the Creator? If you have, read **God's Word**, and do so now.

*John 14:15: **If ye love me, keep my commandments.***

*Mark 16:16: **He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.***

He that believes?

Believes what?

You be the judge!

Faith is always a matter of the will. You decide whether you will believe what God says or not. Then you choose to act accordingly.

Three monkeys sat on a fence. Two of them decided to jump down. How many were left? THREE! They decided to, but did not follow with action :-)

Faith without action is dead;

*James 2:20: **But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?***

*James 2:26: **For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.***

**Is baptism a choice - or an act of obedience, or both?**