

Baptized into Christ By Trey Sullins

One of the most mentioned things in the Bible is baptism. Even though it is such a common topic it is one of the most downplayed and changed instructions in the word of God. Many will accept the need for hearing, repenting, and confessing as requirements for salvation, but for various reasons have chosen to deny the clear passages that teach about baptism and its role in the scriptures. Our purpose is to discuss the importance of proper baptism for salvation.

What is baptism? According to Strong's Greek Dictionary the Greek word for baptism means to immerse. The word "baptism" in English is a transliteration of the Greek word baptizo. Transliteration means that the letters of the original Greek word were changed into English letters in order to retain roughly the same sounding word. Therefore, the Greek word "baptizo" becomes baptism. In English we could accurately use the word "immerse" in the place of baptism.

There are many purposes for baptism that we find within the scriptures. One of those purposes is for the remission of sins. In Acts 2:38 and in Acts 22:16 we read about this purpose. Another purpose is for a new birth. After being washed of your sins you become new and changed to walk according to the way that God directs (John 3:3-5, 2 Corinthians 5:17). Baptism places one in Christ (Galatians 3:27). Lastly, baptism adds one to the church (Acts 2:47). There are more reasons found within the New Testament, but the importance of baptism can be seen from these four reasons.

It is also important to make sure that baptism is done properly. Baptism is for those who have received the word of God. In Acts 2:41 the people who "gladly received word" were baptized. In Acts 16:31 says those that believe will be saved and in verse 33 the jailer's household was baptized. There are no examples of baptism for those who do not believe or receive the word within the scriptures. Therefore, things like infant baptism or baptism for the dead cannot be right in God's eyes.

The question then arises, what about those who were baptized into denominations of the church? The Bible shows us that baptism requires reception of the word of God. When someone is taught by the denominations, they are not taught God's word, but man's creeds and interpretations. How could such a person be baptized into Christ with a proper reception of God's word? In Acts 2:47 the Bible says that God added to the church daily those who were being saved. It would not make sense to conclude that God adds to the church or saves everyone who is baptized. If that were the case, then you could believe whatever you wanted and still be saved so long as you were baptized. However, the only logical conclusion is that God adds to the church and saves those who receive His message which is only the New Testament.

Further proof of this is seen in the account of Apollos in Acts 18:24-27. He was preaching only the baptism of John because he had not yet been taught about the baptism of the Christ. The denominational attitude on baptism seen today might suggest that those people which Apollos baptized would be saved because they loved God and desired to do right. In verse 26 Aquila and Priscilla teach Apollos "more accurately" the "way of God." If the thought and method behind

baptism did not matter, then why would they do this? Clearly it does matter. Once more in Acts 19:4-5, some disciples at Ephesus only knew the baptism of John. After they were taught about believing in Jesus, they were baptized again into Christ. Paul once more instructs on the importance of the proper baptism in 1 Corinthians 1:10-17. Here he lays out that we should all be baptized in the name of Christ. When we are baptized it must be under Christ and by extension His church. Our baptism cannot be of the Methodist, the Baptists, the Catholics, or any other!

From studying the word of God, we should be able to see how important proper baptism is. It is not enough to be baptized in water for any reason. You must be baptized into Jesus Christ and into His church. To do that, you must know what God's word teaches us about proper baptism. God's will is so great that we can be saved at any time. All we must do is chose to be obedient to His will! Are you baptized into Christ?