

# WATER BAPTISM

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”  
(Matthew 28:19)*

As believers we are to follow Jesus in obedience in the waters of baptism. Jesus established water baptism as an ordinance when He gave the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16).

## WHAT IS WATER BAPTISM?

Water baptism is a public, outward testimony that indicates a personal, inward faith. It gives evidence of the inner change that has already occurred in the believer's life, when he or she was “born again” through faith in Jesus Christ.

The word “baptize” literally means “to dip or immerse”.

This act of going under the water during baptism, symbolizes being buried in death. It is a symbol of our dying to our old life and resurrecting to our new life. (Romans 6:1-4)

## WHY SHOULD WE BE BAPTIZED?

There are three very clear reasons why a believer should be baptized.

### **Act of Obedience:**

Throughout the New Testament, water baptism was practiced following conversion. This was done in direct response to Jesus' command that Christians everywhere are to "preach" and then "baptize" those who believe. Therefore, everyone who becomes a Christian needs to be baptized out of obedience to God.

### **Statement of Faith:**

As mentioned earlier, water baptism is an outward statement of one's belief in Christ's atonement for our sins. Baptism is a means to make a public statement of your faith.

### **Public Testimony:**

In the New Testament, we see baptism practiced publicly. It was a very powerful and meaningful way to fulfill Jesus' promise, "Whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32). Those who are publicly baptized "confess before men" their life's commitment to Him as their Lord and Savior.

## **WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?**

All born-again believers in Jesus Christ should be baptized. (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 8:12, 36-38; 16:31-33; 18:8)

## **WHAT BAPTISM DOESN'T DO:**

### **Baptism Cannot Save:**

Salvation comes through faith alone, and not works (Ephesians 2:8). Therefore, the act of baptism cannot save us. Rather it gives evidence through public action that a person has already been saved. It is an act of obedience.

### **Baptism Cannot Cleanse From Sin:**

The cleansing of sins takes place when we believe and accept Christ and ask Him to cleanse our sins (1 John 1:9). Baptism may witness to our cleansing, but the water itself is powerless to cleanse from sin.

### **Baptism Cannot Magically Free Us From Sinful Habits:**

Self-control, moral purity, holiness and much more, are all benefits of receiving Christ and allowing the Holy Spirit to influence and change us. Baptism alone will not magically or automatically free us from these things. Still, it does tell others that you have willingly submitted your life to the process of spiritual growth and change through the power of the Holy Spirit.