

QUESTION: Does a person have to be baptized in water in order to be saved? Some believers say yes and others say no. What do you say?

PASTOR GREG'S ANSWER:

In Romans 6:3, 6, it says *“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?” “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.”*

The very moment you turned to God and accepted His Gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, your old flesh was nailed once and for all to the accursed tree and suffers the anathema (curse, wrath, judgment) of Almighty God. Your old nature was “baptized” into the body of Jesus Christ.

What does it mean to be “baptized into Jesus Christ” and “baptized into his death”?

The Greek word from which we get the English word “baptize” is “baptizo”. It literally means ‘to place in to, to fully immerse, and to identify with another’. Notice two different baptisms in the New Testament:

1) Baptism of the believer in water.

This is an ordinance given by the Lord, and administered once a person is born-again into the family of God becoming a believer in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Participating in water baptism does not add too, or take away from the act of salvation. Moreover, water does not ‘wash’ us of our sins. Only the blood of the Lamb of God is able to wash and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Believer’s baptism, as it is often called, simply identifies and testifies to the world, of the grace that has already occurred in the believer’s heart the moment he/she believed and received Christ as Savior.

When we think of the baptism of someone, we instinctively think of the believer being immersed in water, but this is not always the case in Scripture. Remember, most false teachings and doctrines come from not “rightly dividing the Word of truth”. A good student of the Bible will avail themselves to Bible customs, manners, historical documents, original languages, from whence the Bible was translated, etc.

Water baptism – like partaking of the Lord’s Supper – is simply an ordinance the Lord desires us to participate in once we have placed our faith in His finished work on the cross. If water baptism is required to take us to Heaven, then babies and all the Old Testament Saints wouldn’t make it.

2) Baptism of the believer into the body of Christ.

Unlike water baptism which takes place 'after' a person is saved; the baptism of a person "into the crucified body of Christ" takes place the 'moment' a person is saved. Not that we are literally crucified as were the two thieves beside our Lord, but in a spiritual and mysterious way that only God can perform. He baptized, or placed us into the body of our Savior. Our old flesh is immersed (baptized) – not in water, which identifies us with Christ - but into Jesus Christ Himself on the cross, thus we are crucified with Him.

Remember, salvation has always been secured by faith. "By faith Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteous." Here are some of many Bible verses showing that salvation is through faith in the finished work of Christ:

Ephesian 2:8, 9 - For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

2 Timothy 1:9 - Who hath saved us, and called [us] with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

Acts 4:12 - Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Romans 1:16 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

John 5:24 - Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

John 11:26 - And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this.

Acts 16:31 - And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Acts 13:39 - And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

John 6:35 - And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

Ephesians 2:8 - For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God: