



Word of God Ministry Church Under The Son

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Baptism

Jesus Christ gave two special commands (or ordinances) for the church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. The act of baptism involves being "washed" with water. There are different methods of baptism practiced by believers - submersion, sprinkling, and pouring. Baptism is an outward sign of a person's commitment to follow Jesus Christ. It is an important act of obedience in the life of a believer.

- Jesus Is Baptized

Matthew 3:13 ¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him.

John the Baptist was sent by God to pave the way for Christ. *"In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!' For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; Make His paths straight'''" (verses 1-3)*

Some thought John the Baptist was the promised Messiah, but he made it very clear to his listeners that he was not: *"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (verse 11).* When accepting John's baptism, people confessed their sins. John spoke of the imminent coming of the kingdom of God, which would involve severe judgment. His message prepared those who repented for the coming of Christ (verses 7-12).

Jesus Himself was baptized. John protested at first, saying that Jesus should be baptizing him instead. But Jesus said to him, *"Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (verse 15).* Though Jesus was sinless, He recognized that as the promised Messiah He was called to identify with the people He came to deliver. Baptism expressed His wholehearted identification with His people before God. It was also a public expression of His dedication to God's will and to ministry (verses 15-17). This event marked the beginning of Jesus' public ministry.

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- Jesus' Instruction To Baptize

Matthew 28:18-20 ¹⁸And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go 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, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

During Jesus' public preaching ministry, His disciples baptized others (John 4:1, 2). Here, following His resurrection, Jesus instructs His disciples to go and make disciples of "all the nations" and to baptize them "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Much of the New Testament shows the church fulfilling this command - also known as "The Great Commission."

- The Importance Of Baptism

Acts 8:36, 37 ³⁶Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" ³⁷Then 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."

Baptism represents what God has done through Christ on your behalf. Jesus Christ paid the penalty for your sins by dying on the cross and rising from the dead. When you are baptized in the name of the Lord, you publicly acknowledge that you are sinful and have accepted Christ as Lord and Savior (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48). Baptism publicly signifies your cleansing from sin and sets you apart for service to Christ (Matthew 10:32, 33).

Through baptism, you are identified with Christ. Though baptism is important to the Christian faith, it is not a means of salvation. Only acceptance of Christ's sacrificial death can save you. Baptism, however, is a picture of your new life in Christ - washed clean from your sin by Jesus' death on the cross. "*Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life*" (Romans 6:3, 4).

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The act of baptism represents the death of your sinful nature and the new life you have in Christ. Jesus Christ is honored when you obey Him and show this public acknowledgement of your faith in Him.

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