

Why Should You Be Baptized As A Believer?

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Much confusion exists today regarding baptism in the local Church. I want to clarify a few points and further explicate on why baptism is biblically reserved for the disciples alone. That is to say, the biblical ordinance of baptism is to be administered only upon those who provide a believable and credible profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to provide for you a number of biblical reasons *why you should be baptized as a believer*.

1. It follows the preaching pattern of Jesus and His disciples.

John the Baptist entered the scene at the outset of the NT and preached “repent for the kingdom of heaven is near” and then he proceeded to baptize those who repented. Then Jesus began to preach the same message of repentance and then those who repented were baptized by Him. In the book of Acts, the Apostles preached and then those who believed were baptized.

2. It follows the pattern of the early Church as revealed in the book of Acts.

The book of Acts provides ample accounts of sinners who heard the gospel preached, then they believed, and then they were baptized (Acts 2, 8, 18, etc.). There is no clear account in the NT of any person being baptized who had not heard the gospel and personally repented of faith & believed in Christ. To put it positively, only those who individually repented and believed in Jesus Christ were baptized.

3. It alone accurately symbolizes one’s death, burial, and resurrection to newness of life because of being united to Jesus Christ.

Colossians 2 and Romans 6 both clearly picture a believer’s union with Christ as one who has died to his old life of sin, he has been buried with Christ, and he has been raised to newness of life. Just as Christ died, was buried, and was raised from the dead to life again, so it is with the believing sinner. He has died to his old life of rebellion, sin, and evil. He has been buried with Christ (by being united with Him — *in Christ*). And he has been raised to newness of life because of a sovereign act of God that gave him a new heart and new affections that now are able to live, serve, follow, worship, and please God. Only a believer can experience this.

4. It is the only baptism pattern that permits the one being baptized an opportunity to share his testimony as to how God saved him.

Only one who individually repents of his sinful past and places his saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ can testify to this and thus be qualified for baptism. An infant cannot proclaim his faith in Christ nor can he repent of sin. Therefore, an infant should not be baptized any more than an infant should take communion in memory of Christ’s substitutionary death in his place.

5. It obeys the clear command of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The closing words of Matthew’s gospel contain the final words of our Lord on earth before He ascended to His Father. Here he said to His followers to go into all the world and make disciples. The following supporting phrases further define how one is to make disciples. First, His followers are to baptize new disciples in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And second, His followers are to teach the new disciples who have been baptized all that Christ has commanded. This clearly answers the question that many in our world have today of *why the baptism issue really matters*. It matters because it is an obedience issue. Christ clearly commanded new disciples (believers, followers) to be baptized and to be taught to obey Him. Thus, it is an obedience issue that publicly demonstrates what has inwardly taken place in the sinner’s heart.