

## Resources:

Mr. Nelson Miles. *Theology 3 (Ecclesiology) Notes*. FSB  
Pastor David Thompson. *Ecclesiology Notes*. Texas Corners Bible Church  
Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer. *Systematic Theology Vol. 5*, pg. 63.  
Dr. John Walvood. *Major Bible Themes*. Pg. 269.  
Dr. S. Lewis Johnson. *Sermon - The Baptism of Christ*. Believers Chapel

What is the connection between Jesus' baptism and believer's baptism? Nothing.

**THERE IS NO REAL CONNECTION BETWEEN JESUS' BAPTISM AND CHURCH AGE BELIEVER'S BAPTISM; THE TWO BAPTISMS ARE DIFFERENT.**

Pastor David Thompson wrote, "there is no direct connection between the two and to miss this is to misunderstand important doctrine."

Lewis Sperry Chafer wrote, "there is no direct relation existing between the baptism of Christ and the baptism of a believer."

Pastor S. Lewis Johnson said, "this is an enigma to many. You'll go in many churches and you'll hear the preacher as he baptizes someone say, 'now you want to follow the Lord in baptism?' I wonder where we ever got that expression except from ignorance of holy Scripture. 'Follow the Lord in baptism?' Why that is absolutely impossible. We cannot follow Jesus in His baptism. His baptism was absolutely unique. And so, we cannot follow him in baptism. This is not Christian baptism that Jesus Christ undergoes. How ignorant of Scripture do we have to be to make statements like that? This is not Christian baptism."

I think we should ask and answer 3 questions to help clarify why I take that stance.

**Question #1** - Are there any similarities between Jesus' baptism and believer's baptism?

(Similarity #1) Both water baptisms involved water.

Jesus was baptized in water by John in the Jordan river. Believers are most often baptized in some sort of body of water.

(Similarity #2) Both baptisms involve obedience to the word of God.

If Jesus was going to align Himself with the program of God, He needed to be baptized. If a believer in Jesus is going to obey the Word of God, he/she will eventually be baptized in water. Jesus commanded baptism in the church age in Matthew 28:19.

(Similarity #3) Both baptisms are ritualistic and represent a spiritual reality.

For a believer in Jesus getting baptized in water, that is referred as *ritual* baptism. This is different than spiritual or *real* baptism. When Jesus got baptized, He did not gain eternal life through that and His sins did not get washed away in forgiveness. In the same way that those things did not happen to Jesus when He was water baptized, when a believer is water baptized, he does not merit eternal life through that action and his sins do not get washed away in that moment.

(Similarity #4) Both water baptisms do not change the condition/standing of the person.

Jesus did not become the Messiah at His water baptism. It was a ceremony that announced that He is the Messiah. When a believer gets baptized in water, that person does not change in that moment from eternal death to eternal life. Rather, it is a ceremony that publicly announces that person has already transferred from eternal death to eternal life when he believed in Jesus.

**Question #2** - What are the different baptisms we read about in the Bible?

We stated last week in our definition of baptism that baptism has to do with identification and immersion into something - being placed into something. It does not always refer to water, but it does always refer to something being identified with something else.

1. Christ baptizing with the Holy Spirit. **Matthew 3:11** - A future reference to Pentecost. (no water)
2. Christ baptizing with fire. **Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16**- a reference to Pentecost, persecution, and the second coming (1 Peter 1:7; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Malachi 3-4) (no water)
3. The Holy Spirit baptizing believers into the Body of Christ. **1 Corinthians 12:13** (no water - this is spirit/real baptism)
4. Christ's baptism into death on the cross. **Luke 12:50** (no water)
5. A typical baptism of Noah's ark, which depicts a baptism which now saves us. **1 Peter 3:20-21**. (The only water referred to here would be speaking of the flood, but the baptism isn't in the water, the baptism is being save inside the ark)
6. The baptism of the children of Israel into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. **1 Corinthians 10:1-2**.
7. The cultish baptism in Corinth called the baptism for the dead. **1 Corinthians 15:29** (this may have involved water but Paul never gives instruction to continue this unscriptural practice)

8. The Jewish law baptisms which were ritualistic. **Hebrews 9:9-10** - the word "washings" is "baptisms" (does include washing with water) (cf. Leviticus 11:25; Numbers 19:13)
9. The Jewish baptisms or washing invented by men. **Mark 7:1-7** - the word "wash" is "baptism" (does include water but was unscriptural)
10. John's water baptism which was to introduce Jesus Christ to Israel. **John 1:31** specifically focused on the theme of repentance and forgiveness. **Luke 3:3** (this includes water but it is not the same at Church age water baptism today. It included confession of sin and commitment to God because the Messiah was coming)
11. Christ's water baptism that was designed to fulfill all righteousness of the law and to introduce Him as Messiah to Israel. **Matthew 3:13-15; John 1:31** (included water, but again, not the same at Church age believer's water baptism)
12. Pentecostal water baptism which meant a miraculous reception of the Holy Spirit. **Acts 2:38**
13. The Holy Spirit baptizing believers into the work of Christ in death and resurrection. **Romans 6:1-11; Colossians 2:11-13** (no water)
14. Water baptism that was being practiced in a New Testament Church. **1 Corinthians 1:14-17** (today's Church age water/ritual baptism)

John Walvood wrote, "the ordinance of water baptism, in the history of the church, has been the subject of countless controversies and has resulted in major divisions in the organized church."

David Thompson wrote, "it is not too difficult to see why there is so much confusion concerning the subject of baptism, when very few even take the time to examine the various baptisms found in Scripture."

**Question #3** - What exactly is the difference between ritual (water) baptism and real (spirit) baptism for a believer?

As a believer in Jesus, we need to get this very clear in our heads. There is a difference between spirit baptism and water baptism. The two are not the same.

### **What is Spirit baptism?**

Spirit baptism is twofold. #1 - When a person believes in Jesus through hearing the message of the gospel, that person receives the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ baptizes that person with the Holy Spirit by having the Holy Spirit indwell that person. This is described in Ephesians 1:13. #2 - When a person believes in Jesus through hearing the message of the gospel, that person is placed into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. These two events are simultaneous at the moment a

person believes in Jesus and is given eternal life. In fact, if we walk through the Bible, we will discover 32 simultaneous events that takes place the moment a person believes in Jesus, but in relation to baptism, these are the two things that happen - Baptized with the Spirit indwelling you and baptized by the Spirit into Christ. That is Spirit baptism and it is different than water baptism.

**What is water baptism?**

Water baptism is an event that takes places after one believes in Jesus, and it is a ceremony that symbolizes what took place when that person believed in Jesus. That person is baptized in water, usually by another believer, and this ceremony is an outward sign of what has taken place inwardly. Water baptism is a symbol of a person sharing in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus through faith in Him.

**THERE IS NO REAL CONNECTION BETWEEN JESUS' WATER BAPTISM AND CHURCH AGE BELIEVER'S WATER BAPTISM; THE TWO BAPTISMS ARE DIFFERENT.**