

**We Believe**  
**What We Believe about Baptism**  
Romans 6:3-4

December 3, 2017 am

HDBC

This is part 5 in the series, **We Believe**. What we believe about some key religious topics. In the series we are remembering that **Theology Matters**.

This morning . . . **What we believe about baptism.**

*Water baptism by immersion after conversion as a testimony of salvation.*

**Is baptism important?** We certainly believe it is, for the very word is in our name. We are Highland Drive **Baptist** Church. **Baptist** comes from the word **baptism**. So, it is important to us. It was important to Jesus who was baptized and commissioned his followers to baptize all who would choose to follow Christ.

It was important to the NT writer, Paul. **Read Romans 6:3-4**

I hope the very mention of the word will remind you of **your own baptism**. Lake, river, pond, stream, or baptistry. Wherever it was, it was an important event.

**Humorous stories related.** I remember the look on the young girl's face when she stepped into the icy waters after I had assured her the water was warm.

Pastor giving advice to younger minister about **how to baptize in a stream**. Feet firmly planted. Right depth of water. Whatever you do don't **baptize them with the current** or you will never get them back up. He had learned that one the hard way.

I remember one of my missions professors sharing about baptizing in a river in Malawi when many of the people began to scream loudly to him. They were very animated, but he did not know the word they were using. Until he looked to the spot where they were pointing and saw the large crocodile heading his way.

## 1. The Person to be baptized

Who should be baptized and when should they?

Scriptural baptism is for believers only. In the NT baptism always came **right after salvation**. When a person was saved, he or she was soon baptized.

Acts 2:41 3,000 saved/baptized on the day of Pentecost

Acts 8:12 The Samaritan believers saved and baptized

Acts 8:36 The Ethiopian eunuch saved and baptized

Acts 9:18 Paul saved and baptized

Acts 10:47 Cornelius saved and baptized

Acts 16:14-15 Lydia saved and baptized

Acts 16:30-33 The Philippian jailor saved and baptized

**No one in NT** was baptized apart from a personal, faith commitment to Christ.

### A Couple of things to consider at this point:

Have you been saved but not baptized? You need to get that right.

Were you baptized, then saved. You need to get that right.

## 2. The Method of baptism

We believe immersion is the only valid method of baptism. True two reasons:

### A. Meaning of the Word

**Baptizo** - Means to immerse. That is the normal meaning.

That's the way they did it during the early centuries of Christianity.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century King James of England authorized an English translation of the Bible. When they came to the Greek word baptizo they had a problem. The translation would be "immerse." For generations they had practiced sprinkling. So they came up with a new word. Changed the Greek letters to English and made a new English word.

**Began to change** under the emperor Constantine. They saw baptism as the saving act. So, they baptized everyone to make everyone a Christian. Difficult to immerse everyone, especially infants. So, sprinkling emerged.

## B. The Reality it Pictures

Pictures death, burial and resurrection. Only immersion does that.

### Something to consider at this point:

Were you baptized, but not by immersion? Encourage you to correct this.

## 3. The Reason for baptism

### A. Example of Jesus

Jesus went to John, his cousin and was baptized by Him. This was the beginning of his ministry. The father was pleased and expressed that pleasure in an audible voice.

**Jesus did this not** because he had sins to confess or because he needed repentance as the others who were coming to John, but as a way of fully identifying with mankind. And further, as an example to us. He led the way.

### B. Command of Jesus

This is probably the most compelling reason. Jesus commanded it. Listen to the words of Matthew 28:19.

*Go into all the world and make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the father, son and holy spirit.*

**If you are saved** and not baptized, you have not obeyed one of the most basic commands of the Lord. You are living in disobedience to Him. Though baptism is not necessary for your salvation, it is important.

Began his ministry by **demonstrating it**, and ended by **commanding it**.

### C. Symbolizes our Salvation

Baptism is a Picture - Romans 6:3-4

Picture of the **believer's identification with Christ** in His death, burial and resurrection.

### **Baptist Statement of Faith**

*Christian baptism is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus.*

When you became a Christian you died to the old way of living and were born again to live a new kind of life. Baptism **pictures** that transformation.

**Going under** the water pictures death and burial to the old way of life.

**Coming out of** water pictures new birth and new life in Christ Jesus.

#### **D. Signals our Salvation**

Baptism is a **public testimony** of one's faith in Christ and willingness to follow Christ. It is the outward expression that one has made his decision and is firmly committed to Christ. Point of no return.

*In places where Christians are persecuted, it is at the point of baptism that the persecution usually begins. Even non-believers and persecutors recognize this aspect of baptism. They know what it signifies.*

#### **A Couple of things to consider at this point:**

Once again, have you been saved but not baptized? Disobedience.

Were you baptized, but for the wrong reason? Get that right.

#### **4. The Requirement of baptism**

2 questions. Is it required for salvation? Is it required for church membership?

##### **Is it required for salvation? Yes and no.**

Yes, in the sense that we do so out of obedience to Christ. It is not optional.

No, in that our salvation is not dependent upon it. Baptism does not complete our salvation. It announces it. We are fully saved when we place faith in Christ.

**The gospel** is the source of saving power, not baptism.

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.* Romans 1:16

*Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel...* 1 Corinthians 1:17

**Is it required for church membership? Yes**

In order to be a member of our church you have to have experienced biblical baptism. We define that simply as . . . .

*Water baptism by immersion after salvation as a testimony of your salvation.*

**Two reasons we require it for membership:**

**1) Example in the New Testament – Acts 2:41**

*So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added (to the church) that day about three thousand souls.* Acts 2:41.

**Day of Pentecost** 3,000 individuals received Christ and were baptized. With their baptism they were immediately counted among the fellowship of that church. **There is no example in the New Testament of people being associated with the church who had not been baptized.** In fact there is no evidence of anyone who professed Christ and yet refused to be baptized.

**2) Identification with the Body of Christ – 1 Cor. 12:13**

Water baptism is a picture of spiritual baptism. When you are saved you are immediately baptized into the Body of Christ. **1 Cor. 12:13**

*For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.*

You become a part of the spiritual body of Christ through spiritual baptism.

**We identify with His Spiritual body** through **spiritual baptism**.

**We identify with His Visible body** through **water baptism**.

Call for those who need to be baptized.