

## CHAPTER 3

# WATER BAPTISM

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

—Matthew 28:19

One of the first things that Jesus did as he was beginning his years of ministry was to get water baptized. When we get saved and become a follower of Jesus, this is one of the first things we should do as well. Deciding to follow Jesus is truly an internal heart decision, but water baptism is a public declaration of our faith in Jesus.

Water baptism is also a symbolic act of aligning yourself with Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. When we go under the water, we identify with his death, and when we come out of the water, we identify with being raised up to new life like Jesus was.

**“BAPTISM IS REPENTANCE AND SURRENDER.”**

Having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.

—Colossians 2:12 (ESV)

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

—Galatians 3:27 (ESV)

It is important that water baptism is not viewed as just a Christian ritual. Let's read a few verses from Romans 6 that give

us a better understanding of what water baptism means and why it's such a powerful decision:

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

—Romans 6:1-4

Baptism is a declaration that we are dying to our old way of living and taking on the new life of Jesus. We won't be perfect or get it all exactly right, but our goal is to leave the sin and disobedience of our past behind, and make honoring God and his Word our pursuit.

Some try to follow Jesus without giving up their past life of sin. As a follower of Jesus I cannot go on sinning and doing whatever I want or whatever I think feels right. As a Christian, God's thoughts, his Word, and his direction must be moved to the forefront of my daily decisions.

When Jesus called his disciples, they left everything in order to follow him. When we follow Jesus, we are submitting and surrendering to him as the Lord of our life.

While God does choose to partner with humanity to achieve his will and usually allows us the freedom to do it the way we enjoy, ultimately, we must remember that we are following and serving God. If my way is ever in conflict with God's way, I now choose to follow his way.

## **GETTING WATER BAPTIZED**

Some reading this may have grown up in a church where they had water sprinkled on their head as a baby. However, when the Bible speaks of water baptism, it is referring to being fully submerged under water to identify with the death and resurrection of Jesus. When Jesus was a child his parents took him to be dedicated, but he wasn't water baptized until later in

life. Similarly, if you were dedicated or had water sprinkled on you as a child, that's great, but water baptism is an important personal decision that you make when you're mature enough to choose to follow Jesus.

Your next step is to connect with someone at your church to find out how to participate in the next water baptism opportunity or to set up a time to be water baptized. This is an exciting and powerful step in following Jesus!

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## CHAPTER CHALLENGE

### STUDY IT THROUGH:

What did Jesus do before he began his public ministry?

Matthew 3:13-16

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What are the two things we're called to do in response to the gospel? What will we receive? Acts 2:38

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What accompanies believing? Mark 16:16

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When we are water baptized, who does Jesus say that we should be baptized in the name of? Matthew 28:19

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### WALK IT OUT:

- If you haven't yet been baptized, reach out to your local church and schedule a time to be baptized.
- Invite all of your family and friends to join you for this water baptism.