

**AND NOW, WHY DELAY?
GO AND BE BAPTIZED... (Acts 22:16)**

Upon examination of the word "baptize" we find it is not actually an English word, but a Greek word written in letters of the English alphabet. If we write out the Greek in English letters, this gives us "baptizo." Then with a change of the "o" to an "e," we have the word "baptize."

In Strong's Exhaustive Concordance we see the primary meaning of the word "baptizo," "to make fully wet." Strong's gives the meaning of the verb "bapto" as "to cover wholly with fluid, hence to dip."

On the day of Pentecost 3000 people responded to the gospel and were baptized (Acts 2:41). If the twelve apostles baptized and it took 2 minutes a person to perform the act,

that would mean that each apostle baptized eight and one-half hours that day. It was commonly known and understood by believers and unbelievers that all those that put saving faith in Jesus Christ as Lord, Messiah and Saviour would immediately be baptized.

In modern day evangelism I think we have substituted repentance, faith, water baptism and discipleship for repeating a prayer after someone. The first command for all mankind is repentance toward God, faith in the Lord (Master) Jesus (Saviour) Christ (the anointed King) and water baptism (Acts 17:30; 20:21; 2:38). The apostles even included baptism in the call to faith (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16). *“One can hardly read the New Testament without noticing the heavy stress the early church placed on baptism. They assumed that every genuine believer would embark on a life of*

obedience and discipleship. That was nonnegotiable. Therefore they viewed baptism as the turning point. Only those who were baptized were considered Christians. That is why the Ethiopian eunuch was so eager to be baptized (Acts 8:36-39).

Unfortunately, the church today takes baptism more casually. It is not unusual to meet people who have been professing Christians for years but have never been baptized. That was unheard of in the New Testament church. Unfortunately, we have lost the focus on initial obedience” and a faith that works, that is, that expresses itself in actions (Faith Works by John MacArthur, Jr., p. 208).

JESUS COMMISSION TO BAPTIZE

Matthew 28:18-19 18 Jesus drew near and said to them, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. 19 Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, 20 and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age." **(TEV)**

Mark 16:15-16 15 And then he told them, "You are to go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone, everywhere. 16 Those who believe and are baptized will be saved. But those who refuse to believe will be condemned. **(LB)**

THE EARLY CHURCH'S PRACTICE OF BAPTISM

The Believers at Pentecost

Acts 2 :36-39. **36** "Therefore I clearly state to everyone in Israel that God has made this Jesus you crucified to be the Lord, the Messiah!" **37** These words of Peter's moved them deeply, and they said to him and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" **38** And Peter replied, "Each one of you must turn from sin, return to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; then you also shall receive this gift, the Holy Spirit. **39** For Christ promised him to each one of you who has been called by the Lord our God, and to your children and even to those in distant lands!" **(LB)**

The City of Samaria

Acts 8:5, 12. **5** Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. **12** But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. **(KJV)**

Simon the Sorcerer

Acts 8:13 **13** Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. **(KJV)**

The Ethiopian

Acts 8:35-39. **35** So Philip told him the Great News about Jesus, beginning with the very Scripture he had been reading. **36** As they continued down the road they came to a body of water, and the eunuch said, “Look, here’s water! Why can’t I be baptized right now?” **37** “If you believe with all your heart, you may,” Philip answered. And the eunuch replied, “I believe that Jesus Christ is indeed the Son of God!” **38** He then gave orders for the chariot to be stopped. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. **39** But when they came up out of the water the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch didn’t see any more of him. But he was extremely happy and continued on his way, rejoicing. **(LDNT)**

Saul, later to become the Apostle Paul

Acts 9:3-6, 17-18. **3** So Saul headed toward Damascus. As he came near the city, a bright light from heaven suddenly flashed around him. **4** Saul fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul! Why are you persecuting me?" **5** Saul said, "Who are you, Lord?" The voice answered, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. **6** Get up now and go into the city. Someone there will tell you what you must do." **17** So Ananias went to the house of Judas. He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus sent me. He is the one you saw on the road on your way here. He sent me so that you can see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." **18** Immediately, something that looked like fish scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he was able to

see again! Then Saul got up and was baptized.
(NCV)

Saul's testimony again from Acts 22

Acts 22:12-16 **12** "There a man named Ananias came to me. He was a religious man; he obeyed the law of Moses, and all the Jews who lived there respected him. **13** He stood by me and said, 'Brother Saul, see again!' Immediately I was able to see him. **14** He said, 'The God of our ancestors chose you long ago to know his plan, to see the Righteous One, and to hear words from him. **15** You will be his witness to all people, telling them about what you have seen and heard. **16** Now, why wait any longer? Get up, be baptized, and wash your sins away, trusting in him to save you.'
(NCV)

Cornelius and the Gentiles

Acts 10:43-48. **43** All the prophets say it is true that all who believe in Jesus will be forgiven of their sins through Jesus' name."

44 While Peter was still saying this, the Holy Spirit came down on all those who were listening. **45** The Jewish believers who came with Peter were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been given even to the nations.

46 These believers heard them speaking in different languages and praising God. Then Peter said, **47** "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we did!" **48** So Peter ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days. **(NCV)**

Lydia a dealer in purple cloth

Acts 16:14-15. **14** One of those listening was a woman named Lydia. She was from the city of Thyatira. Her business was selling purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to accept Paul's message. **15** She and her family were baptized. Then she invited us to her home. "Do you consider me a believer in the Lord?" she asked. "If you do, come and stay at my house." She succeeded in getting us to go home with her. **(NLT)**

The Philippian Jailer

Acts 16:25-34. **25** About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. **26** Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison

were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose. **27** The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. **28** But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!" **29** The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. **30** He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" **31** They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved — you and your household." **32** Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. **33** At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. **34** The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was

filled with joy because he had come to believe in God — he and his whole family. **(NIV)**

Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue and many of the Corinthians

Acts 18:7-8. **7** Paul then moved into the house of a man named Titius Justus, who worshiped God and lived next door to the Jewish meeting place. **8** Crispus was the leader of the meeting place. He and everyone in his family put their faith in the Lord. Many others in Corinth also heard the message, and all the people who had faith in the Lord were baptized. **(CEV)**

Certain disciples of John

Acts 19:1-7. **1** While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and

arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples **2** and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." **3** So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?" "John's baptism," they replied. **4** Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus." **5** On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. **6** When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. **7** There were about twelve men in all. **(NIV)**

OTHER REFERENCES TO THE SUBJECT OF BAPTISM

Romans 6:3-4. **3** Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? **4** For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. **(NLT)**

1 Peter 3:18-21. **18** Christ also suffered. He died once for the sins of all us guilty sinners although he himself was innocent of any sin at any time, that he might bring us safely home to God. But though his body died, his spirit lived on, **19** and it was in the spirit that he visited the spirits in prison and preached to them- **20** spirits of those who, long before in the days of Noah, had refused to listen to God, though he

waited patiently for them while Noah was building the ark. Yet only eight persons were saved from drowning in that terrible flood. **21** (That, by the way, is what baptism pictures for us: In baptism we show that we have been saved from death and doom by the resurrection of Christ; not because our bodies are washed clean by the water but because in being baptized we are turning to God and asking him to cleanse our hearts from sin.)
(LB)

QUESTIONS

1. What are the requirements for baptism?

Answer: Acts 2:38 38 Then Peter said unto them, **Repent, and be baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the

remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. **(KJV)**

Acts 8:35-38. **35** Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. **36** Now 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?**" **37** Then 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." **38** So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. **(NKJV)**

2. How many individuals that have repented of their sins and believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ, are to be baptized? a. some. b. all. c. or none.

Answer: Acts 2:38-39. 38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and **be baptized every one of you** in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. **39** For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. **(KJV)**

3. Baptism identifies a person with: a. the first Baptist church. b. the Catholic church. c. the Assemblies of God. d. the Lord Jesus Christ.

Answer: Galatians 3:26-27. 26 All of you are God's children because of your faith in Christ Jesus. **27** And when you were baptized, it was as though you had put on Christ in the same way you put on new clothes. **(CEV)**

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON
THE SUBJECT OF BAPTISM
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**DKM
10065 Sun Ridge Circle
Rogers, AR 72756 U.S.A.**