

Water Baptism #1

Baptism is a controversial subject with many. I am not sure why this is the case, but it is. The New Testament is quite clear about the mode and purpose of baptism. Put simply, baptism is an immersion or burial. In the New Testament, the element used for baptism/burial is water (Acts 8:36; 10:47-48). Bible baptism occurs when a believer is immersed in water (Colossians 2:12 by the authority of the Godhead (Matthew 28:19) for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). In other words, one must be baptized in order to be saved (Acts 22:16). This is not the only step in God's plan of salvation, but it is a necessity if we wish to be saved from sin (Mark 16:16).

This is simple, straight-forward New Testament teaching. Again, I am not sure why it is so controversial among people today, but it is. In fact, one group, the Baptist people, have a creed book which states, "It is most likely that in the Apostolic age when there was but 'one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,' and no differing denominations existed, the baptism of a convert by that very act constituted him a member of the church, and at once endowed him with all the rights and privileges of full membership. In that sense, 'baptism was the door into the church.' Now it is different" (Hiscox, Edward T., *Standard Manual For Baptist Churches*, ch. 4, p. 22).

I have wondered about that last phrase: "Now, it is different ..." What has made these teachings "different"? Is it society? Is it man's knowledge? I find it interesting that even though the New Testament notes the passing of time, what Christ said did not change during those years. We will see if it is truly "different" in our next article.

Adapted From Jarrod Jacobs