

Do you agree with God that you are a sinner? Romans 3:23 says that... *"all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*

Baptism will not save you, church membership doesn't provide salvation; partaking of the communion elements won't secure your eternal life.

You must confess to God you are a sinner; you must confess with all your heart that Jesus died and was resurrected for your salvation.

When you do this you have the special privilege of publicly identifying yourself as a citizen of heaven through the act of water baptism.

Baptism does not save, it does not help to save in any way; it does not add anything to the Lord's finished work on the cross, but it is a command and a most important step in the Christian life. It is not for the unbeliever, it is for BELIEVERS ONLY (Acts 8:12).

Believers should be baptized because:

Jesus APPROVED it (Matthew 3:15)

Jesus COMMANDED it (Matthew 28:18)

Jesus SUBMITTED to it (Matthew 3:12-17)

God the Father REJOICED in it (Matt. 3:17)

The early church PRACTICED it (John 4:1-3; Acts 8:26-39; 9:17, 18; 22:16)

When you have surrendered your life and allegiance to Christ as Savior and Lord, you have the wonderful privilege of entering into the act of Believer's Baptism.

If you have chosen to identify with Jesus Christ and His death, burial and resurrection, and desire to be baptized, be sure to talk to one of our pastors about your decision. Contact the Church office for an appointment.

## WHAT TO BRING TO YOUR BAPTISM

- One or two large towels
- Dark, non-transparent clothing in which to be baptized (shorts and a t-shirt are suitable)
- A change of dry clothes to wear during the rest of the service and home
- A heart ready to receive from the Lord

Many take the opportunity to fast the day before they are to be baptized. Although it is not a requirement, it would be great time to seek the Holy Spirit's leading, filling and gifting in your life.

**Please meet at the church no later than one half hour before your baptism service for a time of prayer, orientation and instructions.**

## Calvary Chapel of Casa Grande

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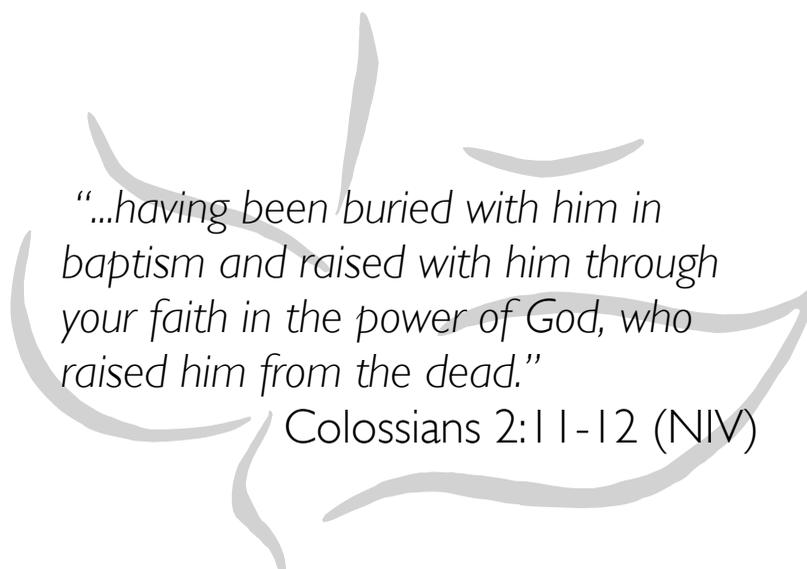
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# Baptism



*"...having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead."*

Colossians 2:11-12 (NIV)

# The Privilege of Baptism

**B**aptism, like a wedding ceremony, is not to be entered into carelessly or indifferently. Like marriage, it is to be entered into with joy, but also with reverence and understanding. The one being baptized is pledging his/her eternal fidelity to God by making a statement of identification and a declaration of regeneration. For this reason it is important that born again Christians understand the purpose and importance of water baptism.

Our English word "baptism" comes from the Greek *baptizo*. We will always find that the word *baptizo* means to "dip" or to "immerse." The biblical model for baptism is by immersion. Although the ritual of sprinkling may be a beautiful ceremonial act it is not biblical baptism. There is a Greek word *rhantizo* which means "to sprinkle" but it is never used in connection with the ordinance of baptism.

But what is the significance of baptism? What is its purpose, and why is it important?

To answer these questions we have to understand the history of baptism.

The origins of biblical baptism go back as far as the giving of the Old Testament law (Lev. 15:16). It was a ritual of purification. As centuries went by it was included in many areas of the Jewish life that were not included in the Old Testament law; and yet it remained a visible illustration of identifying with the desire to be pure before God. (Maimonides, Book of Cleanness pg. 526; Yad, Mikva'OT 9:8)

When John the Baptist came on the scene preaching baptism of repentance, the act of baptism was not something new to the Jews. But rather than being a ritual cleansing it was a public demonstration that the one being baptized had repented of his sins; in other words, the individual was identifying himself as one who had deliberately sinned against God and man but now he was returning to godliness. In the book of Matthew chapter 3, we read that a great many people came to John, "and were confessing their sins."

John the Baptist was preaching that the kingdom of heaven was at hand; his ministry of baptism was a public act of identifying with and repenting from sins, and identifying with their coming King. We read in Matthew 3 that before Jesus began His public ministry He came to John to be baptized.

John knew that Jesus was the King, the Son of God, the perfect Lamb of God; why would Jesus need to be baptized? He was without sin! But Jesus was identifying Himself with sinners. Those people who came with repentant hearts to be baptized recognized that, according to the Old Testament Law, they deserved to die because they had violated God's Law. But Jesus took His place with them in baptism as a public statement that He was ready to go down into death for them.

Jesus was sinless, He didn't need to repent, but He was to "fulfill all righteousness" by bearing the curse of the law for those who did. In other words, His baptism in the Jordan was a shadow (a prophetic statement) of a far more solemn and agonizing immersion which He would yet undergo. In three short years He would go to be hung on a cross (a Roman instrument of torture and death) and be immersed into the physical agony, pain and humiliation of crucifixion; but the greatest agony of all, being plunged into the penalty for the sins of all the world. Billows of judgment and the wrath of God rolled over Him as He took your place and mine. It was at the river Jordan through baptism, that He identified with the sins of people and prepared them for His more solemn immersion.

Historically, the Israelites used baptism as an act of identifying with a desire to be pure before God. The Jews who believed the preaching of John the Baptist were baptized as an act of identifying with their sins, repenting from them, and preparing themselves for their King. Through baptism Jesus identified with the sins of the people.

Baptism is an act of identifying with something. In the case of born again Christians it is identifying with Christ. It is a public statement that we claim Jesus Christ as our King and our Savior. It is a public demonstration that we identify with His death, burial and resurrection.

With the Apostle Paul we can say,

**"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who**

**live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:20**

Not only does baptism identify the born-again Christian with Christ his King but it is a picture of something that has happened in the person's life. At some time in that individual's life he or she has said, **"I am a sinner; I deserve God's wrath because I have sinned against God. I need a savior. I believe that Jesus was crucified for my sins, He was buried and resurrected for my salvation. I want Jesus as my Savior and Lord."**

Romans 10:9,10 says that:

**"if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. for with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation."**

Baptism is an act that is reserved for those who have recognized their need for a Savior, and because they believe Jesus died for their sins and rose again to provide eternal life, they have asked Christ to be their Lord and Savior.

1 Peter 3:18-21

<sup>18</sup> Christ also suffered when he died for our sins once for all time. He never sinned, but he died for sinners that he might bring us safely home to God. He suffered physical death, but he was raised to life in the Spirit. ...God waited patiently while Noah was building his boat. Only eight people were saved from drowning in that terrible flood. <sup>21</sup> And this is a picture of baptism, which now saves you by the power of Jesus Christ's resurrection. Baptism is not a removal of dirt from your body; it is an appeal to God from a clean conscience. (NLT)

Col 2:11-12

<sup>12</sup> having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. (NIV)

Gal 3:26-28

<sup>26</sup> You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, <sup>27</sup> for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. (NIV)