

Topic Baptism

Texts. Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:16, Romans 6:3-4, Acts 1:5, John 3: 5

Aim. To understand the concept of Baptism and its importance.

Introduction: Baptism is a significant sacrament in Christianity, symbolizing the believer's faith in Jesus Christ and their commitment to living a new life. Baptism is one of the most important practices in Christianity, symbolizing spiritual cleansing, repentance, and entrance into the Christian faith. It is an outward act that reflects an inward change and a public declaration of faith in Jesus Christ. Baptism is the ritual of immersion in water (not sprinkling) to signify the cleansing of sin and rebirth into new life through faith in Jesus. It is a symbol of identifying with Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. There are two types of baptism identified in the Bible, baptism of water and baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Water baptism is done by man in public to show one's commitment to follow Christ like John's baptism, but the baptism of the Holy Spirit is done by God as an empowerment for us to be effective witnesses for Christ as in the day of Pentecost

Baptism by water symbolizes the believer's identification with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. Baptism of the Holy comes with a close walk with God and a hunger and thirst to receive the promise of the Holy Spirit. The two baptisms are important steps to see and enter the kingdom of God. It is not just an end but a beginning—a starting point for discipleship. It marks entry into a new life as a follower of Christ.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does baptism mean to you personally? How has it impacted your faith journey?
2. What are the conditions for baptism? A. Water baptism: (Obedience to a command)
 - Repentance. Acts 2:38, John 3:1
 - Believe. Mark 16:16. John 3:16, 1 Peter 3:21B. Baptism of the Holy Spirit (Revelation)
 - Revelation. Acts 19:1-6
 - Desire/hunger Luke 11:9-13
3. Who Should Be Baptized? Acts 2:38, Acts 8:12, Luke 11:9-13
4. How does understanding baptism as a personal commitment act to shape our walk with God?
 - **Symbol of New Life and Identification with Christ:** Romans 6:3-4: Baptism represents a personal decision to turn away from an old life of sin and embrace a new life in Christ.

- **Cleansing and Forgiveness of Sin:** Acts 22:16 Baptism symbolizes the washing away of sins.
- **Spiritual Transformation:** Acts 2:38: On a personal level, baptism signifies being born again. It reflects the inner transformation that takes place when one accepts Jesus as Lord and Saviour
- **Rebirth and Renewal:** Titus 3:5 Baptism marks the beginning of a new life in Christ, born of the Spirit.

Conclusion:

Baptism is a vital aspect of Christian faith that joins the themes of repentance, new life, and community. It serves as both an initiation into discipleship and a powerful symbol of faith in Jesus Christ. While baptism is a command from Christ and an important step in the Christian life, the New Testament makes it clear that salvation comes by **grace through faith** in Jesus Christ, not by works (Ephesians 2:8-9). As believers reflect on their own baptism or prepare for this significant step, they should recognize its profound implications for their spiritual journey and their role within the body of Christ. Baptism is not just a one-time event but marks the beginning of a lifelong journey of faith. Are you living in the newness of life that baptism symbolizes?

Memory Verse. John 3:5. Jesus answered, verily, verily, I say on to thee, Except a man is born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.