

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT BAPTISM

1. Where does the word “baptize” come from?

“Baptize” comes from the Greek word “baptizo”, meaning to dip, to immerse, to submerge, to cover with water, or to plunge under water and comes to us from the Greek New Testament Bible.

2. If a baby was christened at birth, would it be considered baptized?

No, a baby is not submerged during a christening, thus, would not be considered baptized. In most cases, the baby would be sprinkled with water during the christening. The baby would be considered “ranted”, from the Greek word “rantizo” meaning “to sprinkle”. As we shall discuss further on, a baby would also not be considered baptized in the true Christian sense since it is unable to decide whether it wishes to live a life after Christ.

3. What did Jesus say about baptism?

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son and of the Holy Ghost [Spirit].” Matthew 28:19. Jesus had instructed his followers to be baptized.

4. Before a person is baptized, what is a prerequisite for them to do?

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized, everyone of you.” Acts 2:38. Before baptism, one must feel regret and sorrow for one’s sins and then wish to reform to a way of life, modeled after Christ.

5. What is another prerequisite to getting baptized?

One should be taught and learn about Jesus and the Kingdom of God. *“And he said unto the, Go ye therefore, and teach all nations...”* Mark 16:15.

6. Must one believe in Jesus the Christ before baptism?

Belief in Jesus as being God’s Anointed One is necessary before being baptized. *“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.”* Mark 16:16; *“Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”* Acts 8:35 to 37.

7. To whom must we repent?

We repent of our sins towards God, the Father. *“Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Acts 20:21.

8. Why is it necessary to repent to God before being baptized?

It is necessary because every one of us have sinned against God, thus, we need to acknowledge this before taking the step to follow His Will. *“For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”* Romans 3:23; *“If we say that we have no sin, we*

deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." I John 1:8, 9.

9. Is baptism necessary to become a Christian?

Yes, it is necessary for our salvation and demonstrates our willingness to live as Christ did. *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."* Mark 16:16; *"...I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."* John 3:5; *"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."* Galatians 3:27.

10. What does baptism signify?

Baptism signifies our identity with Christ by faith and our acceptance in Christ' burial and resurrection. It also symbolizes the death of our old sinful nature. *"Buried with him in baptism, where also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses."* Colossians 2:12, 13.

11. How does one know they are ready to be baptized?

When a person is ready to give up their sinful ways and follow Christ, one is ready to be baptized. *"Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life... Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."* Romans 6:4, 6.

12. How should one be baptized?

A person needs a body of water that can sufficient cover their body. *"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water..."* Matthew 3:16; *"And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized."* John 3:23; *"And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."* Acts 8:38, 39. Note that the eunuch was completely immersed – "they went down both into the water" and "they were come up out of the water". Obviously, there should be enough water for at least two people: the one being baptized and the one administering the baptism.

13. Once one has repented of their sins, is it necessary to wait to be baptized?

No, once one has acknowledged their sinful nature and knows who the Christ is, then there is no need to delay before being baptized. *"And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."* Acts 22:16.

14. Does it really matter what mode of baptism a person goes through?

Yes, it does. The Bible states there is only one way to be baptized, which is the manner in which Jesus and the apostles baptized in. *"One Lord, one faith, one baptism."* Ephesians 4:5.

15. Can infants or children be baptized?

Based on what has been shown thus far, in order to be baptized, one must be able to acknowledge their sins, repent and know enough about Jesus to make the decision to follow him. An infant cannot do any of those things, thus, they cannot be baptized. A child can only be baptized if they are old enough to have understanding of what sins are, who Jesus is and are able to take the step to follow Jesus. Most young children do not have such comprehension, thus, should not be baptized. If we take Jesus' own example, he was not baptized until about 30 years of age (Luke 3:21 to 23), however, it is not necessary to wait that long in order to be baptized. Comprehension of the step you are taking in following Christ is crucial before being baptized.

16. When baptizing others, what should the minister of God be saying?

Ministers who baptize others should be baptizing people into the name of Jesus Christ (ie. "I baptize you into the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ."). Many churches will baptize "in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost" but that is a trinitarian practice, which the Church of God does not believe. "...*only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.*" Acts 8:16b. Note that the Greek translation states "into" versus "in" the name of Jesus.

17. After baptism, how should we conduct ourselves?

Once baptized, we should try to live a life modeled after Christ, having buried our old sins. "*I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*" Galations 2:20; "*For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*" Galations 3:27.