

Being Baptized

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What Does It Mean To Be Baptized?

In the first century when the new covenant replaced the old covenant as the authority under which people live, circumcision was replaced with baptism as evidence of being in a covenant relationship with God. Under the old testament, faithful followers of God, whether they were Hebrews or Gentiles were required to be circumcised. Old Testament circumcision was an outward physical mark in the flesh, while baptism replaced it as the “[*circumcision of the heart*](#)“, ([Romans 2:29](#)), or the “*circumcision made without hands*” ([Colossians 2:11](#)). Both are the point at which an individual comes into compliance with the will of God. Being baptized under the new covenant signifies one has entered into that relationship with God and as such has [become one of His children](#).

Being baptized means we are in Jesus Christ

The scriptures teach us that Christ is the [mediator of the new covenant](#) therefore baptism is closely associated with Him. Baptism is the means by which a convert enters into Christ as recorded in [Galatians 3:27](#) and [Romans 6:3](#). Baptism is a similarity between the death of Christ on the cross and the conversion of a sinner. Paul illustrated this similarity in his letter to the Romans.

[Romans 6:3-4](#) “*Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death...*” Being baptized means that one has been buried with Christ through the immersion of baptism. Christ died and was buried in the tomb and in a similar fashion a new convert dies and is buried in water.

[Romans 6:4](#) “*...that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father*” Jesus Christ was raised from the dead and in a like fashion, the convert is raised from the watery grave of baptism.

“*even so we also should walk in newness of life.*” After Christ was risen from the dead, He had been given new life after His death. In a similar fashion, a baptized convert is raised from the grave and given a new life. Jesus explained this in more detail to Nicodemus on one occasion in [John 3:5-7](#) where He taught, “*Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’*” The “newness of life” mentioned by Paul is the same thing as the rebirth that Jesus taught. One who has been reborn has been given a new life. Paul went on to explain this similarity even further in verse 5, “*For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection*” Being baptized means one has died with Christ, has been buried with Christ, has been reborn with Christ and has received a new life with Christ.

Being baptized means we are freed from sin.

[Romans 6:6](#) “knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin.” When Christ died on the cross, He was set free from the sin of the world. He was no longer compelled to suffer the consequences for it on that cross. In a similar fashion, the baptized convert has been set free from His own sins. No longer will he be required to suffer the consequences for his past sins. In [Acts 2](#) we have an account of the first Christian converts after the resurrection of Christ. When convinced they had crucified the son of God, the converts asked what they should do. Peter answered them in verse 38. “*Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins*”. When Paul was converted, he was told very much the same thing in [Acts 22:16](#), “*And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins*“. In Paul’s letter to the Colossian Christians, he discussed baptism and had this to say in [Colossians 2:13](#), “*He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses.*” Being baptized means our sins have been remitted, washed away, and forgiven. Our new life with Christ is made possible through the forgiveness of sin.

Being baptized means we now live with Christ

[Romans 6:8](#) “*Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*”

When Jesus died, He died once for all. After He was raised from the dead, death no longer had any power over Him. In a similar fashion, the baptized convert no longer lives under the power of the condemnation of sin. Death has no power over the baptized believer. We are to consider ourselves dead to sin. In other words, we don’t live like we used to live. Like Christ who was risen from the dead and now lives for God, we are to be raised from the dead and live for God as well. Our new life means a faithful life for God. We live with Christ and we serve God with Christ. We are now “*alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*”

Through baptism, a convert is a spiritual participant in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Have you been baptized? Have you died to sin? Have you been buried with Christ? Have you been risen with Christ. Have you been freed of your sins? Are you alive in Christ? This is what it means to be baptized. If you have not been baptized, then you have not died to sin, you have not been buried with Christ, you have not been risen with Him, you are not alive with Him and you cannot live for Him. Do not delay. Baptism is the way into a spiritual covenant relationship with God. Why would anyone not want that?