

## Doctrine of Baptisms

1. The Greek word for baptism (*baptizo*) is used to mean, “to dip”, “to immerse” and is associated with water.
2. But the word for baptism also has a metaphorical meaning, “to identify.” In secular literature it was used this way by Euripides (c. 484-406), a Greek dramatist, Homer (*The Odyssey*, Ninth book), a Greek poet in the 9<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> century BC, Herodotus (c. 484-430 BC), the Greek historian.
3. Baptism is a Greek word transliterated instead of translated, which is the cause of much confusion since several biblical baptisms have nothing to do with water in contrast to three baptisms that use water.

### No water

- There is the baptism of the Spirit into the body of Christ. At the moment of salvation, God the Holy Spirit takes every believer and enters him into union with Christ. Here, then, is positional truth. The believer is in Christ and so His eternal security is assured.

Spirit Baptism was Prophesied. *Acts 1:5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.*

Spirit Baptism is Fulfilled. *1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*

Spirit Baptism Guarantees the Security of the Believer. *John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*

- There is the baptism of fire whereby the believer is identified with purification, and the unbeliever is identified with ultimate judgment.

*Matthew 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: 12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.*

*Luke 3:16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: 17 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.*

*2 Thessalonians 1:7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*

- There is the baptism of the Cross whereby Jesus Christ had the sins of the elect poured out on Him.

*Luke 12:50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!*

- There is the baptism of Moses.

*1 Corinthians 10:2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.*

## **Water**

- There is the baptism of John. The believer is identified in water with repentance in order to enter the kingdom of heaven.

*Matthew 3:1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

*Luke 7:29 And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.*

- There is the baptism of Jesus which represents the identification of Christ in water with the will of God being obeyed, even unto the cross.

*Matthew 3:13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.*

*Matthew 3:16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

- There is the baptism of the believer. The water represents retroactive positional truth, going down into the water with Christ in His death, and current positional truth, raised in the likeness of His resurrection.

*Romans 6:4 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. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:*

4. To understand *baptizo* in context, the subject must be identified with an object. In Isaiah 55:1, water represents salvation. In Ephesians 5:26, water represents the Word. In John 7:37-39 the water represents the Holy Spirit.
  - Salvation. *Isaiah 55:1 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.*
  - The Word. *Ephesians 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,*
  - The Holy Spirit. *John 7: 37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. 38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. 39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)*
5. In those baptisms that are without water, there is an actual identification.
  - In 1 Corinthians 12:13 the believer is identified with the body of Christ.
  - In Matthew 3:11 the believer is identified with the Holy Spirit and the spiritual fire which purifies both the believer and the unbeliever.
  - In Luke 12:50 the believer is identified with the cross of Calvary.
  - In 1 Corinthians 10:2 the Exodus generation was identified with Moses and the cloud.
6. In those baptisms that are with water, the water is used as a ritual or representative identification.
  - In Luke 7:29 the baptism of John identified people as repenting of their sins.
  - In Matthew 3:13-17 the baptism of Jesus was identified with fulfilling the righteousness of the Law.
  - In Romans 6:4 the baptism of the believer identifies that person with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ from among the dead.

***Special Note.***

An example of a simple believer's baptism ceremony.

“I baptize you my sister / brother in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Buried in the likeness of His death,  
 Raised in the likeness of His resurrection,  
 To walk in the newness of life.”

7. While baptism is important, care must be taken not to embrace the idea that baptism is essential for salvation. The Scriptures do not teach baptism regeneration. Rather, every person is saved by faith alone in Christ alone.
  - *John 3:15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*
  - *John 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*
  - *John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*
  - *John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*
  - *John 6:40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*
  - *John 6:47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.*
  - *Acts 10:43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*
  - *Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*
  - *Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

8. The “one baptism” which is shared with every believer is found in Ephesians 4. The “one baptism” is the Spirit baptism whereby the believer is identified with the body of Christ.
  - *Ephesians 4:4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*