

BAPTISM

What is the Old Testament antecedent?

- NT baptism did not arise out of nothing, but follows from OT
- baptism is a ceremonial washing

Acts 22:16

Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.

1 Peter 3:21

Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

There were numerous OT regulations for ceremonial washings

Leviticus 14:9

He shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and he shall be clean.

Exodus 30:17-19

¹⁷ The LORD said to Moses, ¹⁸ “You shall also make a basin of bronze, with its stand of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it, ¹⁹ with which Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet.”

Therefore, amount of water used doesn't matter

- debate about mode of baptism: immersion, pouring, sprinkling

Ezekiel 36:25-27

²⁵ I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. ²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

Hebrews 10:22

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Baptism is a picture of our union with Christ

- baptismal waters is dual symbol of *cleansing* and *death*

Galatians 3:27

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Romans 6:3-4

³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Baptism is our induction into the church

- baptism is connected to community belonging

Galatians 3:27-29

²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

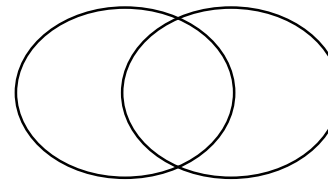
1 Corinthians 12:13

For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and all were made to drink of one Spirit. [see also Eph. 4:4-6]

Distinction between visible and invisible church

visible church

invisible church



visible church – all who are baptized
invisible church – all who are saved

Baptism is a *passive rite* versus the *active rite* of Lord's Supper

- we are passive because the baptism is being done to us
- this is why baptism is a once-for-all rite | not to be repeated

Baptism Notes

What is the Old Testament antecedent?

- NT baptism did not arise out of nothing, but follows from OT practice
- baptism is a ceremonial washing

Acts 22:16

Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.

1 Peter 3:21

Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The symbolism of baptism is washing away your sins, where dirt is a picture of sin

There were numerous OT regulations for ceremonial washings

Leviticus 14:9 [countless more regulations | touch something unclean, bath]

He shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and he shall be clean.

Exodus 30:17-19

¹⁷ The LORD said to Moses, ¹⁸ “You shall also make a basin of bronze, with its stand of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it, ¹⁹ with which Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet.”

A prominent feature of the tabernacle/temple was enormous bronze basin

- priests constantly wash themselves | stand before holy God

Notice priests were to only wash their hands and feet

- was this a short-cut for efficiency's sake?
- no, because the washings were symbolic | picture of inward cleansing
- began to understand it doesn't have to be a literal, full-scrub bath

Therefore, amount of water used doesn't matter

- debate about mode of baptism: immersion, pouring, sprinkling
- there's a fierce debate, usually on side of Baptists – only proper baptism is full-immersion

Ezekiel 36:25-27

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Notice that this water cleansing is picture of a new heart and Holy Spirit

Notice that the mode here is sprinkling – just a few tiny drops

- remember in Exodus 24, when Moses ratified covenant at Sinai
- he didn't pour blood of sacrifice (oxen) on people, but sprinkled them

Hebrews 10:22

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

We see same imagery in Hebrews

- our hearts are sprinkled clean with water
- notice sprinkling and washing are equated – again because washing is symbolic

So any mode is fine

- I think immersion is a beautiful way to be baptized, but let's not be militant
- practical issues demand that we sprinkle (no baptismal pool) | also, we want in worship service

Baptist counter-argument – *baptizo* (βαπτίζω)

- argument is *baptizo* only means “immersion”
- if look Greek-English lexicons, immersion is a secondary meaning
- primary meaning is “to wash, to purify with water”

Practically speaking, hard to see immersion in several places in Acts

- Philippian jailer and family was baptized at once
- hard to see Paul and everyone going around city, in dead of night, after major earthquake, looking for a body of water
- or at Pentecost, 3,000 people were baptized – hard to imagine immersion in Jerusalem

Baptism is a picture of our union with Christ

- “picture” – shorthand for sign and seal
- union with Christ – basis of our salvation | marriage analogy – everything his is ours and ours is his

Galatians 3:27 – for as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Language is important – “baptized into Christ”

- not “for Christ” or “because of Christ” but “into Christ”
- baptism signifies our being united to him
- because we are united to him, we have put on Christ (like clothing) and his righteousness

Romans 6:3-4

³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

United to Christ' death and resurrection

- his death to sin and judgment is our death
- his resurrection to newness of life is our resurrection

Now we see symbolism of the water – death

- water – cleansing waters
- water – waters of death

Bible is full of imagery of water representing death

- Noah's flood
- Exodus – Red Sea crossing
- Jonah – sea

Baptism is our induction into the church

Galatians 3:27-29

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²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

Notice Paul connects baptism with Christian community

- because we are all baptized, we are all “one in Christ” | old distinctions are no more

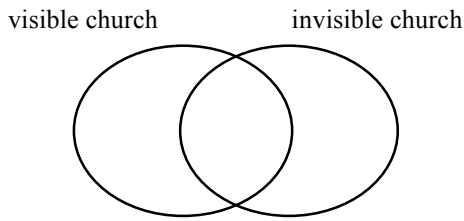
1 Corinthians 12:13

For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and all were made to drink of one Spirit. [see also Eph. 4:4-6]

Paul says virtually the same thing

- notice, there is no Jew or Greek, slave or free
- notice – “baptized into one body” | doesn't say, “baptized into Christ” but his body
- to be baptized (united) to Christ is to be also baptized (united) to his body
- this makes sense, because to be saved is also to be in the church
- you might say – “ah, is that always the case?”

Distinction between visible and invisible church



visible church – all people who are baptized | church as we see it
invisible church – all people who are saved | church as God sees it

Not everyone who is baptized is saved

- baptism must be received by faith to be effective

3 categories, from left to right: (1) not saved but in church, (2) saved and in church (3) saved but not in church

- in reality, 3rd category should be small bump

Baptism (visible sign) is how you enter the visible church

- baptism and church membership are synonymous | you cannot be a member without being baptized
- in some churches, baptism and membership are dissociated
 - baptism is a sign of your faith, or strong, consistent faith
 - membership is a sign of active participation or service in the church
 - both are deeply mistaken. Both are one and the same – to be united to Christ
- this is why improper for campus ministries to baptize (because baptize into what?)
 - one response, “we’re baptizing people into invisible church”
 - not everyone who is baptized is saved, so this is to confuse things

Some implications:

- since all we see is visible church, all baptized are Christians and all non-baptized are non-Christians
- of course, this is not strictly true (see graph above), but this is how we operate
- therefore, Lord’s Table is only for members of the church (or visiting members of other churches)

Baptism is a *passive rite* versus the *active rite* of Lord’s Supper

- we are passive because baptism is being done to us | symbolizing our salvation, sins cleansed away
- versus Lord’s Supper in which we are actively participating because symbolizing fellowship/sanctification
- this is why baptism is a once-for-all rite | not to be repeated
- versus Lord’s Supper which is to be eaten frequently