



The . Baptism

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Are you able to
drink of the cup
that I shall drink,
and to be baptized
with the baptism
that I am baptized?

Matthew 20:22

JESUS asked this question in response to a request. James and John had come with their mother to “desire a certain thing of him.” She wanted Jesus to “grant that these my two sons may sit, one on your right hand, and the other on the left, in your kingdom.” Jesus said that such a request was not for him to give; it would be given to those for whom it was prepared by his Father. But the baptism and the cup were quite a different matter.

Jesus had been baptized by his cousin, John the Baptist, in the river Jordan three years earlier. John had told those who came to hear him cry as a voice in the wilderness, that he baptized with water, but there was “One among you who will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire.” Matt 3:11.

The baptism of John was unto repentance. Repentance means to have “crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts” Gal 5:24. The baptism of Jesus is into his death and into newness of life. Romans 6:3. This is what he was speaking

about to James and John. The cup he would drink was to be a cup of suffering; the baptism he was to be baptized with was his death on the cross.

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 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.” Romans 6:3,4.



As Jesus was buried in the heart of the earth, so we are baptized into a watery grave. Baptism has been performed in many different ways. Some are sprinkled with water or even rose petals; others have water poured over their head. But these fail to fulfill the symbol of true baptism—buried, fully immersed in the water, and then coming up out of the water.

This was the experience of the Ethiopian eunuch when he was baptized by Philip in Acts chapter 8. “They went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch;

and he baptized him.” Then “they were come up out of the water” verses 38,39.



John the Baptist was baptizing at Aenon near Salim “because there was much water there” John 3:23. It doesn’t require a lot of water to sprinkle or pour some on a person.

Baptism begins with death but ends with a resurrection to newness of life. As “Jesus died and rose again” 1Thess 4:14; 2Cor 5:15, so we are “buried with him in baptism” and “also you are risen” Col 2:12. Paul said, “I... am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live” Galatians 2:19,20.

Thus is fulfilled the truth that God does “kill, and...make alive” Deut 32:39; 1Sam 2:6. “Our old man of sin is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed” Romans 6:6 and then we rise to “newness of life” verse 4.

When the people asked what they should do to be saved on the day of Pentecost, Peter told them to “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ” Acts 2:38. This is exactly what they did throughout the book of Acts.

“When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women...they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Acts 8:12,16.

When Peter came to Cornelius’ home in Caesarea, “he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.” Acts 10:48.

When Paul arrived in Ephesus he found certain disciples that had been baptized with the baptism of repentance “unto John’s baptism.” But when they heard that they should believe on Christ Jesus, “they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Acts 19:3-5.

Paul said, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Galatians 3:27. Indeed, there is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism,” Ephesians 4:5 which is in the name of the “one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things” Son of the “one God, the Father, of whom are all things.” 1Corinthians 8:6.

Why then does Matthew alone quote Jesus instructing his disciples to baptize “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost”? Matthew 28:19. Only one other gospel even mentions baptism. Mark simply has Christ saying, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” 16:15-18. Luke’s account has Jesus speaking about himself in the third person:

“...thus it behooved Christ to suffer and rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached *in his name* among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” But not a word at all about baptism in Luke.

Yet, not only preaching and baptism but *everything* was performed in the name of Jesus.

The Gentiles would trust *in his name*. Matthew 12:21. Many had believed *in his name*, John 2:23, were healed through faith *in his name*. Acts 3:6,16. The disciples spoke *in the name* of Jesus. Acts 5:40. Demons were cast out *in the name* of Jesus Christ. Acts 16:18. The sick were anointed with oil *in the name* of the Lord. James 5:14. Believers were washed, sanctified, and justified *in the name* of the Lord Jesus. 1Cor 6:11. Whatever they did in word or deed, they did all *in the name* of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Col 3:17.

Baptism is first performed in water, a symbol of the Spirit, the water of life (John 7:38,39; Rev 21:6). Oil and fire are also symbols of the Spirit. John foretold of One who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Matt 3:11. Jesus referred to this just moments before he ascended back to His Father, saying, “You shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now” Acts 1:5. And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, Jesus by the right hand of God poured forth the Spirit

having received the promise of the Father and “tongues of fire” were seen on the heads of the 120 gathered there in the upper room.



“Power from on high” let them speak with boldness to the many gathered from all parts of Asia each hearing the message of the crucified and risen Christ in their own language.

Another baptism of the Spirit is yet to come, the great final fulfillment of Joel when the windows of heaven will be opened once again and God will pour out His Spirit on all flesh. Joel 2:28. “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring” Isaiah 44:3.

