

Baptism

- There are technically three types of baptism in the Bible: The baptism of spirit, the baptism of water, and the baptism of fire. All three of these can be seen in the preaching of John the Baptist: [Luke 3:16-17](#) “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.” This is also repeated in [Matthew 3:11, 12](#).
 - Of these only two of them pertain to believers, and one to unbelievers; that is why we typically only address these two types of baptism.
 - Spiritual and water baptism are linked to the believer, one upon their moment of salvation; and the other following salvation.
 - Water baptism can also be broken into two subjects, the baptism of John, which was a baptism of repentance, and the baptism of new testament believers.
 - Fire baptism can be seen in the verses above as referring to unbelievers being judged by God, referring to them being cast into the Lake of Fire, at the final judgment. This is supported by God using this same terminology of burning the chaff to refer to the final judgment all throughout the Old Testament.
- The difference between water baptism and spiritual baptism can best be seen in the salvation of Cornelius and his household, in the book of Acts. [Acts 10:44-48](#) “While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. (45) And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. (46) For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, (47) Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? (48) And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.”
 - Here we see Cornelius and his family upon hearing the gospel, believing on Jesus Christ, and being saved. As a result of this belief, two things happened: first they received the Holy Spirit, which was accompanied by certain signs to evidence this to the Jews, since this is the first time Gentiles who were not proselytes are seen being saved [Acts 2:10](#) “Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,”. Then following their salvation and receiving the Holy Spirit, they were baptized with water.
 - The first of these events is then explained by Peter in the next chapter, as he testifies of what God did for the Gentiles. [Acts 11:15-16](#) “And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. (16) Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, **John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.**” Peter explains in this passage that receiving the Holy Spirit is that Baptism of the Spirit; as prophesied by John in all four gospels. As well as by Joel and other Old Testament prophets.
 - Jesus also further defines this for us in [Acts 1:4-5](#) “And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but **wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. (5) For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.**” Defining the baptism of the Spirit as them receiving the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The same event that Peter was comparing the Gentiles receiving the Holy spirit to, when he said the Holy Ghost fell on them “as on us at the beginning.”
 - Note that the baptism of the spirit is the receiving of the Holy Spirit and not any gifts that may have followed, as baptism notes being dunked or submerged in something, it is in this case being filled with God’s Spirit. Consider [1st 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.” This verse and its context note, that the baptism is receiving the spirit, and any gifts that may come from the Holy Spirit follow His taking residence inside of us, so that we become a “temple of the Holy Ghost”.

- **Romans 8:9** “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”. This shows us that it is impossible to be saved, and not have the Holy Spirit (there are only two exceptions to this in the New Testament, both of which God notes as being different for a reason, both of which we will explain later.), meaning it is part of the act of salvation, while gifts are something separate that follow. This can also be seen in this story, as the evidence of Cornelius’s salvation to the Jews, was the presence or baptizing of the Spirit.
- **1st Corinthians 14:21-22** “In the law it is written, With *men of* other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. (22) Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.” We see that sign gifts like tongues were promised in the law as a sign to unbelieving Jews, which is why certain moments in Acts are followed by someone speaking in tongues. Not because this was what it meant to have the Holy Spirit but because it was given by God as a sign when the Jews doubted something He was doing.
 - We then see that the water baptism of Cornelius, and every other believer, is an event that follows after salvation and the Baptism of the Spirit.
- It is a misunderstanding of these principles that leads to almost all false doctrines concerning baptism. That is why one must clearly define these three baptisms, in order to avoid, misapplying a verse about spiritual baptism, to being about water baptism. Perhaps the greatest example of this is **Acts 2:37-38** “Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? (38) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Many cults will use this verse to try to make water baptism a requirement for salvation, however everything else the Bible teaches on baptism contradicts this, as well as the verse itself. This verse is about receiving the Holy Spirit, upon realizing you are a sinner and trusting Christ as your Savior.
 - Their water baptism followed after they had already trusted God’s promises in **Acts 2:41** “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.”
 - Another principle to be learned from the Baptism of the Spirit and the Baptism of Fire, is that in these baptisms, God is the one baptizing the individual. As a result, He is completely submerging them in something, so that like a sponge they soak it all up. With the Baptism of the Spirit, we are in Christ and He (in the person of the Holy Spirit) is in us. With the Baptism of Fire, unbelievers are being cast into the Lake of Fire to be surrounded with God’s judgment.
- With the Baptism of Water, we can already see that it is different than the other two baptisms, as each of those are a response of God to someone’s choice to trust Him as Savior or not. The Baptism of Water is a choice given to the believer and is carried out by the church. When trying to understand why God has us to do this there are two main words that describe why a believer should choose to be baptized with water: Obedience and Identification.
- As an act of obedience, baptism is seen to be the first step in committing one’s life to Christ. We can see that every believer whose baptism is recorded in scripture, was baptized quickly after accepting Christ as Savior. In addition to those saved at Pentecost and Cornelius’s household, the book of Acts is full of other examples, including: the Samaritan believers and the Ethiopian

Eunuch in Acts 8, the Apostle Paul in Acts 9, the Philippian Jailer in Acts 16, Crispus in Acts 18, and etc. The only baptism in scripture that was delayed was that of Paul, who had to wait until he could reach Damascus, to follow God's command to find the preacher there.

- To understand why God commands baptism, we must see our choice to follow in water baptism as a direct response to what He has done in salvation and with it spiritual baptism. This is why baptism must follow salvation, because it is a response to what God did the moment we were saved. That is why, although Romans 6 is about spiritual baptism, it also where we properly understand what water baptism is about. [Romans 6:1-4](#) "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? (2) God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? (3) Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? (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."
- Prior to salvation our spirit existed within us but was dead in trespasses and sins. Every person is a body, a soul, and a spirit according to 1st Thessalonians 5:13. This is why we had to be born again spiritually, or quickened, meaning to be made a live forever more. [Ephesians 2:1](#) "And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins;".
- This is why in Romans 6 the argument concerning walking in the newness of life is that we are now dead to sin that we might live for Christ. [Romans 6:11-14](#) "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. (12) Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. (13) Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God. (14) For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." We have a new ability to not simply resist sin and try to do right in the power of the flesh, but in the power of the spirit. Because we have been made alive in Christ, through our spirit being quickened, and God's Spirit indwelling us; we can now walk in the newness of life. This is what happened because of the baptism of the Spirit. Therefore, water baptism is a response to this, making it a decision to walk in the newness of life, and yield your members as instruments of righteousness.
 - Water baptism is always a person's response to God, which we see in it being the only baptism carried out by men. This can even be seen in the baptism of John, which was the response of people to his preaching. God had given John as a prophet to make straight the way of the Lord, he was a direct messenger from God. Those who came to him were responding to God's message with a physical act to note their repentance. That is why John's baptism was a baptism of repentance according to the gospels. [Mark 1:2-5](#) "As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. (3) The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. (4) John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. (5) And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." We see that those who were baptized by John were people who realized they were sinners and were turning back to

God. They were people who repented of their dead works and of their sin and came looking for the Messiah that John was preaching about.

- John's baptism didn't save people, it prepared them to look for the Messiah. God shows us this plainly through one of Paul's encounters with a group of twelve men in Ephesus. These were men who had been baptized in response to their repentance of their sin. However, they had not yet put their faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore, they had not yet received salvation or the Holy Spirit. Their story is a unique situation, and one God emphasizes to note the change from the Old to the New Testament. This change being that the faith needed to be saved needs to be a specific faith in Jesus Christ and His payment for sin. This is why they had not received the Holy Ghost and did not do so until Paul put his hands on them, consenting to and acknowledging this change of Testaments. This making it clear that Judaism and trusting the Old Testament promises would not save without Jesus. The sign of tongues was given as proof that at this point, they had received the Spirit. The most complicated part of this story is the baptism of water proceeding the baptism of the Spirit. Just note this story is the exception, not the rule; just because six fingered gloves exist doesn't mean it is what is normal. This is why the laying on of hands was required, because it was a unique situation. Their water baptism in this case was them acknowledging that Jesus died for them, and they had to put their faith in Him. It was them personally acknowledging the changing of the testaments and with this putting their faith in Jesus Christ and not that they had followed John's baptism. Their faith in Jesus as the one John was pointing them to is what saved them, and their baptism was a response to this salvation. Showing that water baptism is first and foremost a response to salvation. In their case this was done prior to the baptism of the Spirit, because God was using them as an object lesson to the church. For us though, because Spiritual baptism is simultaneous with salvation, our water baptism is a response to God saving us and what He did when He saved us. [Acts 19:1-7](#) "And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, (2) He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. (3) And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. (4) Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. (5) When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. (6) And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. (7) And all the men were about twelve."
- The only other occasion in which water baptism proceeded receiving the Holy Spirit is when we first see the Gospel spreading to the Samaritans through Philip the Evangelist. While it should have been understood that salvation was for the Samaritans too, given that Jesus had went there and preached to them Himself, it was needful for the church to acknowledge that their racial differences did not exclude these believers from the gift of the Holy Ghost. Remember the Samaritans were half

Jews, who believed in God but did not worship Him according to the law and commandments. So Philip preached to them and many were saved, he accepted their testimony of faith and then baptized them. They did not receive the Holy Spirit though until the apostles came and put hands on them acknowledging and accepting that the Holy Spirit was for them too and not the Jew only. [Acts 8:14-17](#) “Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: (15) Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (16) (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) (17) Then laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.”

- This means the practical reason for baptism is that it is a choice to yield one’s members as instruments of righteousness. It is the first act of obedience for a believer because it is the decision to walk in the newness of life, that we now have the ability to. So, it becomes that start of our journey of serving God, as we commit our lives to live for Him. This can be further seen in Jesus’s commandment concerning baptism in Matthew 28. Here baptism is given as a response to teaching salvation to people, making it a decision to follow Christ after receiving Him. [Matthew 28:18-20](#) “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. (19) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.” We see that following this it is expected that someone continues in discipleship and learning to observe God’s commandments. You have then salvation as the point you are enabled to serve God, baptism as the decision to serve Him, and discipleship as the instruction of how we are to serve God. This makes the Lord’s Supper our personal evaluation of our service, but that is explained in our lesson on the Lord’s Supper.

- Note that this commandment is given to those apostles and disciples who are being sent out to start churches. Meaning the command to baptize and disciple people is a commandment of the local church. This can be further seen in [Act 2:41-47](#) “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. (42) And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. (43) And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. (44) And all that believed were together, and had all things common; (45) And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need. (46) And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, (47) Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” This should be understood correctly that this passage is referring to the church at Jerusalem, the local church wherein the apostles pastored or worked out of. You can note that their church had everything in common, not that they had everything in common with every church. That is why later when churches give to them it is called a liberality offering (as mentioned in 1st Corinthians 16:1-3 and many

other passages) because those churches had no personal obligation to support the church in Jerusalem. This is important because it establishes that once someone is baptized by a local church, they become members of that church. This is to further structure their path of service to God, by giving a place and pastor to disciple them. Now making the path of service to God: salvation as the enabling point, baptism as the decision to serve, and following it becoming part of a local church so that you can be disciplined in whatsoever things Christ has commanded us. This is the problem with churches that put requirements like discipleship or reaching adulthood as being necessary for baptism. It is not biblical and changes the order God has put in place Himself. To better understand the doctrine of the local church please see our lesson on the church.

- Once we understand water baptism is a response to salvation, we can see it is not part of being saved. In fact, the question concerning the requirement for baptism is asked twice in the Bible, and both times the answer is that the only requirement is that someone is first saved. [Act 8:35-37](#) “Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. (36) 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? (37) 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.” See here that when the Eunuch asked what could stop him from being baptized the answer was, if he was saved he could be. Scriptural baptism must be proceeded by a personal testimony of faith. Baptism cannot be followed by a decision to trust Christ as Savior, if so, it is not baptism, it is just dunking someone under the water. Like those who live together and call it marriage, putting a lost person under water will never be baptism in the eyes of God. Marriage is a covenant between God and two people, it is not living together or fornication. Those who call such things marriage are defiling a sacred institution ordained by God. Those who baptize babies or people without a personal testimony of faith are doing the same thing. They are imitating what God created and ordained, but not doing it His way, yet insisting that it is the same. Perhaps this is better illustrated by so called “same sex marriage”. God defines marriage as one man and one woman uniting in covenant with Him. Changing that to accommodate two men or two women can never meet the qualifications to be called marriage. Baptizing a baby or any other unbeliever can never meet the requirements of God’s definition for baptism. That definition being that it is a believer who in response to their salvation chooses to serve God. Having a confirmation at a later age will never make that act of dunking an unbeliever baptism in the eyes of God. It would be the same as those who have lived together in fornication for years, finally getting married, and trying to say that now those years of living in sin were not sin in God’s eyes because of a later decision; it is not possible. This is why with the Eunuch and with today the requirement for someone to be baptized is a personal testimony of their faith in Jesus Christ.
 - Consider that never in the Bible is someone baptized without making a personal testimony of faith, there is not one infant baptism in all of scripture. In fact, infant baptism didn’t come into practice until almost 300 years after the church was founded and the New Testament was completed. It was done only by those who were already splitting away from biblical church doctrine and leading to the formation of the first church split to leave the Bible, the Roman Catholic Church. Meaning this is not a Bible doctrine, but the doctrine of those who left the Bible to start their own religion. It was done because of a false doctrine concerning salvation, in this case the belief that baptism could save without faith in Jesus

Christ. It was also a way of indoctrinating people into their cult from birth and not upon a personal decision to be part of it.

- The other instance of this is in Acts 10 concerning the baptism of Cornelius and his household. When they trusted Christ it was a big deal that these Gentiles had been saved. This is why chapter 11 is Peter going back to the Jews to explain what happened. This is also why they not only received the Holy Spirit, but their receiving of the Spirit was accompanied with the gift of speaking in tongues, it was the proof that they had received the Spirit. [Acts 10:44-48](#) “While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. (45) And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. (46) For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, (47) Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? (48) And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.” While Peter was speaking Cornelius and his house trusted Jesus and were saved immediately. They received the Spirit and the gift of tongues as a sign to the Jews that their salvation was real. Peter then asked can anyone give a reason to forbid water baptism? The answer was no because they were saved, as evidenced by them receiving the Holy Spirit. This shows us then in two separate contexts that the only requirement for baptism is that someone must first be saved. This makes it plain that baptism cannot proceed salvation nor can it be a requirement for salvation, it can only be a response to one’s salvation. This passage also shows that everyone who is saved is a candidate for salvation as this is just one of several instances of a family being saved and the whole household being baptized.
 - Further proof that baptism cannot be a requirement for salvation is the thief on the cross. Jesus promised him he would go to heaven, but he never had to be baptized for it. Given his death followed Jesus’s word’s “it is finished” this cannot be written off as an issue of Old versus New Testament either. He was saved simply by his faith being placed in Jesus Christ. [Luke 23:39-43](#) “And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. (40) But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? (41) And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. (42) And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. (43) And Jesus said unto him, **Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.**”
 - The baptism of Jesus also shows this, that baptism is not something being done to save someone, but as commitment to serve God. [Matthew 3:13-15](#) “Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. (14) But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? (15) And Jesus answering said unto him, **Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.** Then he suffered him.” Jesus had no sins to be washed away, so when He said He was to be baptized to fulfill all righteousness it couldn’t be for Him to be saved. One reason according to the passage was to show Him as the Messiah to those who were gathered, but there is also a deeper reason. The answer being that going into the New Testament and concerning God’s work through the church, it is expected

that before one goes into God's service, they should first commit their lives unto Him through baptism. It fulfills all righteousness because it is the right thing to do. Following His baptism Jesus began calling His disciples, was tempted of the Devil, and then immediately began His earthly ministry. He set the example that baptism doesn't save you, but it is expected that to do things right, we commit our lives to God in baptism before we minister for Him. Jesus showed this is the first act of obedience in a life that will serve God correctly.

- One other story that helps to highlight this is the story mentioned before in Acts 8, wherein the Samaritans were saved and baptized. The reason being that Simon the sorcerer was part of the group who were baptized, and while we are told he believed, it is evident that he did not accept Christ as Savior. This is not because of what he did but because of what Peter says to him. Peter informs him that he has no right to the Holy Spirit (every saved person does), he was perishing, his heart was not right in the sight of God, and that he was still bound in his sins or iniquity. [Acts 8:18-23](#) "And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, [\(19\)](#) Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. [\(20\)](#) But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. [\(21\)](#) Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. [\(22\)](#) Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. [\(23\)](#) For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and *in* the bond of iniquity." This means someone can believe the story of the gospel to be true without confessing Christ as their Savior, something made clear by Romans 10:9, 10. This also means someone can make a profession of faith and follow the Lord in baptism, but still be lost and bound in their sins. Consider the terminology "in the bond of iniquity" this means he had not been set free from his bondage to sin by Jesus Christ. Note that the term "ye are yet in your sins" is also used in 1st Corinthians 15 to say that without the resurrection of Jesus Christ we would still be lost in our sin. He is also said to think the gift of God could be bought and that he was poisoned by bitterness. To understand the doctrine of salvation better please review our lesson on salvation.
- Peter even tells us directly that baptism doesn't save us from our sin, but from a guilty conscience in [1st Peter 3:21](#) "The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:" The context of this verse has already made it clear that salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ alone. Only His blood can wash away sin, not any sacrifice or work. What baptism can wash away though is our guilty conscience. By making a commitment to walk in the newness of life, it frees us from the guilt of disobeying this command. It also frees us of the guilt of having received the free gift of eternal life, while not following Christ as He expects us to. So when looking at the practical side of why one should be baptized, it is to commit your life to living out the salvation God has given you, as a natural response to being saved. Which allows you to enjoy a guilt free relationship with God that comes from trying to live for Him.
- The second word we associate with baptism is Identification. With Obedience we saw why God has a believer to take this step. With identification we see how He expects it to be carried out.

Remembering that Romans 6 is primarily concerning the baptism of the Spirit, we can still see that the idea or imagery behind baptism is that it should present the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. [Romans 6:5-10](#) "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of *his* resurrection: (6) 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. (7) For he that is dead is freed from sin. (8) Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: (9) Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. (10) For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." Spiritually this is seen in the decision to trust Christ as Savior, followed by being buried in His Spirit, and raised to walk in the newness of life. Now we will never be truly free from the lusts of the flesh until this body is raised incorruptible at the rapture. In the grand picture you can see this imagery as well if we use the past, present, and future tenses of salvation; those being Justification, Sanctification, and Glorification. In trusting Christ we die to the condemnation we once faced as we are justified, then being (buried) in Christ we are sanctified by being filled with His Spirit and overcoming the power of sin in our lives, and then eventually we will be raised victorious over all that sin has done to us in a glorified incorruptible body. [Galatians 3:27](#) "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." [Colossians 2:11-13](#) "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: (12) Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. (13) And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;"

- Similar imagery can be seen in the Old Testament, such as when Joshua and Israel are about to cross the River Jordan. The ark of the covenant, God's throne in the tabernacle, is brought to Jordan which means death or judgment. Then when the ark is taken into the river of death, this river of judgment is dried up all the way back top the city of Adam. Then the ark is raised out of the river victorious on the other side. This is just to show that God uses similar pictures of the death, burial, and resurrection throughout scripture. [Joshua 3:15-17](#) "And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,) (16) That the waters which came down from above stood *and* rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that *is* beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, *even* the salt sea, failed, *and* were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho. (17) And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan."
- This is why baptism has a believer going into the water to picture Christ death, as they are then placed under the water in burial; and raised to walk in the newness of life. This is why any baptism that is not by submersion cannot be called baptism. The word baptize is just a transliterated word from the Greek word "baptizo" meaning to dunk or submerge. It is literally the definition of baptism, that one is to be dunked or buried under the water. Just look at Jesus's baptism in [Mark 1:9-10](#) "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. (10) And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:". It says He came up out of the water, which means He had been submerged. We can also notice that John had only picked this exact spot because the water was deeper there, according to the Bible. [John 3:23](#) "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized."

- You will notice the same with Philip and the Eunuch, that in his baptism they had to go into the water, so that he could be submerged. If a baptism is not by submersion, it is by definition not baptism. [Acts 8:38-39](#) “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. (39) 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.”
- You will also notice that there is of necessity a personal testimony of belief given by the one to be baptized. This is of course because the requirement for baptism is that someone first be saved. However, I cannot know the certainty of someone’s salvation, I can only accept their personal statement of faith, that is why this is all Philip could ask for from the Eunuch. [Acts 8:37](#) “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.”
- Because this baptism is to be identified with Christ, it is also commanded that one be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; or under the command and authority of the Trinity. This is the commandment that Jesus gave us Himself in [Matthew 28:19](#) “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:” This is a declaration of whose baptism you partaking in. Is it the baptism of John, the baptism of some denomination, or of the pastor? No! Biblical baptism is being carried out under the authority or in the name of God. While this ordinance is given to local churches and must be carried out by a church and not an individual acting apart from the local church, it is first and foremost an act of obedience and identification with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. [1st Corinthians 1:12-16](#) “Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. (13) Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? (14) I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; (15) Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. (16) And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.”
 - There is admittedly some confusion for certain movements, especially those who don’t understand the relationship of the Old and New Testaments, concerning whose name the baptism should be carried out in. That is because following this commandment being given you will find that two baptisms are mentioned as being in the name of the Lord Jesus. This can be seen in [Acts 19:5](#) “When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” and in [Acts 8:16](#) “(For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)”. These are also the two times wherein someone was baptized prior to receiving the Holy Spirit. In both cases, as we have already seen, those who were baptized had to have hands laid on them, meaning those involved had to consent to or acknowledge the person’s right to salvation, baptism, and the Holy Spirit. This statement is not a contradiction to the commandment of Jesus in Matthew 28. I mean it is not saying these people were not baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; but that the baptism given to these people was according to the command of the Lord Jesus Christ given in Matthew 28, and those putting on hands had to understand that. It is that those carrying out the baptism understood the command to baptize was Jesus’s and not their own. Those He declared worthy to do be baptized were worthy and needed to follow His command to be baptized, regardless of their nationality or their previous religious acts. This is in fact one of the greatest testimonies that a non-scriptural baptism is not accepted as baptism in the eyes

of Jesus, that He expects it to be done His way or in His name. It wasn't for them to evaluate the worthiness of those being baptized, but to accept this baptism belongs to Jesus and it is just for them to baptize as He told them, this is why they had to lay on hands and consent to or acknowledge it. It is not for us to redefine baptism or compromise on the way God has commanded it to be done. It is an ordinance given to His church and should be treated as such.

- This is also why baptism must be carried out under the authority of a local church or those ordained to do it by a local church. Because it is not my baptism, but the baptism of the Lord Jesus, and His ordained place of ministry on the earth is the local church. He gave this as an ordinance to the local church because it is the local church that God chooses to work through in the New Testament. You can see this in each verse we have referenced so far, that everyone carrying out baptism was ordained by the local church to do so. To understand the doctrine of the local church better please review our lesson on the local church.