



Baptism

Talking points

- 1) The importance of baptism
- 2) Baptism is the task of clergyman
- 3) The necessity of baptism
- 4) Immersion in water
- 5) Infant baptism
- 6) Objections/replies to baptism

The importance of baptism

1. Salvation is completed through baptism:
"He who believes and is baptised will be saved" ([Mark.16: 16](#)).
2. We receive the second birth which is of water and spirit
"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" ([John.3:3](#)). The Lord explained this to him, saying:
"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" ([John.3: 5](#)).

3. Baptism washes away sins.

The washing with water is the washing of renewal, washing away the sins.

Ananias' words to Saul: "And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptised, and wash away your sins" ([Acts 22: 16](#)).

4. Forgiveness of sins In baptism.

"Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then St. Peter and the Apostles replied: "Repent, and let every one of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" ([Acts 2: 37,38](#)).

So how does forgiveness of sins come through baptism?

5. DYING WITH CHRIST!!! (and rising with him)

"...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death" (Phil.3: 10).

The Apostle says: "Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death" (Rom.6: 3,4).

"...we died with Him... we were buried with Him... we have been united together in the likeness of His death... our old man was crucified with Him." Confirming the same meaning, the Apostle also says in his Epistle to the Colossians: "...buried with Him in baptism" (Col.2: 12).

6. Newness of life and putting on Christ

"Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom.6: 4).

"For as many of you as were baptised into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal.3: 27).

7. Becoming members of the church

"In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses" ([Col.2: 11-13](#)).

The same way the circumcised were considered members of God's people, likewise the baptised become members of the church of God's body.

Other old testament symbols of baptism

Noah's ark

St. Peter the Apostle says: "...while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us, namely baptism" (1Pet.3: 20,21).

Crossing of the red sea

St. Paul the Apostle says: "Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1Cor.10: 1,2).

Another symbol of baptism in the Old Testament

(Ezek.16: 8,9) - the Lord says to the sinful Jerusalem (which here resembles the human soul in its fall): "'When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time was the time of love. I entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine,' says the Lord God. 'Then I washed you in water; yes, I thoroughly washed off your blood, and I anointed you with oil.' "

The phrase "you became Mine" means that Jerusalem (the human soul) became a member of Christ's Body (the Church).

Baptism is the task of clergymen

1. Before the Lord's ascension he said to his apostles:
"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"
([Matt.28: 19](#)).
2. "why do the Orthodox Church re-baptise the converts from the Protestant denominations"?
 - (a) It was not administered by a clergyman
 - (b) It was not considered a Sacrament
 - (c) It was not considered to carry any spiritual importance

The necessity of baptism

1. "He who believes and is baptised will be saved" ([Mark. 16:16](#)).
If baptism were meant to be only a sign, the Lord would have not given it all that importance.
2. If salvation was to only be attained through belief, why were all those who believed baptised?
 - The day 3000 believers were baptised by Peter ([Acts 2:38](#))
 - The Ethiopian eunuch baptised by Phillip ([Acts 8:36-39](#))
 - Saul of Tarsus was called to be baptised ([Acts 22:16](#))
 - Lydia, the woman dealer of purple cloth was baptised together with all her household ([Acts 16:14](#))
 - Cornelius baptised by Peter ([Acts 10: 44,47](#))

Immersion in water

1. The Lord Jesus Himself was baptised by immersion. "Then Jesus, when He had been baptised, came up immediately from the water" ([Matt.3: 16](#)).
2. "And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptised him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away" ([Acts 8: 38,39](#)).
3. The word 'baptisma' means dye. Dyeing cannot be done without immersion
4. "Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death"
([Rom.6: 4](#)) and we were "buried with Him in baptism" ([Col.2: 12](#))

5. Baptism is a rebirth. Birth is the coming out of a body from another body.
6. Baptism is the washing away of sins, not the sprinkling away of sins.
St. Paul said in his Epistle to Titus: "He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit" ([Titus 3: 5](#)).
7. The buildings of early churches contain immersion fonts, proof that a deep font was need for baptism by immersion.

Infant baptism

Coptic's insist on infant baptism for several reasons

1. "...unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" ([John.3: 5](#)).
2. Prepares infants for a life of faith
3. For infants, we apply the Lord's saying: "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven" ([Matt. 19: 14](#)).
4. "Free Salvation"
5. If we were really strict on the condition of belief, we would have forbidden from baptism many adults who were not mentally mature to comprehend the facts and depths of belief

6. What happens if the little child refuses the faith when he grows up?
7. We baptise little children because the Holy Bible indicates this. The Holy Bible mentions baptisms of whole families or of a person with his entire household.
8. Remember the disagreement between St. Augustine and St. Jerome on the origin of the soul: whether is it born or created?. St. Augustine said that it is born with man and St. Jerome said that it is created. St. Augustine asked: "If it is created, it does not inherit Adam's sin. Why then do we baptise infants?"
9. There is not a single verse in the Holy Bible that forbids infant baptism.

10. We baptise children on the belief of their parents, many examples of this In the old testament

- Circumcision

It is known that circumcision was to be done on the eighth day after birth, according to God's command ([Gen.17: 12](#))

- Crossing of the Red Sea

What was the position of the little children who were carried by their mothers and fathers across the Sea?

- The Passover

Salvation of the little children through the blood of the Passover lamb, from the hand of the Angel who killed every firstborn son.

Questions and replies

1. If baptism is renewal of life, why do we sin after being baptised?
2. Does baptism still carry its benefits/importance if the clergyman who administers it is a malefactor?
3. How was the Penitent Thief saved without baptism?
What is baptism but dying with Christ, as our teacher St. Paul says in (Rom.6)

4. If baptism is essential, why did the Apostles Paul and Silas say to the jailer at Philippi: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved" (Acts 16: 31) and not: "Believe and be baptised", which is proof that belief is adequate for salvation?
- (a) "Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house" (Acts 16: 32).
- (b) "And immediately he and all his family were baptised" (Acts 16: 33).

5. If baptism is so important, were the prophets of the Old Testament baptised? If the commandment of baptism had existed in their days, they would have been baptised.

6. Would it not be better if we say that baptism is rising with Christ and not dying with Him because death is harmful and not beneficial whereas rising is beneficial?

"For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection" (Rom.6:5)

"Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him" (Rom.6:8).

7. Why should a person whose parents were baptised and saved from Adam's sin, be baptised as well?

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned" (Rom.5:12).

"Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me" (Ps.51:5).