

Baptism throughout Acts

The Christian practice of baptism shows up throughout the book of Acts. So we wrestle with the following questions ... What is it? Why is it significant? Who is it for? What blessing does it bring?

What is It?

- Form = Immersion

“They were being baptized by him in the Jordan River ... coming up out of the water ...” - Mark 1:5, 10

“John also was baptizing in Aenon ... because there was much water there.” - John 3:23

- Function = Identification

“Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ have been baptized into His death ... For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection.” - Romans 6:3-5

“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God.” - Galatians 2:20

“For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel ... so that the cross of Christ would not be made void.” - 1 Corinthians 1:17

Who is It For?

- Believers Only

“They said, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household’ ... And he took them that very hour of the night and ... immediately he was baptized.” - Acts 16:31-33

“A woman named Lydia ... was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul. And when she and her household had been baptized ...” - Acts 16:14-15

“Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he? And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus.” - Acts 10:47-48

“But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about ... the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.” - Acts 8:12

- Any Exceptions?

“Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” - Acts 2:38

- What about Babies?

“The faith which infants lack is ... replaced by the faith of the Church.” - Ludwig Ott

What Blessing Results?

- The Command of Baptism

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.” - Matthew 28:19-20

- The Blessing of Obedience

“But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves ... But one who looks intently at the perfect law ... and abides by it ... this man will be blessed in what he does.” - James 1:22, 25

- The Invitation of Identification ...

“Therefore, Jesus also ... through His own blood, suffered outside the gate. So, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.” - Hebrews 13:12-14