



BAPTISM: A REFRESHER

1. What is baptism?

1.1. The means by which new disciples are recognized (Mat 28:19)

1.2. The supernatural act by which God receives our faith, we receive a justified standing w/God, loosing from our sins (forgiveness), empowerment over sin (1st resurrection/new birth/new life), entrance into the covenant community and access to all God's AL blessing (1Pe 3:21; Act 2:38; Rom 6:3-7; 1Co 12:13; 2Co 1:20).

2. Who has the authority to baptize?

Only a biblically defined church (i.e. a church est'd by and under the Lordship of Christ¹) has the authority to declare a person loosed from their sins (Mar 16:16 w/Joh 20:23 w/Mat 16:19 w/18:18; consider also 1Ti 3:15 and Gen 28:17).

3. Why is baptism necessary?

3.1. Christ commands it (Mat 28:19)

3.2. God rejects those who reject His sign (e.g. Exo 12:13; Rev 7:13-14 w/Mat 22:12)

4. What about the thief on the cross and those dying?

Both are baptized in the "final baptism" of death (Luk 23:40-43; Jam 5:14-15).

5. How do we baptize?

The word "baptize" refers to washing/cleansing w/water (e.g. Mar 7:4; Luk 11:38). Historically baptism has included immersion (where convenient), but also simply pouring water over the head since this is the member of our bodies which symbolically represents our life (e.g. Luk 21:18; Col 2:19).

6. Who can be baptized?

Those to whom the promises of God are given:

6.1. Covenant children

6.2. Those recognized by the church as having counted the costs of the gospel (LBS, G&M) and ready to live the rest of their lives in repentant faith (Act 8:35-36; Act 2:40-41).

¹ According to Acts 11:19-26 a church exists where: 1) there is a congregation of professing believers, 2) w/ at least one biblically qualified elder, 3) committed to the sound gospel message of justification gained by faith and maintained by faithful obedience, 4) who are also committed to making disciples and teaching the saints.