

# Baptism – A Burial Into Death

The Lord Jesus Christ commanded “*baptizing in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*” as a necessary component of discipleship (Matthew 28:19). An examination of the work of Christ’s apostles reveals that believers from Jerusalem to Samaria to distant lands were baptized as Christ had commanded (Acts 2:41; 8:12; 16:33; 18:8). The apostle Peter actually wrote that baptism saves (I Peter 3:21).

A believer in Jesus puts on Christ when he is baptized into the Anointed One of God (cf. Galatians 3:27). He cannot be saved without putting on Christ. He cannot put on Christ without being baptized into Christ. Thus a believer cannot be saved without being baptized into the Lord Jesus. The Holy One of God, who has been given all authority in heaven and on earth, determined that baptism is an important teaching and practice of His plan of salvation.

According to Greek scholars, the transliterated words “baptize” or “baptism” come from a Greek word meaning “to dip, to immerse, to submerge.” In the eighth chapter of Acts the conversion of the Ethiopian treasurer illustrates that definition. After being taught concerning Jesus (vs. 35), the Ethiopian asked to be baptized. Philip and the man “*went down into the water, and he baptized him*” (vs. 38). The Lord’s baptism requires going down into the water.

The apostle Paul asked, “*Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?*” (Romans 6:3). Immersion in water in the name of the Lord is an immersion into the atoning and propitiatory death of God’s Son (cf. Romans 3:25), who is the Lamb of God who takes away sin (John 1:29). Those who “*have been united together in the likeness of His death*” receive the hope of being in the likeness of the Lord’s resurrection (Romans 6:5).

“*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*” (Romans 6:4). Immersion in water is the God-ordained means by which a penitent believer is buried with Jesus into death. Paul used similar wording in his epistle to the saints of Colosse – “*buried with Him in baptism*” (Colossians 2:12). The old man of sin must be done away with, put to death, crucified with Jesus. If we are determined to be crucified with Christ, then should we not be buried with Him, too? The Lord grants us the privilege and opportunity to turn to Him by faith by being baptized for the remission of our sins (cf. Acts 2:38; 22:16).