

# Baptism

## What it is about.

Matthew 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water to repentance but He that comes after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire. 12 Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

That passage is important because it marks the difference between symbolic baptism and the real baptism. Baptism is about what controls us; it is about repentance.

### **Repentance is more than saying, "I'm sorry."**

Repentance is mental. It is something in my mind. It is an understanding and decision that "I'm going this way and I turn that way." It is agreeing that God is right and I am wrong. Repentance is a decision to go God's way, not my own. It is not just repenting for the sins I've done, it's repenting about the motive that made me do the sin.

### **Salvation is more than just forgiveness.**

Jesus came to do more than forgive us our sins. He came to rescue us from hell. He came to rescue us from sin and from sinning. He came to save us from not just our past sin, but also save us from our possible future sins.

### **Our lives operate one of two ways.**

We are led by the Holy Spirit, with its benefits, Grace and eternity in heaven, or we are led by our flesh, with the consequence of Judgment and eternity in hell.

His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will clear the threshing floor and gather His wheat into the granary, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire. Matthew 3:12

There is the "fire." John is saying that when Jesus Christ comes into the world He will baptize everybody in it either with the Holy Spirit or with fire, one or the other. Fire is a symbol of judgment. John is saying, Look, you have one of two choices. This One who is coming is going to deal with everyone in the world, without exception. I am dealing with only a few here. But He who is coming after me, who knows the hearts of all men and is able to judge what is going on in their thoughts and in their inner lives, He will baptize you either with the Holy Spirit or with fire.

### **We have forgotten about the wrath of God.**

2 Thessalonians 1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

John said to the people, "**now is your chance.**" If you don't want to be baptized with fire, (judgment) then confess your sins, and be baptized with water as a symbol of your confession, so when He comes, your baptism may be that gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit which perfects and fulfills God's plan for men.

### **Baptism Is a Picture of Repentance**

**It is the picture of us taking a public stand with Christ and committing to a life change.**

Matthew 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water to repentance. John has tied together symbol and reality. He says, "I am baptizing you with water as a mark of your repentance from sin, as a sign of your confession of your sins, but this does not complete the meaning of baptism."

## **Baptism Is a Picture of Death**

**It is a picture of our old fleshly ways dying and being buried in Christ's death.**

Romans 6:4 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.

**Our baptism is our testimony to everyone** that we have actually taken, by our inner commitment, the step of renouncing our old life of self-centeredness, and, responding to the invitation of the Lord Jesus to allow Him to control us.

**Baptism helps us to understand and grasp what is involved in being made a member of the body of Christ.**

It cuts us off from the old life we once lived and introduces us to a new atmosphere, a whole new realm of living, so that we enter into a new life.

And while staying with them He charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father. He said, "You heard from Me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." Acts 1:4-5

The Holy Spirit was poured out upon these disciples, and, for the first time, the body of Christ was formed. That is the purpose of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is to form the body of Christ by introducing every individual believer into that body.

## **Baptism Is a Picture of New Life We have power in Christ to live a new life**

I want you to know, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. 1Corinthians 10:1-4

Here was a mob of unruly people which Moses led out of Egypt. They were a mass of people who were following a leader out of bondage, out of slavery, into what they hoped would be freedom. As they came out of the sea onto the other side they were no longer a motley mob; they were a unified nation under God, under the leadership of one man, God's man, Moses.

**This is what baptism accomplishes. It unites us to One; it identifies us with the One who is our Leader. It brings us into union with Jesus, who leads us in freedom.**