Water Baptism Class

# I. Introduction

Water baptism is a step of obedience that every follower of Jesus Christ should observe. What exactly is the purpose of water baptism, and when should a Christian do it? This class is designed to help you understand what water baptism is, and why you should be water baptized as a follower of Jesus Christ, and not before!

# II. Scriptural Evidence

**Mt.28:18-20** 18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen.

* Jesus authorized his disciples (disciplined followers) to make new disciples, which would involve water baptism.

# III. The Significance

Let's take a closer look at water baptism, so we can understand its spiritual significance.

First of all, the word **baptism** is derived from the Greek word "baptizo", and means to

***immerse*** *or* ***submerge***.

* When Jesus was baptized, it says in Mark 1:10 that he *"came up from the water"*

This indicates that Jesus must have been in the water.

# Let’s take a look at Rom.6:1-11

* Water baptism symbolizes important parts of a Christian’s new life:

1 “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

4 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.

5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of *His* resurrection,

6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

7 For he who has died has been freed from sin.

8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.

10 For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God.

11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

# A). As a born again child of God, my spirit is now dead to sin.

**Rom.6:2-4 says, “**How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?” 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death,”

**Gal.2:20 says,** "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who lives, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

Once again, it’s important that I realize the distinction between my spirit, my soul and my body here. The real me is spirit! I have a soul (mind, will & emotions) and I live in a body. As a born again Jesus follower, I am now spiritually right with God (dead to sin & alive to God). However, my mind, will and emotions (soul) are in the process of being renewed, and my body one day will be replaced with a new immortal body. Therefore, in the area of my soul and body, I am still capable of sinning. However, I don’t have to sin if I don’t want to. Spiritually, I now have God’s desires. Therefore I need to follow those desires and choose to die to sin daily both in my “soul” and “body”, just like the Apostle Paul did as he states in **1 Cor.15:31 >**  *“I die daily”.*

In other words, don’t allow your soul and body to do whatever it wants.

**i)**. The first part of baptism, the immersion of the person being baptized, symbolizes the

**death** of my sinful spiritual nature!

The reality of the death that takes place in a Christian’s life is highly important.

Although, I am human, and susceptible to committing sin, it shouldn’t be my desire any more, nor should it be a way of life!

Therefore, I need to discipline my soul and body due the fact that my old sinful habits still have negative consequences in this life. However, when I do sin in these areas, it’s important that I understand that I am still righteous in spirit (that means I’m still a child of God and have eternal life), but I need to repent (change my mind & ways) from that sin as soon as the Holy Spirit or my conscience convicts me of it, so that I can experience the abundant life God has for me.

**1 John 5:16-18 “**If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that. 17 All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not leading to death. 18 We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.”

* Sin is not healthy for me, plus it **grieves** the Holy Spirit! **(Eph.4:30)**
* Learn to live free from sin’s **power** over your soul and body!

# B). The old nature is to be buried and left buried - don't be a grave digger

We bury people who are dead, and water baptism **symbolizes** this burial (not sprinkling).

**Rom.6:4 says, *“****Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death…”*

**Rom. 6:6** *“knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.”*

Don’t **look** back! Commit to your new life in Christ!

As the Apostle Paul stated in **Philippians 3:13-14**, *“Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”*

Jesus said in **Luke 9:62** that, *"No one, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."*

**i)**. The second part of water baptism is when I’m under the water, it symbolizes the **burial** of my sinful nature!

# C). We are to see ourselves in our new life that is in Christ!

**Rom.6:4-5 says, *“****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. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection”*

**2 Cor.5:17 says, *“****Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”*

As a born again child of God, I have a new life! I’m not the same person I was before I accepted Jesus as my Lord & Saviour. I may not have changed physically, and perhaps I still have some stinking thinking to still deal with, but spiritually I am changed, and as a result my DNA (**D**rive, **N**ature and **A**ppetite) has changed.

My Drive is now **love**, my Nature is now **righteous,** and my Appetite is now **holy.**

**i)**. The third part of water baptism is when I come up from under the water, it symbolizes the **resurrection** of my new life in Christ!

# D). Water Baptism represents your allegiance to Jesus Christ

* When we are baptized, we publicly identify ourselves with Jesus as one ofHis **followers**.
* It’s not just about being dead to sin, it’s about being **alive** to God!

**Rom.6:10 says**, *"For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives,* ***He lives to God****."*

# **IV. Faith first, then baptism soon after**

**- It’s important to understand that repentance & faith should always precede water baptism.**

There are many scriptural evidences of this truth. However, for the sake of time, we’ve simply given you some scripture references to look up on your own.

* **See Acts 10:44-48 >** Gentile believers received the Holy Spirit, **then** were baptized.
* **See Acts 8:26-39** **>** Philip baptizes Ethiopian eunuch after he believes.

**\*** After reading the account found in Acts 8 (esp.vs.36-37), what is the qualification for being

water baptized? **Answer -** If you believe what Jesus did for you with all your heart, you may.

* It's important that faith in Jesus Christ precedes baptism.

Philip’s response was,“if we **believe** with **all** of our hearts, we may” (vs.37)

**Q.** What does this tell us about infant baptism?

Jesus was presented to the Lord by his parents when he was a baby (Lk.2:21-24), but he wasn't baptized until he was starting off in his public ministry at 30 years of age. (Lk:3:21-23)

V. We are to be baptized in a Name

**i).** **Colossians 3:3 says,** *“For you died (old sinful spiritual nature), and your life (new life) is hidden with Christ in God.”*

* As Christians, our new life is hidden in Christ, and now when God sees you, He sees the righteousness of **Jesus** in you!

That’s our new identity! Therefore, water baptism symbolizes our new identity in Jesus Christ! Therefore, we are water baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ!

**Acts 2:38** **says,** “Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

**Acts 19:5** **says**, *“When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”*

Therefore, when Jesus instructed His disciples to baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in Mt.28:19, we need to understand the following:

**\* Father, Son and Holy Spirit** are descriptive **titles of the persons of the God-head**, just like “dad”, “mom” or “brother”, etc. The names associated with these titles are seen in scripture:

* **Father -**  **Jer.33:2** - *"The* ***Lord*** *is His name"* (means owner, ruler, master)
* **Son** - **Lk.1:31** - *"You shall call his name* ***Jesus****"* (means salvation)
* **Holy Spirit** – **Lk.4:18** - The Holy Spirit is the Anointing **- Christ** (means “anointing”)

**Col.2:9-10** says, *“For in Him (Jesus) dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”*

* Therefore, the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is the name: Lord Jesus Christ (the **Anointed Saviour** who **Owns** you!)

# VI. Summary

***a. Suggestion or Command? In Acts 10:44-48*** *we read about the Gentiles (non-Jew) who were reached with the gospel.*

*44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.*

*45 And those of the circumcision (Jews) who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.*

*46 For they (the Jewish Christians) heard them (the new Gentile converts) speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered,*

*47 "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"*

*48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.*

From verse 48, we should acknowledge that water baptism is a **command** not a suggestion!

**b.** Therefore to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, is to publicly acknowledge your total death to the old sinful nature and complete commitment and allegiance to God through Jesus Christ's work of atonement, acknowledging Jesus as not only your saviour, but as your master and owner!

**c.** Water baptism **is not** your means of salvation. God’s grace, through your faith and acceptance in what Jesus did for you, is your means of salvation. Water baptism is publicly acknowledging who you now are as a new creation (2 Cor.5:17) and committed follower of Jesus Christ.

**Mk.8:38** *"For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."*

**d.** If you haven't been water baptized, or you have, but without a proper understanding of what it meant, please consider being baptized soon!

# VII. What to expect?

1. To have fun! This is not a sad occasion, this is a joyful occasion!

2. People to applaud you and celebrate with you. Feel free to bring family or friends to witness this great occasion. Cameras are permitted!

3. The opportunity to say a brief public statement of your decision to be a Christian / follower of Jesus Christ, and to be prayed for.

4. To get wet from head to toe! Wear modest clothing you don’t mind getting wet. A customized t-shirt saying, “I have decided to follow Jesus”, will be given to you. Also, please bring a towel and change of clothes. Ladies, be careful of make-up that is not waterproof.