

Plan of Salvation Step 5: Be Baptized

Key Scriptures: Mark 16:16; Acts 2:37-38

Lesson Objective

To gain a clear understanding of baptism—what it is, what it represents, and to confirm through Scripture that it is a necessary step in salvation.

Warm-Up Questions

1. What does baptism mean to you, and what role do you think it plays in salvation?
 2. Have you ever heard different teachings about baptism? If so, what were they?
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Scriptures of Focus

Mark 16:16

- **(KJV)** " He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
- **(AMP)** "He who has believed [in Me] and has been baptized will be saved [from the penalty of God's wrath and judgment]; but he who has not believed will be condemned."

In Mark 16:16, baptism is directly linked to salvation, with the conjunction 'AND' clearly connecting belief with baptism. This verse shows that belief alone is not sufficient for salvation; baptism is also required. However, true baptism, according to Scripture, can only follow genuine belief. Additionally, the verse underscores the serious consequences for those who fail to believe and be baptized. Those who do not obey the Word of God will face eternal separation from God in the lake of fire, as described in Revelation 21:8.

Acts 2:37-38

- **(KJV)** "(37) Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? (38) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
- **(AMP)** "(37) Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart [with remorse and anxiety], and they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what are we to do? (38) And Peter said to them, "Repent [change your old way of thinking, turn from your sinful ways, accept and follow Jesus as the Messiah] and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

In Acts 2:37-38, we witness the response to the first gospel sermon preached on the day of Pentecost, marking the establishment of the church. The people, having heard the Word, were

'pricked in their hearts' and recognized their need for salvation. When they asked, 'What shall we do to be saved?' Peter gave a clear answer: 'Repent and be baptized.' This moment highlights the key elements of the plan of salvation. The people heard the Word and believed, as shown by their desire to be saved. Peter emphasized the necessity of repentance, performed 'in the name of Jesus Christ,' which also implies confession. The conjunction 'AND' is significant, showing that salvation requires both repentance and baptism, further affirming the importance of baptism in the process of salvation.

Strong's Definition

Baptism (G907 - baptizō)

- Meaning: To immerse, submerge.
- This confirms that baptism involves full immersion rather than sprinkling.

Dip (G911 - bapto)

- Meaning: To dip, dye, or stain (not a complete submersion like baptizō).

Sprinkle (G4472 - rhantizō)

- Meaning: To cleanse by sprinkling.
- Used in the Old Testament for ceremonial cleansing, but never for baptism.

The word for baptism used in Mark 16:16, Acts 2:37-38, and other New Testament scriptures is baptizō, which means 'to immerse' or 'to submerge.' To faithfully follow the Word of God, the church must practice baptism as it is described in Scripture. The Bible does not support practices such as sprinkling, splashing, or dipping. True baptism involves fully immersing the individual in water, symbolizing a complete burial. This is clearly illustrated in Romans 6:4, which speaks of being 'buried with Him by baptism into death.' To adhere to the New Testament example, baptism must be an immersion, completely enveloping the individual in water.

Baptism As A Requirement For Salvation

- **Galatians 3:27 KJV** - (27) For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
 - Galatians 3:27 highlights the importance of baptism as the only means by which we 'put on Christ.' The scripture makes it clear that baptism is the sole path through which believers are united with Christ, marking the beginning of their new identity in Him.
- **John 3:1-7 KJV** - (1) There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: (2) The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. (3) Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. (4) Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be

born? (5) Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (6) That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (7) Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

- The account of Nicodemus in John 3:1-7 underscores the necessity of baptism for salvation, where Jesus speaks of it as the 'new birth'—being born of the Spirit. Just as a child is born into the world through the physical birth process, a person is spiritually reborn when they are baptized. There is rich symbolism between the birth of a child and baptism. A child is immersed in the womb, and when the water breaks, the birthing process begins. The child then takes its first breath. Similarly, in baptism, the old self is buried in the water, and when the person rises from the water, they take their first breath as a new creation in Christ. Just as the birth of a child brings joy, so does the spiritual rebirth through baptism, as a person is joyfully added to the body of Christ.
- **I Peter 3:21 KJV** - (21) The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:
 - I Peter 3:21 emphasizes the essential role of baptism in salvation, making it clear that baptism is required for one to be saved. However, this verse also highlights that baptism is not just a physical act. It requires the individual to be in the right frame of mind, fully understanding the significance of what they are doing. Baptism is the 'answer of a good conscience toward God,' signifying a sincere commitment and faith in God's work of salvation.
 - Note: The Bible does not support infant baptism or sprinkling as a form of baptism. The term baptizō (used in the New Testament for baptism) means to immerse or submerge, not to sprinkle or pour water. In passages such as Acts 2:38, Acts 8:12, and Mark 16:16, baptism is always connected with a person who is capable of hearing, understanding, and responding to the gospel message. In Matthew 28:19, Jesus commands making disciples and baptizing them, which implies a conscious decision to follow Christ, something that would not apply to infants. Furthermore, there are no examples in the Bible of infants being baptized or of sprinkling being used as the method of baptism.

We Are Added To The Church Through Baptism (We DO NOT Join the Church)

Joining

- Self-initiated action: A person voluntarily chooses to become part of a group.
- Requires personal effort: The individual may sign up, apply, or take specific steps to be included.
- Implies decision and control: The person owns and controls the action.
- A person joins a gym by signing up and paying a membership fee.

Being Added

- External action: Someone else places the person in the group.
- Not self-determined: The person meets certain criteria, and the group (or its leader) includes them.
- Implies reception, not initiation: The person does not control the process of being added.
- A baby is added to a family at birth

Scripture References:

- Acts 2:41 KJV - (41) Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and **the same day there were added** unto them about three thousand souls.
- I Corinthians 12:18 KJV - (18) But now hath **God set the members every one of them in the body**, as it hath pleased him.

The Bible never uses the term 'join' or refers to joining the church. Instead, Scripture clearly teaches that we are 'added' to the body of Christ, the church, by the one who has the authority to do so—God Himself. Believers do not join the church by their own decision alone. Rather, God adds them to the church when they obey the gospel, as seen in Acts 2:47. This underscores that church membership is a result of God's divine action, not merely a personal choice. In essence, while 'joining' focuses on human effort, 'being added' highlights God's sovereign role in bringing us into His body.

Examples of Baptism (Baptized That Same Day, No mention of Baptismal Sunday)

Name	Scripture	Outcome
About 3,000	Acts 2:37-41	Baptized That Same Day
Ethiopian Eunuch	Acts 8:27-38	Baptized At That Moment
Lydia	Acts 16:14-15	Baptized along with her Household
Jailer	Acts 16:25-33	Baptized with household that same hour

Note: The Bible does not mention waiting for a specific day, such as a certain Sunday of the month, to baptize individuals. In Scripture, baptism is presented as something that should be done immediately after a person has come to faith and repented. For example, in Acts 2:38-41, after Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, those who accepted the message were baptized that same day. Similarly, in Acts 8:36-39, when the Ethiopian eunuch came to faith, he was immediately baptized upon finding water. The emphasis is on the urgency and immediate nature of baptism following one's conversion.

Discussion Questions

1. How should the church respond when someone comes to be added to the body of Christ (the church)?
 2. Do you recall the feeling that you had when you or someone close was baptized into Christ?
 3. How can we help people overcome their fear of being baptized? (What are some of those fears?)
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Key Point

Baptism is an essential step in the process of salvation and is not optional. It follows the person's sincere response to God's Word: hearing, believing, repenting, and confessing Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the Living God. For baptism to be meaningful, the individual must be fully aware and in the right state of mind, understanding the spiritual significance in their heart. It is not merely a physical act but a profound commitment to God. Baptism is performed by full immersion, symbolizing the burial of the old self and the beginning of a new life in Christ.

Closing Scripture

Colossians 2:12 KJV

" (12) Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."

Challenge for the Week

- Take the opportunity this week to share the Plan of Salvation with someone, praying that their heart will be moved and that they will choose to accept Christ before it is eternally too late.