

## Baptism 101

### Matthew 3

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1. Baptism is designed to be part of discipleship out of obedience and our command to conform to Christ.
2. In Matthew 3, John the Baptist preaches to the crowds about the call to repent, and the nearness of God's Kingdom. The nearness in this case is the increasing expectation of the Messiah.
3. The crowd responds and begins confessing their sin and being baptized based on John's message of repentance. John baptizes people who desire God's transformation in their lives.
4. The baptism of Jesus is not out of repentance, because He had no sin. His baptism is like a coronation that marks the beginning of his focus toward the cross and resurrection. Jesus is being obedient to the work He came for.
5. In the ancient world, immersion represents purification, restoration, and qualification for full participation in the life of the community.
6. The baptismal water (Mikveh) is referred to as the womb of the world- meaning as the convert comes out, their status changed. They have been "born again" or made a "new creation." However, water purification is only as good as the purification of the soul.
7. As Jesus is baptized and demonstrates His willingness to take on the servant role, the Heavens open, God speaks, and the Holy Spirit descends as a dove, onto the Son of God.
8. The very word "Christian" means "Christ follower" or "one who is of Christ. Baptism is an act of obedience to Christ's command to identify with Him. If we neglect baptism, then we are in disobedience.
9. When we are baptized into Christ, we are symbolically dying with Him and rising to new life- therefore, born again!

## GREEK & HEBREW WORDS

**Meta-noeo** (met-an-o-eh'-o); to think differently, feel compunction

**Noieo** (noy-eh'-o); to exercise the mind (observe), to comprehend, heed :- perceive, think, understand

## TODAY'S WORSHIP

Only A Holy God  
Great I Am  
Way Maker

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Jesus contrasts external ritual washing with internal spiritual cleansing (Matthew 23:25-26).

- Where do you see this tension between outward religious practices and inward spiritual transformation in modern church life?

Mark mentions that baptism is "one of the most significant commands given by King Jesus."

- How do you personally view the importance of baptism in one's walk with Jesus?
- Why do you think baptism was so important to Jesus that He would command that his followers be baptized and baptize new followers?
- What are some different ways you understand baptism to be symbolizing spiritual realities?

Matt. 3:15 states that the purpose of Jesus' baptism is to "fulfill all righteousness." Another way to say this is to "be completely aligned with God's will." Mark states that "It's through baptism that Jesus affirms His determination to do the work of the Kingdom"

- In what way(s) do you think Jesus saw His baptism as aligning himself with God's will?
- In light of this understanding of baptism, how would you explain the significance of getting baptized to a new disciple of Jesus?

Have you personally been baptized since becoming a disciple of Jesus?

- If so, when and where did this happen? What was your motivation for doing it?
- If not, why haven't you taken this step so far?

Take a moment to write down any action steps that you feel you need to take in light of this teaching and discussion. [Consider sharing them with one another and praying for their successful follow-through.]