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This topical Bible study is for God's glory
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All words spoken by Jesus Christ are in **red text**.

(Hyperlinks are surrounded by parenthesis and are underlined.)

Short answer...YES! All Christians—those who have decided to place their faith in Jesus—the Son of God who offered His body on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins so that we may be forgiven—should be baptized.

Jesus declared, **“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.”** Matthew 28:19

However, it is important to understand baptism:

- Does not provide salvation. Salvation occurs because of our faith and not baptism. **“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”** Ephesians 2:8-9
- Represents:
 - An act of obedience.
 - The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.
 - An illustrative testimony of the changes that have occurred within:
 - Submersion under water demonstrates our death (and burial) to sin.
 - Rising up from the water represents our new (and resurrected) life in Jesus.
 - **“Buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”** Colossians 2:12-14
 - **“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

Here are additional aspects of baptism:

- Baptism is a public demonstration of the believer’s faith and desires of their heart.
- It should occur when someone has reached a degree of spiritual maturity and enlightenment where they are able to articulate:
 - Their understanding that they are sinful.
 - They are forgiven for their sins because of God’s grace and their faith in what Jesus had done for them on the cross.
- It should occur one time:
 - After one accepts Jesus as their Savior and Lord.
 - By full immersion under water (bathtub, lake, ocean, river, pool, etc.).
 - The Greek word for baptism is “baptizo.” Baptizo means to immerse, submerge, or fully wet.
 - Sprinkling of water on the head or body lacks the spiritual significance and representation of death and burial because of sin, and a resurrected new life.



Here is a link to a video on Baptism: (<https://www.gotquestions.org/Christian-baptism.html>)

The Baptism of Jesus

Jesus was a mirror image of God's character. He exemplified God's truth, God's grace and God's love; He lived a life that was an example of God's definition of righteous behavior; and He demonstrated what He taught—including being baptized.

John the Baptist was baptizing persons at the Jordan river. John was preparing the way for Jesus by declaring the imminent arrival of the Messiah, and the need to repent and be baptized (as a public demonstration of their willing heart to repent from their sins and turn towards God).

"In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!' For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord; Make His paths straight.'" Matthew 3:1-3

John also made prophetic declarations about the divine nature of Jesus, His ministry, and what will occur during the final judgment. (Mat. 13:24-30; Rev. 20:11-15)

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Matthew 3:11-12

Jesus travelled to the Jordan river to be baptized by John. "Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?' But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him." Mat. 3:13-15

The baptism of Jesus fulfilled righteousness by demonstrating:

- Even though He was sinless and did not need to repent, He wanted to be baptized:
 - As a means to demonstrate His humanity.
 - As an example for those who believe in Him.
- An example of His impending death and resurrection.
- A confirmation that He is the Messiah by what occurred after He rose from the water.

"When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'" Matthew 3:16-17

The baptism of Jesus is recorded in all four gospels: (Mat. 3:13-17; Mark 1:2-11; Luke 3:21-23; John 1:29-34). Thereafter is when Jesus began His public ministry.

Here is link to a video on the baptism of Jesus: (<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/yOq6GkRRPao>).

How A Baptism Should Occur

A baptism is a positive, wonderful and loving event. As such, if possible, it is beneficial to have family, friends and Christian brothers and sisters attend to witness the baptism. In addition, the baptism should occur in any clean and safe body of water—including a pool, stream, lake, ocean, bathtub—or any means possible where the baptized may be fully immersed. In addition, the baptizer must be a Christian (preferably the pastor or elder within the church).

Preparation

- The baptizer should pre-instruct the baptized of what will occur. For example, the baptized will need to close their mouth and use their thumb and index finger to close their nostrils. When ready, the baptizer will place one hand behind their head and another hand to hold their arm or wrist. The baptized should relax and fall backward into the water. Once fully submerged, the baptizer will immediately raise their head out of the water and assist them upward until standing.
- Clothing will become wet and possibly transparent. As such, the baptized should wear dark clothing to not reveal inappropriate under garments or “private areas” of their body. Plus bring dry clothes to change into.
- Ask the baptized if they would like to make a public profession of their faith and reason for their baptism.

Suggestion of What the Baptizer May Say

It is appropriate for the baptizer to introduce the one being baptized to those who are witnessing the baptism. An introduction may include:

- Their personal knowledge of this person.
- How they have witnessed their transformation.
- Additional relevant background information if appropriate.
- Then, if agreed upon, ask the one who will be baptized if they would like to speak.

What the Baptizer Should Say (prior to the baptism)

- *Because of your declared faith, I baptize you “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”* Matthew 28:19
- Important Note: Baptism should be a joyful experience and not a ritual. Except for baptizing “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” other words that are spoken should not follow any prescribed format. It is about the intent of our heart; it is about our faith; it is about worship; it is about obedience; and it is about our love for God. While it is beneficial to have order and structure, our acts of worship and obedience should flow freely from our heart and not defined by a specific sequence of ritualistic words and behaviors. Rituals can stifle the spirit and harden the heart towards the true meaning and purpose of our worship and obedience to God. Therefore, whenever possible, make this a personal, joyous and special occasion for all.



I pray this lesson fully explains the spiritual importance and meaning of baptism.

All for His Glory!
Harold D. Thomas