

Why Do We Baptize by Sprinkling/Pouring and not Immersion/Dunking?

1. Ex. 24:8 Moses sprinkles people with blood of covenant.
 - a. Mt. 26:28; Mk. 14:24; Lk. 22:20, Christ says He “pours out” His blood of the New Covenant.
 - b. Heb. 9:19-20; 10:29 connect Moses to Christ, do not reject the blood of the new covenant by which you were sanctified, and thereby outrage the Spirit of grace.
2. Ezek. 36:25-26 “I will **sprinkle clean water on you.**” Also says new heart and spirit is given, removes heart of stone. Compare this to the new covenant as promised in Jeremiah 31:31ff.
3. Baptism does not mean “immersion”. It has a range of meaning of various washings/cleanings (you can bathe by taking a shower or a bath, sponge bath, etc.).
 - a. Acts 8:38-39, Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch go down into the water, but only after this is the Ethiopian said to be baptized by Philip. They both then come up out of the water.
 - b. If going in and coming out meant immersion, then not only was the Ethiopian immersed, so was Philip, the one doing the baptism! This is an absurd idea.
 - c. Mk. 1:8-10, Jesus is baptized by John, going into and coming out of the water. Again, as seen from Acts 8 above, this does not mean He was immersed. It means he walked into the Jordan river. The Ethiopian’s baptism likely didn’t even have enough water to immerse his whole body.
4. After Christ’s baptism, as He comes back to dry ground, the Spirit “**descends**” upon Him.
 - a. John the Baptist says he baptizes with water, but Christ will baptize with the Holy Spirit. We see Christ is now baptized/full of the Holy Spirit, and will soon, after He ascends on High, baptize His people with the Holy Spirit, by pouring out His Spirit upon them.
 - b. Acts 1-2, Apostles must wait for the Spirit to be “**poured out**” from Christ on high.
 - c. Acts 1:5, Jesus says, “they will be baptized with H.S. soon.
 - d. Acts 2:3, Holy Spirit **comes upon/sits** disciples/apostles like tongues of fire.
 - e. Acts 8:14-16, H.S. had not yet “**fallen**” upon the Samaritans.
 - f. Acts 10:44, Peter is preaching and the H.S. “**falls upon**” the Gentiles. The Jews are astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit is “**poured out**” also on the Gentiles.
5. Peter then says in Acts 10:47-48, “Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, **who have received the Holy Spirit** just as we have?” And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.
 - a. We see baptism in the new covenant/for us today is deeply connected to the blood of Christ and its sprinkling/pouring out. And because Christ’s blood cleanses/covers His people, it is a baptism that can also symbolize the Holy Spirit’s outpouring/being received by God’s people.
 - b. Christ’s blood cleanses us, and makes us fit to receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. So baptism symbolizes Christ’s blood and Spirit. So how does His blood and Spirit come upon us? Plainly, Scripture shows it is by pouring or sprinkling, not immersing or dunking!
 - d. This shows the Lord is sovereign in covenanting and redeeming His people. He is the one who covers us with Christ’s blood, and pours out His Spirit upon His people.
 - e. But in immersion, the water, which is meant to symbolize the blood and Spirit of Christ, is passive, and the person is active. While this might be said to symbolize burial with Christ and rising to new life akin to Romans 6, this is not the focus of the Scriptures on baptism’s meaning.
 - f. But since God is the initiator and the one who promises Christ’s blood and indwelling Spirit to His covenant people, we can see God’s sovereign grace, and that He can make this covenant and its promises of Christ’s blood and Spirit to whomever He wishes.

- g. Since God has always covenanted with believers and their children (Gen. 17:7; Acts 2:38-39), then babies of believers also ought to be baptized, and as the child grows in age, they should be taught that their baptism shows God has covenanted with them and promised them the blood of His Son and the Spirit of His Son, to be received savingly by faith and repentance.