

The Discipline of Disciple-Making: “Making Disciples & Baptizing Them”

Acts 2-19

God's Word teaches us a doctrine called “believer’s baptism” which means that: *God has only designed baptism to be applied to believers.* Believer’s Baptism started when Jesus Christ said that the way that people were to declare God’s ownership of their lives after they were saved, was when they were baptized in His Name. Jesus included this baptism of believers into the plan for the church.

CHRIST JESUS LEFT THE PLAN FOR HIS CHURCH

When Jesus left the disciples with the plan they were to follow, it was simple:

Go, evangelize, baptize & train.

That is the Great Commission. That is God’s plan for Christ's Church. Stated twice (Matthew 28:18-20 and Mark 16:16); and illustrated in Acts nine times, it is what God expects us in Christ's Church to be doing.

Our job is to make disciples; and **our motivation** is to do that (and everything else), for the glory of God. A simple reading of the commission of Christ and the record of the response of His disciples, and the early church, would lead us to conclude that:

BAPTISM WAS PART OF THE PLAN

Baptism for the New Testament Church had its origin in the command of Christ to make disciples and baptize them (Matt. 28:19). There was a particular order established in what Christ said: *first people became disciples, then those disciples were baptized, and then they were taught.*

Please stand with me, and listen to the clear and simple plan God the Son, our Savior Jesus Christ left for each of us:

Matthew 28:18-20 (NKJV) 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.

So we could simply map the plan Christ left in these four actions:

Go—Disciple—Baptize—Teach.

That means then that according to God's Word, and from the record we have in Church History:

BAPTISM WAS EXPECTED IN THE 1ST CENTURY!

The Great Commission pattern is carried out in the book of Acts. Before we look at each of the ten passages that record a baptism, we could summarize everything about Baptism that the book of Acts records like this:

Acts 2:38-41:	<i>Day of Pentecost responders</i> received the Word; and then were baptized .
Acts 8:12-13:	<i>Samaritans</i> believed; and were baptized .
Acts 8:36-37:	<i>Ethiopian</i> confesses Christ; and was baptized .
Acts 9:17-18:	<i>Paul</i> converted, receives Spirit; and then was baptized .
Acts 10:47-48:	<i>Gentiles</i> were saved, received the Spirit; and then they were baptized .
Acts 16:14-15:	<i>Lydia</i> , after the Lord opened her heart: was baptized .
Acts 16:30-34:	<i>Philippian jailer</i> and family believed; and were baptized .
Acts 18:7-8:	<i>Corinthians</i> heard, believed; and were baptized .
Acts 19:4-6:	<i>Ephesians</i> believed; and were baptized .

All of these summaries indicate that in each event baptism follows belief; and it is striking if you notice the pattern: that baptism is always mentioned closely following conversion.

Now, as good Bereans who search the Scriptures ourselves and see if what is presented is actually taught there (Acts 17:11), join me we go to each actual event, note in the passages when the person was saved, and then see how closely Baptism follows.

BELIEVER'S BAPTISM IS CLEARLY PORTRAYED IN ACTS

Baptism Account-1: Peter preached, people responded.

But, only those who heard the gospel, understood and responded to it through faith and repentance, could be baptized. The result was that the people received the Word, and then were baptized (Acts 2:41). Note the sequence as we read though Acts 2:37-44:

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, **what shall we do?**" 38 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**. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.” 40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “**Be saved** from this perverse generation.” 41 Then **those who gladly received his word were baptized**; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. 42 And **they continued steadfastly** in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. 44 Now **all who believed** were together, and had all things in common,

Baptism Account-2: Those who responded to Philip’s message first believed, and then were baptized. Note Acts 8:12-13:

But **when they believed** Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were **baptized**. 13 Then Simon himself also **believed**; and when he **was baptized** he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs, which were done.

Baptism Account-3: As soon as the Ethiopian believed in Christ, he stopped his chariot so that he could be baptized. Follow along in Acts 8:35-37:

Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning **at this Scripture, preached Jesus** to him. 36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, “See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?” 37 Then Philip said, “**If you believe with all your heart**, you may.” And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

Baptism Account-4: As soon as Paul received back his sight after his conversion, and was filled with the Holy Spirit, he was baptized (9:11-18).

So the Lord said to him, “Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. 12 And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight.” 13 Then Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. 14 And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name.” 15 But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. 16 For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name’s sake.” 17 And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, “**Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.**” 18 Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and **he arose and was baptized**.

Baptism Account-5: As soon as Cornelius and his household were saved, Peter “ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ” (10:41-48).

Acts 10:41-48 (NKJV) not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. 42 And **He commanded us to preach** to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead. 43 To Him all the prophets witness that, **through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.** 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 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 heard them 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.** Then they asked him to stay a few days.

Baptism Account-6: Lydia is converted and then baptized (Acts 16:6–15); but note how God makes Paul go in a different direction, sends him a vision, and opens Lydia’s heart. This is an amazing example of God the Savior seeking the lost.

Acts 16:6-15 (NKJV) Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were **forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach** the word in Asia. 7 After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. 8 So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” 10 Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, **concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.** 11 Therefore, sailing from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and the next day came to Neapolis, 12 and from there to Philippi, which is the foremost city of that part of Macedonia, a colony. And we were staying in that city for some days. 13 And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there. 14 Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, **who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.** 15 And when **she and her household were baptized,** she begged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” So she persuaded us.

Baptism Account-7: the conversion of the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:25–34) again follows the believer’s baptism pattern: he hears, cries out, believes, and then is baptized.

Acts 16:25-34 (NKJV) But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. 26 Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were

opened and everyone's chains were loosed. 27 And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. 28 But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here." 29 Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 And he brought them out and said, "**Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**" 31 So they said, "**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.**" 32 Then **they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.** 33 And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. **And immediately he and all his family were baptized.** 34 Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, **having believed in God with all his household.**

Baptism Account-8: As soon as lost pagans and Jews in Corinth were being won to Jesus Christ, they were also being baptized (18:4-10).

Acts 18:4-10 (NKJV) And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks. 5 When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. 6 But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." 7 And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain man named Justus, one who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. 8 Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, **believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.** 9 Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; 10 for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city."

Baptism Account-9: As soon as Paul found some disciples of John in Ephesus who had only been baptized with the baptism of John for repentance: he told them about Jesus, the one for whom John was merely preparing the way; and when they believed "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (19:1-7).

Acts 19:1-7 (NKJV) And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples 2 he said to them, "**Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?**" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." 3 And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism." 4 Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that **they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.**" 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. 7 Now the men were about twelve in all.

So in every baptism event recorded in the Book of Acts we can see belief in the Gospel, followed by the outward sign of that belief in believer's baptism.

PAUL TAUGHT WHAT BAPTISM DECLARES IN COLOSSIANS

In Colossians 2:11-15, Paul wrote to the church at Colosse what he taught in other places where he had visited. Baptism portrays the wonders of what Christ did for us in salvation.

Truth # 1: Baptism Is My Declaration That I Have A Heart That Is New

“In him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ”. (Colossians 2:11, NKJV)

Our new heart speaks of spiritual heart circumcision (Ezekiel 36:26-27), or the work of salvation as Christ is putting off our old person

Truth # 2: Baptism Is My Declaration That I Have a Past That Is Buried And Forever Gone

“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”. (Colossians 2:12, NKJV)

Truth # 3: Baptism Is My Declaration That I Have A Fresh, New Beginning

Colossians 2:13 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,

Truth # 4: Baptism Is My Declaration That I Have An End To All Guilt, Because All My Sins Are On Jesus

Colossians 2:14a 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.

Truth # 5: Baptism Is My Declaration That I Have Nothing Left to Fear

Colossians 2:14b 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.

Today in Christ we have: a heart that is new; a past that is forever gone; a fresh new beginning, an end to all guilt; and nothing left to fear!

BAPTISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Remember what New Testament baptism is:

Believer's Baptism *was commanded by Christ for the Church to observe until the end of the age.* Baptism means identification (Mt. 28:19). New Testament baptism is always to identify believers with Christ in His death and resurrection. When we are baptized in the name of Christ (Acts 2:38) we are stressing our association with Christ. In Romans 6:4–5 where Spirit baptism is described, not water baptism: the passage still illustrates what water baptism means: the public declaration that believers are united to Christ by faith in His death and resurrection. Immersion is the most Biblical mode of baptism, not just because the Greek word for baptism denotes immersion; but also because only immersion can symbolize death, burial, and resurrection.

Believer's Baptism *portrays my new relationship with God.* Matthew 28:19-20 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen. (KJV)

Believer's Baptism *announces my pledge of allegiance to Christ, as I am baptized into the name of the Triune God, and fellowship with Him.* 1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether [we be] Jews or Gentiles, whether [we be] bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. (KJV) Galatians 3:26-27 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (KJV)