

Did Jesus command us to be baptized in water?

- 1- **There is only one baptism (so somebody's wrong) – *Ephesians 4:4*:** *“There is one body and one Spirit --- just as you were called to one hope when you were called --- one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all.”*

- 2- **Since the Bible says there is only “one baptism” --- then which one is it?**
 - A. The Greeks have a word for “*immerse*” (*baptizo*), one for “*sprinkle*” (*rantizo*) and one for “*pour*” (*cheo*), and one that could be translated either “*immerse*,” “*pour*,” or “*sprinkle*” (*hundriano*). **The only word used in the Bible to describe Christian baptism is “*baptizo*” (*immerse*).**

- 3- **Then where did sprinkling and pouring come from?**
 - A. **Sprinkling & pouring became a substitute for immersion in 753 AD** (over 700 years after the first Church was started and the first 3,000 Christians were immersed). **Pope Stephen II** allowed the monks of Cressy in Brittany to sprinkle the head in cases of necessity. **By the year 1311, the Roman Catholic Church held a Council at Revenna and legalized sprinkling or pouring as a substitution for immersion** (according to the Edinburgh Encyclopedia).

 - B. But remember, in *Matthew 15:9*, Jesus said: *“They worship Me in vain, their teachings are but rules made by men.”*

- 4- **Even top religious leaders and founders of different denominations knew the Truth:**
 - A. **John Calvin (founder of the Presbyterians)** said: “The word ‘baptize’ signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the primitive Church.”

 - B. **Martin Luther (founder of the Lutherans)** said: “Baptism is a Greek word, and may be translated ‘immerse.’ I would have those who are to be baptized to be altogether dipped.”

 - C. **John Wesley (founder of the Methodists)** said: “Buried with Him by baptism --- alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion.”

- 5- **Ask yourself this question: “Which baptism (sprinkle, pour, or immerse) requires the following four Biblical points?”:**

- A. **WATER – Acts 8:36**: “As they (Philip and the eunuch) traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, ‘Look, here is some water. Why shouldn’t I be baptized’ (baptizo or immersed)?”
- B. **MUCH WATER – John 3:22,23**: “...Jesus and His disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where He spent some time with them, and **baptized (baptizo or immersed)**. Now John (the Baptist) also was **baptizing (baptizo or immersing)** at Aenon near Salim, **because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptized (baptizo or immersed).**”
- C. **GOING DOWN INTO THE WATER – Acts 8:38**: “And he (eunuch) ordered the chariot to stop. Then both Philip and the eunuch **went down into the water and Philip baptized (baptizo or immersed) him.**”
- D. **COMING UP OUT OF THE WATER – Matthew 3:16**: “As soon as Jesus was **baptized (baptizo or immersed), He went up out of the water...**”

6- Now, ask yourself, “Which baptism is also a representative of the following Biblical symbols”:

- A. **A REBIRTH – John 3:5,22-26**: “Jesus answered, ‘I tell you the truth, unless a man is **born of the water and the Spirit**, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God’.” BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW JESUS WAS SPEAKING HERE OF WATER BAPTISM BY IMMERSION? Because it continues to tell us, that as soon as Jesus left Nicodemus...(22) “After this, Jesus and His disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where He spent some time with them, and **baptized (baptizo or immersed)...(26)** they came to John (the Baptist) and said to him, ‘Rabbi, that man (Jesus) who was with you on the other side of the Jordan...**is baptizing (baptizo or immersing)**, and everyone is going to Him...(4:1) The Pharisees heard that **Jesus was gaining and baptizing (baptizo or immersing) more disciples than John (the Baptist).**”
- B. **A DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION – Romans 6:3-5**: “Or don’t you know that all of us who were **baptized (baptizo or immersed) into Christ Jesus were baptized (baptizo or immersed) into His death? We were therefore buried with Him through baptism (baptizo or immersion) into death**, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, that we too may live a new life. If we have been united with Him in His death (symbolically through baptism or immersion), we will certainly also be united with Him in His **resurrection**. YOU CAN BE SURE YOU’RE GOING TO HEAVEN?”

C. WASHING AWAY SINS – When the Apostle Paul (then called Saul) was struck down blind by Jesus for killing Christians, he explains what happened to him in Acts 22:10-16: “What shall I do Lord? I (Saul) asked. ‘Get up,’ the Lord said, ‘and go into Damascus. There you will be told all that you have been assigned to do.’ My companions led me by the hand into Damascus, because the brilliance of the light had blinded me. A man named Ananias came to see me.. He stood beside me and said, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight!’ And at that very moment I was able to see him. Then he said: ‘The God of our fathers has chosen you to know His will and to see the Righteous One (Jesus) and to hear words from His mouth. You will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. And now, what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized (baptizo or immersed), and wash away your sins, calling on His (Christ’s) name’.”

(1) In I Kings 5, remember the story of how Naaman was cleansed of his leprosy only when he obeyed God’s entire command as Elisha instructed, and dipped (baptizo or immersed) himself seven times in the Jordan river? Would he have been healed if he refused dip, baptize, or immerse himself? When he was healed, did the water in the Jordan river magically wash away his leprosy, or was it his faith and obedience to God’s command?

7- Baptism started with John the Baptist.

A. Commanded by God first to the Jews according to Luke 7:29,30: “All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus’ words, acknowledged that God’s way was right, because they had been baptized (baptizo or immersed) by John (the Baptist).”

B. It required water according to John 1:31: “I (John the Baptist), myself did not know Him (Christ), but the reason I came baptizing (baptizo or immersing) with water was that He might be revealed to Israel.”

C. It was for the forgiveness of sins if the person was repentant, according to Luke 3:3: “He (John the Baptist) went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism (baptizo or immersion) of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.”

D. It took the place of circumcision --- it was the seal of a New Covenant (New Testament) according to Colossians 2:9-15: “For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity (God) lives in bodily form, and you have been given this fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. **In Him you were also circumcised (seal of the Jew’s promise to obey the Old Law), **in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision****

done by the hands of men, but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with Him in baptism (baptizo or immersion) and raised with Him through your faith in the power of God, who raised Him from the dead. When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code (Old Testament), with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; He took it away, nailing it to the cross.” CHRISTIANS ARE NO LONGER UNDER THE OLD TESTAMENT LAW ONCE THEY’VE BEEN BAPTIZED.

- E. It was symbolic of a rebirth, in order to get into God’s Kingdom, according to John 3:3-5: “Jesus declared, ‘I tell you the truth, *unless a man is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.*’ ‘How can a man be born when he is old?’ Nicodemus asked. ‘Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb to be born again!’ Jesus answered, ‘I tell you the truth, *unless a man is born of the water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.*’”**
- F. Remember, Jesus, Himself, was baptized by John the Baptist, according to Mark 1:9; and, He was also responsible for the baptism of others, according to John 3:22; He was responsible for even more baptisms than John the Baptist, according to John 4:1!**
- G. Then, after Jesus died on the cross and rose again, He commanded everyone in every nation (Jews and Gentiles) to be baptized (baptizo or immersed) in order to be one of His disciples, according to Matthew 28:16-20: “Then the eleven disciples (Judas hung himself) went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they (His Apostles) saw Him (40 days after His resurrection), they worshiped Him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in Heaven and on Earth has been given to Me. Therefore, **go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing (baptizo or immersing) them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you** (including His first command --- to baptize --- baptizo or immerse). And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.’”**
- (1) The Apostles were then told by Jesus in Acts 1:4,5: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift My Father promised, which you have heard Me speak about. For John baptized (baptizo or immersed) with water, but in a few days you (The Apostles) will be baptized (baptizo or immersed) by the Holy Spirit.” SEE MY STUDY ON “WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE GIFT AND THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT”**

(2) **When this happened on the Day of Pentecost, they obeyed Christ's command, and told the people (through the Holy Spirit) in Acts 2:38: “Repent and be baptized (baptizo or immersed), every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift (not the baptism) of the Holy Spirit.” ONLY THE APOSTLES RECEIVED THE BAPTISM (IMMERSION) OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S POWER.**

H. Those who wanted the Holy Spirit, but had only been baptized by John's baptism, were re-baptized, according to Acts 19:1-5: “Paul took the road through the interior, and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, ‘Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?’ They answered, ‘No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.’ So Paul asked, ‘Then what baptism did you receive?’ ‘John's baptism,’ they replied. Paul said, ‘John's baptism was a baptism of repentance (to turn back to God --- it had nothing to do with the Holy Spirit). He told the people to believe in the One coming after him, that is, in Jesus.’ On hearing this, they were baptized (baptizo or immersed) into the Name of the Lord Jesus.”

8- But, are you sure Christians were baptized in water, and not just the Holy Spirit?

A. Philip the Evangelist, who was one of the original Seven Deacons of the original Church started on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 6:1-6) baptized (baptizo or immersed) in water, according to Acts 8:36-39: “As they (Philip and the eunuch) traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, ‘Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized (baptizo or immersed)?’ Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, you may.’ The official answered, ‘I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.’ And he ordered the chariot to stop. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and Philip baptized (baptizo or immersed) him (IN WATER).”

B. But, was water baptism only commanded to the Jews? How about the Gentiles (all those who were not Jews)? Did they baptize in the Holy Spirit, and no longer needed nor use water? Peter answers this question when he converted the first Gentiles into Christianity (as he did the first Jews, according to Acts 2:38). Read Acts 10:44-48: “While Peter was still speaking these words (his sermon to the first Gentile believers --- Cornelius and his household), the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers (Jews) who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God (just like the Apostles were able to do on the Day of

Pentecost in *Acts 2*, when the first Jews became Christians). *Then Peter said, ‘Can anyone (speaking to the Jews who came with him, and who did not think the Gentiles could become Christians) keep these people from being baptized (baptizo or immersed) with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we (Jews) have.’ So, he ordered that they be baptized (baptizo or immersed) in the Name of Jesus Christ (IN WATER!).’*

- (1) Even though Jesus told His Apostles in *Matthew 28:16-20* that they were to “baptize” (baptizo or immerse) “all nations,” the Jews still thought the Gentiles were *unclean*, and therefore, could not be equal Christians with the Jews. This is why Jesus gave Peter the vision of the unclean animals in *Acts 10:9-43*, and told them not to call anything *unclean* that God had made *clean*; **but, to go to the Gentiles.**
- (2) It is also the reason that **this is the only time ever recorded in the Bible that God gave the Baptism of the Holy Spirit to someone (Cornelius and his household) other than the Apostles (*Acts 1:15*).** It was the only way that God could convince the Jews that the Gentiles were equal to them in every way as Christians.
- (3) **This is why Paul said in *Galatians 3:26-28*:** “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, **for all of you who were baptized (baptizo or immersed) into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek (Gentile), slave or free, male nor female; for you are all one (equal) in Christ Jesus.**”
- (4) **And, according to *II Corinthians 5:17*:** “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, and the new has come!”

9- Baptism (baptizo or immersion) is part of what will save you!

- A. ***Mark 16:16*:** “Whoever believes **and is baptized (baptizo or immersed) will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned!**”
- B. ***I Peter 3:21*:** “and this water symbolizes **baptism (baptizo or immersion) that now saves you also** --- not the removal of dirt from the body, but the pledge of a good conscience towards God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ...”

10- Baptism is a command from Jesus in order to be His disciple, according to ***Matthew 28:19,20***: “Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in Heaven and on Earth has been given to Me. Therefore, go and **make disciples of all nations, baptizing (baptizo or immersing) them in the Name of the Father and of**

the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

- A. And what did Jesus “*command*” them to do? To “*make disciples of all nations, baptizing (baptizo or immersing) them in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit!*”
- B. And the Apostles obeyed His command with both **Jews (Acts 2:38)**, and **Gentiles (Acts 10:47)**.
- C. **SO, AS WAS TOLD TO THE APOSTLE PAUL, HIMSELF, IN ACTS 22:16:** “*AND NOW, WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? GET UP, BE BAPTIZED (BAPTIZO OR IMMersed), AND WASH AWAY YOUR SINS, CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD!*”

11- What about all those people throughout history that never were baptized by immersion, because they neither heard nor understood the command. Just as the Ethiopian eunuch said to Philip while trying to understand the Bible he was reading in **Acts 8:30,31:** “*Do you understand what you are reading?’ Philip asked. ‘How can I,’ he said, ‘unless someone explains it to me?’*”

- A. **Jesus explained in John 12:47-50:** “*As for the person who hears My (Jesus) Words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. There is a judge for the one who rejects Me and does not accept My Words (New Testament); that very Word which I spoke will condemn him at the Last Day.*”
- B. **John 15:22-24:** “*If I (Jesus) had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. Now, however, they have no excuse for their sin.*”
- C. **John 9:41:** “*Jesus said, ‘If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see (read Christ’s Words or New Testament, and know what He has commanded you to do), your guilt remains.*”
- D. **Romans 2:14-16:** “*Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the Law (Old Testament) do by nature things required by the Law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the Law, since they show that **the requirements of the Law are written on their hearts, their consciences (I Peter 3:21) also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.** This will take place on the day when God will judge men’s secrets through Jesus Christ, as my Gospel (New Testament) declares.” **SEE MY STUDY ON “WHEN WE CAN JUDGE, AND WHEN WE CAN NOT JUDGE”***

E. According to *Luke 23:40-43*, Jesus saved the thief on the cross just before he died (without baptism); but, remember God's warning in *Hebrews 10-:26,27*: "*If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the Truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of Judgment, and of the raging fire that will consume the enemies of God!*"

12- YOU NOW KNOW THE TRUTH --- WHAT WILL YOU DO?