**THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**

In Christianity there are three fundamental sacraments: professing belief in Jesus Christ, baptism and communion. A sacrament is a Christian rite that is recognized as being essential to salvation. These are also public testimonies of the grace of God. Two were instituted by Jesus Christ: baptism and communion. Four prerequisites for baptism are: belief in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, confession of personal and ancestral sin, repentance of personal and ancestral sin and restitution where appropriate. There are two variants of baptism: baptism by immersion in water and baptism in the Holy Spirit. Baptism in the Holy Spirit has two classical forms: when the Holy Spirit comes on a person and when Holy Spirt goes into a person.

**A Person only Needs to Be Baptized Once and Only Baptism in Christ is Valid**

*"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." Ephesians 4:4-6*

Rebaptism has been done historically when baptism was initially done incorrectly (infant baptism) or incompletely (in the name of a minister, instead of the Trinity, or without calling on the Lord for salvation); but there is no scriptural precedent for this. Rebaptism to “feel better about it is questionable because it demonstrates a lack of faith in the original act being sufficient or lasting.

**A Person Must Hear and Believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ Before They Can Be Baptized**

*"Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day." Acts 2:41*

*"But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Acts 8:12*

*"They replied, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.' Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized." Acts 16:31-33*

The third verse above might be carelessly interpreted to embrace baptism of minors and the forced baptism of some members of the family, servants or slaves. Canon IV of Scriptural interpretation does not allow this because of conflict with other clear passages indicating baptism is exclusively for those past the age of accountability and may not be done contrary to free will. So, it may be presumed all those baptized in the jailer’s household were consenting adults.

**A Father Can Lead His Whole Household in Baptism** (though they also need to be baptized individually)

*"Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.' With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.' Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day." Acts 2:38-41*

**Repentance is a Prerequisite for Baptism and Forgiveness of Sins**

*"And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins." Mark 1:4*

*"Paul said, ‘John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.'" Acts 19:4*

*"And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River." Mark 1:4-5*

**You must believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Profess that Belief to be Saved.**

*“The one believing and being baptized will be saved. And the one not believing will be condemned.” Mark 16:16*

*“For everyone, "whoever may call on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Joel 2:32) Romans 10:13 LITV*

*"And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.’" Acts 22:16*

**Baptism by Water & Holy Spirit gives us Citizenship In the Kingdom of Heaven**

*"Jesus answered, ‘Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.’" John 3:5*

**Baptism is *not* Good Works**

*"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2:8-9*

**If You Are Not Baptized, You Will Suffer Eternal damnation**

*"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." Mark 16:16*

**Through Baptism, We “Put on Christ” and Receive His Righteousness and Authority with Power**

*"Then is the Law against the promises of God? Let it not be! For if a law had been given which had been able to make alive, indeed righteousness would have been out of Law. But the Scripture locked up all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to the ones believing. But before the coming of faith, we were guarded under Law, having been locked up to the faith being about to be revealed. So that the Law has become a trainer of us until Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But faith coming, we are no longer under a trainer; for you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many as were baptized into Christ, you put on Christ. There cannot be Jew nor Greek, there is no slave nor freeman, there is no male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are of Christ, then you are a seed of Abraham, even heirs according to promise." Galatians 3:21-29*

**Baptism in the Holy Spirit**

*"John answered them all, ‘I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.’" Luke 3:16*

*"'I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.' Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?' Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.'" Matthew 3:11-17*

*"Then I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’" Acts 11:16*

*"For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink." 1 Corinthians 12:13*

**Baptism in the Holy Spirit Can Accompany Water Baptism, Immediately Follow it, Come at Another Time, or Even Precede Water Baptism**

Right After

*"As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him." Matthew 3:16*

*"And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’" John 1:33*

*"When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” Luke 3:21-22*

On Another Occasion

*“But a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus, being powerful in the Scriptures. This one having been taught by mouth in the way of the Lord, and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things about the Lord, having understood only the baptism of John. And this one began to speak boldly in the synagogue. And hearing him Priscilla and Aquila took him and more accurately expounded the way of God to him. And he having intended to go through into Achaia, having been encouraged, the brothers wrote to the disciples to welcome him; who, having arrived, helped much those who were believing through grace. For he powerfully confuted the Jews publicly, proving through the Scriptures Jesus to be the Christ.*

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*“And it happened, in the time Apollos was in Corinth, Paul was passing through the higher parts to come to Ephesus. And finding some disciples, he said to them, Believing, did you receive the Holy Spirit? And they said to him, We did not even hear whether the Holy Spirit is. And he said to them, Then to what were you baptized? And they said, To the baptism of John. And Paul said, John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe into the One coming after him, that is, into the Christ, Jesus. And hearing, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.   And Paul laying hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in languages and prophesied.” Acts 18:24-28 & 19:1-6 LITV*

**You Must Be Baptized in the Name of the Father, Christ and the Holy Spirit**

*"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing 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. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20*

*"So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days." Acts 10:48 (Necessary, but not sufficient)*

You should call on the Lord to be saved.

*"And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name." Acts 22:16 ESV*

**Baptism is by Immersion in Water**

*"Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?' And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea." Acts 8:35-40*

*"The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’ I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.' Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’" John 1:29-33*

*"As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. 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." Ephesians 4:1-6*

**Baptism Identifies With the Death, Burial & Resurrection of Christ, and Gives us New Life**

*"What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness." Romans 6:1-18*

*"Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in Him, being rooted and being built up in Him, and being confirmed in the faith, even as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. Watch that there not be one robbing you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and having been filled, you are in Him, who is the Head of all rule and authority, in whom also you were circumcised with a circumcision not made by hands, in the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, being buried with Him in baptism, in whom also you were raised through the faith of the working of God, raising Him from among the dead. And you, being dead in the deviations and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all the deviations, blotting out the handwriting in the ordinances against us, which was contrary to us, even He has taken it out of the midst, nailing it to the cross; having stripped the rulers and the authorities, He made a show of them in public, triumphing over them in it." Colossians 2:6-15 LITV*

**Baptism Is Symbolic of How Noah and His Family Were Saved During the Great Flood – Unlike that Baptism, the Baptism of Christ Puts To Death the Flesh and Makes the Spirit Alive!**

*"Because even Christ once suffered concerning sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God; indeed being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit; in which also, going in to the spirits in prison, He then proclaimed to disobeying ones, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, an ark having been prepared, into which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. Which antitype now also saves us, baptism (not a putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ;  who going into Heaven is at the right of God, the angels, and authorities, and powers being subjected to Him)." I Peter 3:18-22 LITV*