

What is Baptism?

Throughout the Bible, there are various references to water that represent both life and death. In the beginning, God created heaven and earth, including the water that nourishes and sustains all living things. By the waters of the great flood, God condemned the wicked and saved the righteous. God also used water to lead the Israelites out of the bondage of slavery, through the parted sea, and into the (eventual) freedom of the promised land, while using the same water to condemn those who had oppressed God's people.

For the faithful, water represents a new beginning and brings forth new life as a sign of cleansing and rebirth. In the water of the Jordan River, Jesus himself was baptized and anointed by the Father with the Holy Spirit.

We are all born as children of a fallen humanity. However, our heavenly Father, in His mercy, liberates us from the penalty of sin by joining us to the death and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. By the water of baptism, we are cleansed of our sins and reborn as children of God, becoming heirs along with Jesus, to God's heavenly kingdom. God has promised eternal life to all who believe in the sacrifice of His risen Son. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus graciously offers us the gift of salvation and everlasting life.

Bible Verses About Baptism:

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way"— "a voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. (*Mark 1:1-4*)

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 3:16-17*)

Jesus replied [to Nicodemus], "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." "How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!" Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' (*John 3:3-7*)

Then Jesus came to the [disciples] and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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 28:18-20*)

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. (*Acts 2:38*)

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. (*Romans 6:3-4*)

If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (*Romans 10:9*)