Article Summary

The Doctrine of Baptism always elicits questions:

Q: Is baptism necessary?
A: Not for salvation, but it is a necessary step of obedience.

Q: Whose baptism will we accept?
A: Those of like faith. One does not necessarily have to be Baptist, but one must be *baptistic*.

Q: Any special effect when performed?
A: Not in the sense of imparting grace unto salvation, but yes in the sense of blessing, strengthening, and encouraging.

"*God's people should be baptized because God commanded it, not because some church requires it*." **John R. Rice**

"*Baptism separates the tire kickers from the car buyers*." **Max Lucado**

"*We may never be martyrs but we can die to self, to sin, to the world, to our plans and ambitions. That is the significance of baptism; we died with Christ and rose to new life*." **Vance Havner**

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JEREMIAH 20:9
MINISTRIES

B E L I E V E

Baptism

Ordinance vs. Sacrament

While there is nothing wrong with the word *sacrament* it carries theological baggage. For some a *sacrament* has the capability to impart grace to someone. It is best to use *ordinance* which has symbolic meaning. It is understood as something ordered or ordained (and in this sense something Christ ordered). Often the true church is characterized by certain "**Marks**":

- Right preaching of the Word of God.
- Right administration of the Ordinances.

Number of Ordinances

While there is divergence even within evangelicalism (some see foot-washing, marriage, and praying for the sick [**Jas 5**] as ordinances), it seems best to see only two since they were "ordained" by Christ. Those two would be baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The Importance of Baptism

Baptism is underscored because of the following:

- Christ was baptized by John (**Mt 3:15-16**). We follow in His steps (**1 Pet 2:21**), His example.
- Christ commanded His disciples to (**Mt 28:19**).
- Continued by His followers in the early church (see all of **Acts** and the **Epistles**).
- New Testament uses baptism to teach important spiritual truth (**Ro 6:1-10**; **Gal 3:27**; **1 Pet 3:21**).
- The author of Hebrews deems baptism a *foundational* truth (**6:1-2**).

The Meaning of Baptism

- Portrays the believer's identification with Christ's death and resurrection (**1 Cor 10:1-4**).
- Portrays every believer's union with Christ (**Ro 6:3-4**).
- Portrays a covenant with God (**Col 2:11-12**).
- Portrays the believer's deliverance from judgment (**1 Pet 3:19-21**).
- Portrays every believer's own spiritual birth.
- Portrays church collective hope of final resurrection.

- Proclaim Gospel- even if denied from pulpit.
- Serves as the initiatory rite into the body of Christ.

The Subjects of Baptism

We believe in *Believer's Baptism* (**Acts 2:41**; **8:12**; **10:47**; **18:8**)

- The one that professes faith in Christ.
- The one that evidences faith in Christ.

Obviously, this belief disqualifies infant baptism and sees it as meaningless.

The Mode of Baptism

- By definition, "**Baptizo**" means to "plunge, dip, immerse, overwhelm, drown" something in water.
- By context, "immerse" is required for the word in several passages (**Mark 1:5-10**; **Acts 8:35-39**).

This belief views sprinkling, pouring, et al as insufficient.

Rebaptism

Paul rebaptized the followers of John the Baptist after they had believed the Christian message (**Acts 19:1-5**). This serves as an example to follow for those who received Christ after they were baptized. It cannot be stressed too much, we believe in **Believer's Baptism** and only a baptism that is after conversion is sufficient. Failure to understand meaning and mode of baptism should also be cause for concern.

Failure to Obey:

- Christ is disobeyed.
- One is removed from submission to the Word of God.
- One is removed from the fullest measure of God's blessing.
- While baptism does not save a person, deliberate neglect or denial makes one suspect as a follower of Christ.
- In a real sense, baptism is the first step of obedience.

When it comes to baptism, much is expected, but much is at stake. Baptism is only the first step of an expected lifetime of obedience to Christ.