

Forty-One Reasons You Should Be Baptized

Dr. James E. Smith

A believer's baptism is an important moment in his spiritual life according to the Bible. Study the following references on the subject. If you are a believer and have never obeyed Christ in baptism you should seek out a faithful Christian to immerse you.

1. BECAUSE JESUS COMMANDED IT. He commanded his disciples to baptize those whom they had taught (Matt 28:19). The implication is that those who have been taught the gospel should willingly submit to baptism.

2. BECAUSE JESUS MODELED IT. Though sinless he walked seventy miles to be baptized by John in the river Jordan in order to fulfill all righteousness (Matthew 3:13-15). If it was the right thing for him to do, how much more is it vital for sinners such as we all are.

3. BECAUSE BAPTISM IS COUPLED WITH FAITH AND LINKED TO SALVATION IN THE TEACHING OF JESUS. "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16: 16).

4. BECAUSE BAPTISM IS LINKED WITH REPENTANCE AND THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS IN THE TEACHING OF THE APOSTLES. "Repent and be baptized for the remission (forgiveness) of sins. . ." (Acts 2:38).

5. BECAUSE BAPTISM IS ESSENTIAL TO RECEIVING THE "GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT" (Acts 2:38). See also Acts 19:3-5.

6. BECAUSE IN BAPTISM OUR SINS ARE WASHED AWAY (Acts 22: 16), not by the water, but by the blood of Jesus.

7. BECAUSE IN BAPTISM WE CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD. "Arise and be baptized, calling on the name of the Lord" Acts 22:16). Baptism is like an action prayer. In this act we call upon God to fulfill all the promises which he has made to us through Christ. Such calling upon the Lord is essential to our salvation.

8. BECAUSE IN BAPTISM WE ARE BROUGHT INTO SPIRITUAL CONTACT WITH THE BLOOD OF JESUS. We are "baptized into his death" where his precious blood was shed (Romans 6:3).

9. BECAUSE IN BAPTISM WE ACT OUT THE BURIAL OF JESUS (Romans 6:4). We are "buried with him."

10. BECAUSE IN BAPTISM WE ACT OUT THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS (Romans 6:4). We are raised with him.

11. BECAUSE IN BAPTISM WE MARK THE FORMAL BEGINNING OF A NEW LIFE IN CHRIST (Romans 6:4). After our baptism we walk in "newness of life."

12. BECAUSE IN BAPTISM WE COME "INTO JESUS CHRIST" where there is salvation and blessing (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:27).

13. BECAUSE IN BAPTISM WE DEMONSTRATE OUR HOPE IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE RIGHTEOUS (Romans 6:5).

14. BECAUSE IN BAPTISM WE "PUT ON CHRIST" (Galatians 3:27). As a garment provides protection from the elements, so Christ provides spiritual protection to those who wear him. As a uniform identifies a soldier as the member of a particular army, so the one who puts on Christ testifies to the world of his spiritual allegiance.

15. BECAUSE IN BAPTISM WE COMPLETE THE PROCESS OF THE NEW BIRTH which began when the Holy Spirit-inspired word was implanted in our hearts (John 3:5).

16. BECAUSE BEING BORN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT IS ESSENTIAL to entering Christ's kingdom of salvation. "Except a man be born of the water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven" (John 3:5).

17. BECAUSE IN BAPTISM WE EXPERIENCE THE CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST in which the sins of the flesh are removed in the sight of God (Colossians 2: 11-12).

18. BECAUSE IN BAPTISM WE ARE "RAISED WITH HIM" through faith in the operation of God, i.e., baptism demonstrates in the physical realm our faith about what God is doing in the spiritual realm When we are baptized (Colossians 2: 12).

19. BECAUSE BAPTISM IS A NECESSARY PREREQUISITE TO BE COUNTED AMONG THE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST. "Those who received his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day" (Acts 2:41).

20. BECAUSE EVEN HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR OBEDIENCE TO CHRIST IN WATER BAPTISM. After Cornelius and his household were baptized in the Holy Spirit, Peter "ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 10:48).

21. BECAUSE EVEN THE BAPTISM OF JOHN THE BAPTIST WAS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR BAPTISM (Acts 19:3). Merely being immersed is not baptism!

22. BECAUSE WHEN PEOPLE IN THE FIRST CENTURY BELIEVED THE GOSPEL THEY WERE BAPTIZED IMMEDIATELY (Acts 8:36; 19:5). The action must have been considered very important.

23. BECAUSE BAPTISM WAS A PROMINENT PART OF THE PREACHING ABOUT JESUS. Philip preached "Jesus" to the Ethiopian. As part of his message he must have spoken of the importance of baptism. At the first opportunity the Ethiopian asked "See, here is water. What would hinder me from being baptized" (Acts 8:35-36).

24. BECAUSE IF ONE BELIEVES THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD, THERE IS NOTHING TO HINDER HIS BAPTISM (Acts 8:36-37). This means that those incapable of believing in Jesus are not proper candidates for baptism. While teaching about the significance of baptism is important, one need not know all there is to know on the subject because he submits to the Lord in this act

25. BECAUSE BAPTISM LEADS TO A REALIZATION THAT ONE HAS OBEYED THE LORD, HENCE TO JOY (Acts 8:39). The newly baptized Ethiopian "went on his way rejoicing."

26. BECAUSE BAPTISM, BEING THE FINAL ACT OF A SERIES OF INITIAL RESPONSES TO THE GOSPEL, SAVES US. The Apostle Peter declared "baptism now saves us" (1 Peter 3:21).

27. BECAUSE IN BAPTISM ONE IS FOLLOWING THE PROMPTING OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE. It is evidence that one is sincerely trying to do exactly what the Lord commanded (1 Peter 3:21).

28. BECAUSE WE ARE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME (BY THE AUTHORITY) OF THE FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT (Mathew 28:19). Baptism is the only act commanded by all three persons of the Godhead.

29. BAPTISM IS THE NATURAL RESULT OF HAVING BELIEVED THE PREACHING OF THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD. "When they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized..." (Acts 8: 12). .

30. BECAUSE BAPTISM IS REQUIRED OF ALL BELIEVERS REGARDLESS OF SEX OR RACE OR ECONOMIC STATUS. ". .. they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8:12). "We were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free" (1 Corinthians 12:13).

31. BECAUSE WE ARE BAPTIZED IN (OR INTO) THE NAME OF THE LORD AND KING JESUS (Acts 8: 16). Jesus is Lord, and baptism is the pledge of our loyalty to our new King.

32. BECAUSE MIRACULOUS HEALING IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR OBEDIENCE IN BAPTISM (Acts 9:18). Miraculous events do not prove that our sins have been forgiven. God's gracious actions should make one even more anxious to obey this simple command.

33. BECAUSE BAPTISM IS THE NATURAL RESPONSE OF A HEART OPENED BY THE LORD (Acts 16: 14-15). Through the gospel the Lord opened Lydia's heart to respond to Paul's message. She responded by being baptized.

34. BECAUSE BAPTISM IS COUPLED WITH FAITH IN THE REPORTS OF SALVATION IN THE BOOK OF ACTS. "Many of the Corinthians heard him [Paul], believed, and were baptized" (Acts 18:8).

35. BECAUSE BAPTISM IS THE ANTETYPE OF THE CROSSING OF THE RED SEA (1 Corinthians 10:2). Just as Israel left the bondage of Egypt by passing through the sea, so we also leave the bondage of sin to enter into a new relationship with God in baptism.

36. BECAUSE BAPTISM IS THE ANTETYPE OF THE WATERS OF NOAH'S FLOOD (1 Peter 3:20-21). Just as the waters removed Noah from a sinful world, so in baptism we pass from a sinful state to a forgiven state.

37. BECAUSE BAPTISM IS THE RESULT OF THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT ON THE HEART AND MIND THROUGH THE WORD. "We were all baptized by one Spirit into one body" (1 Corinthians 12:13).

38. BECAUSE THERE IS ONE BAPTISM which has been required since the first century and shall be required until the Lord returns. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5).

39. BECAUSE BEFORE WE DRAW NEAR IN OUR SERVICE AS PRIESTS TO GOD, OUR BODIES MUST BE WASHED AS WELL AS HEARTS SPRINKLED. "let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water" (Hebrews 10:22). The text suggests that the sprinkling of the heart for cleansing and the washing of the body take place simultaneously.

40. BECAUSE BAPTISM IS ONE OF THREE CONTEMPORARY WITNESSES TO THE DEITY OF CHRIST. "For there are three who bear witness, the Spirit, and the water and the blood; and the three agree in one" (1 John 5:8). For nearly twenty centuries the act of baptism has been picturing the central fact of redemption, viz., the burial and resurrection of Christ. The Spirit witnesses through the Word. The Lord's Supper bears testimony to the blood.

41. BECAUSE BAPTISM IS THE GRACIOUS PROVISION OF A GRACIOUS GOD. "He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy, he saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). The text suggests that the renewal by the Holy Spirit follows the washing of rebirth (baptism).

In view of these forty-one biblical reasons, why not decide this very hour to "ARISE AND BE BAPTIZED WASHING A WAY YOUR SINS, CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD" (Acts 22:16).

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