

4 Pictures of Water Baptism

Matthew 28:19

Jesus said in Matthew 28:19 *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,*

Mark 16:15 *He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.*

People Baptized in the N.T.

The People at Pentecost – Acts 2:37

The people in Samaria – Acts 8:12

The Ethiopian Eunuch

Paul

Cornelius the centurion.

Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira

The Philippian jailer

And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.

Baptism was something Jesus instructed us to do. It was carried out by thousands of people in the Bible. But what is its importance? To understand this, we need to look at the four pictures used in the New Testament to explain the importance and meaning of Baptism.

Picture #1 1 Peter 3:20-21 *²⁰who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited^[a] in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. ²¹There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,*

The Flood is a picture of baptism. The eight people on the ark knew that they were different from all the other people in the world.

They were saved because they believed God. The wickedness of the people was gone, and these 8 would start over-8 souls saved by water!!

The clearest example that shows the meaning of baptizo is a text from the Greek poet and physician Nicander, who lived about 200 B.C. In a recipe for making pickles both words bapto and baptizo are used. Nicander says that in order to make a pickle, the vegetable should first be `dipped` (bapto) into boiling water and then `baptized` (baptizo) in the vinegar solution. Both verbs concern the immersing of vegetables in a solution. But the first is temporary. The second, the act of baptizing the vegetable, produces a permanent change.

When used in the New Testament, this word more often refers to our union and identification with Christ than to our water baptism. For example, Mark 16:16. ***“He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.”*** Christ is saying that mere intellectual assent is not enough. There must be a real change, like the vegetable to the pickle!

Picture #2

1 Corinthians 10:1 ***I want you to bear in mind, Brothers, that all our ancestors were beneath the cloud, and all passed through the sea; That in the cloud and in the sea they all underwent baptism as followers of Moses;***

By crossing the Red Sea many things were taking effect

They had to trust God

They were leaving their past behind

They had a new future, but it was unknown and a little scary

They were leaving slavery

They were becoming warriors

The past ruler (leader) over them died – was done away with

They now had a new leader (ruler)

There may have been a helpless feeling when the Israelites walked through the waters seeing the past coming after them.

But when they came up out of the water and the waters rushed back – they had a brand-new life in a new land.

Picture #3

Colossians 2:11 *In him (Jesus Christ) you were also circumcised, 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 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.*

William P. Barker tells of a machinist at Ford Motor Company in Detroit who became a Christian. He responded to the invitation and was baptized. As the Holy Spirit began renewing this man, he became convicted of his need to make restitution for some parts and tools he had stolen from the company prior to becoming a Christian. So, the next morning he brought all the tools and parts back to his employer. He explained how he had just been baptized and asked for his foreman's forgiveness. This was such an amazing turn of events that Mr. Ford, who was visiting a plant in Europe at the time, was cabled with the details of the matter and asked his response. Mr. Ford immediately returned a cable with his decision: "Dam up the Detroit River, and baptize the entire city."

Picture #4

Romans 6:1-12 *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore, we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was*

crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise, you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.

Death-burial-res. Of Jesus

This picture of baptism is probably the simplest to see. Jesus was hung on the cross and there He died. He was buried in a borrowed tomb. On the third day Jesus came out of the grave.

The parallel is that we are dead in sin. We are buried with Jesus in baptism. We rise from that watery grave to walk in newness of life. This is a great picture for us of what takes place in baptism.

As we encounter those who are outside a relationship with Jesus, baptism will always be a sticking point in teaching them the gospel. These four pictures in the New Testament have been very helpful for me as I have shared the good news with others. I hope they will help you as well.

Let's close by once again reading 1 Peter 3:20-21 *because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,*