

The Doctrine of Baptisms

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The Doctrine of Baptisms

We read in **Mark 16 (NKJV):15** And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

It is this Scripture that has led many to believe that one has to be baptized in order to be saved. But it is interesting that, in verse 16 above, it is only the one who does not believe who will be condemned. It is not the one who does not believe, and who is not baptized that is condemned.

Jesus commanded us to make disciples, and baptize them, as we read in **Matthew 28 (NKJV):18** And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

There are some, even today, who believe that there is only one baptism mentioned in Scripture, and they go to great lengths to try to prove this in the Scriptures. But we must interpret the Scriptures in context, and not take one Scripture out of context with the rest of the Scriptures.

We read of the “doctrine of baptisms” in **Hebrews 6 (NKJV):1** Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3 And this we will do if God permits.

This is also translated as in **Hebrews 6 (ESV):1** Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

But the word “baptisms” in the **New King James Version**, or “washings” as in the **English Standard Version**, in the Greek is **βαπτισμῶν** (pronounced bāp-te-smov), which is the plural form of **βαπτισμός** (pronounced bāp-te-smo's), from G907; ablution (ceremonial or Christian):—baptism, washing. **Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G909**

This Greek word is derived from **βαπτίζω** (pronounced bāp-te'-zo), from a derivative of G911; to immerse, submerge; to make whelmed (i.e. fully wet); used only (in the New Testament) of ceremonial ablution, especially (technically) of the ordinance of Christian baptism:—Baptist, baptize, wash. **Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G907**

And this Greek word is derived from a derivative of **βάπτω** (pronounced bā'p-to), a primary verb; to overwhelm, i.e. cover wholly with a fluid; in the New Testament only in a qualified or special sense, i.e. (literally) to moisten (a part of one's person), or (by implication) to stain (as with dye):—dip. **Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G911**

So the proper method of baptism in water is immersion.

So what is the doctrine of baptisms? The word translated “doctrine” in the **New King James Version**, or “instruction” as in the **English Standard Version**, in the Greek is **διδασκαλία**

(pronounced de-dä-kha'), from G1321; instruction (the act or the matter):—doctrine, hath been taught. **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G1322**

This Greek word is derived from **διδάσκω** (pronounced de-dä'-sko), a prolonged (causative) form of a primary verb **δάω** **dáō** (to learn); to teach (in the same broad application):—teach. **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G1321**

So we could say that the meaning of the Greek word translated “doctrine” is actually “what is taught”. And in the context of the Bible, it is what the Bible teaches, or we could say that it is the Biblical truth about a theme in the Bible. This will be our understanding as we read the Scriptures and encounter the word “doctrine”.

The Seven Baptisms in the New Testament

There are seven different baptisms in the context of the New Testament. These are the following:

- 1.) The Baptism of Repentance (John's baptism)
- 2.) Water Baptism
- 3.) Baptism with the Holy Spirit
- 4.) Baptism of Suffering
- 5.) Baptism into the Body of Christ
- 6.) Baptism into Christ
- 7.) Baptism into Christ's Death

Only six, that is 2 through 6 above, are for the New Testament believer.

The Baptism of Repentance (John's baptism)

John the Baptist began his ministry in **Matthew 3 (KJV):1** In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. 3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, 6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

Jesus refers to the baptism of John, as we read in context in **Luke 7 (KJV):24** And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind? 25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously appareled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts. 26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. 27 This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. 28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than

John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he. 29 And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. 30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him. 31 And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like? 32 They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept. 33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. 34 The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! 35 But wisdom is justified of all her children.

In verse 27 above, we read that John was the messenger that would prepare the way before the Lord Jesus. This was the fulfillment of **Malachi 3 (KJV):1** Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.

Now the **Baptism of Repentance (John's baptism)** is also mentioned in **Acts 19 (KJV):1** And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, 2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. 3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. 4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. 7 And all the men were about twelve.

The Baptism of Repentance (John's baptism) is therefore not for believers today. John was preparing the hearts of the people, and telling everyone to "believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus", as in verse 4 above. Today we are "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus", as in verse 5 above. And in verse 6 above we note the Baptism with the Holy Spirit when "Paul had laid his hands upon them".

Water Baptism

Water Baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus is for believers today. This was commanded by the Lord Jesus in **Matthew 28 (NKJV):18** And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

And in **Mark 16 (KJV):15** And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

And in **Acts 2 (KJV):38** Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one

of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Water baptism is something we as believers are to do in obedience to the Lord's command. That is, we are to be baptized in water. We will look at instances of water baptism in the New Testament shortly.

The Baptism with the Holy Spirit

Next, the Baptism with the Holy Spirit was prophesied by John the Baptist in **Matthew 3 (KJV):11** I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

Jesus spoke of this in **Luke 24 (KJV):49** And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

And in **John 15 (KJV):16** And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. 18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

And in **John 15 (KJV):26** But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

And in **John 16 (KJV):13** Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. 15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

And in **Acts 1 (KJV):5** For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

And in **Acts 1 (KJV):8** But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

The purpose of the Baptism with the Holy Spirit was to endue believers with power from on high, and to give us comfort, and to guide us into all truth.

And the promise of the Spirit is for all who believe in Jesus Christ, as we read in **Acts 2 (KJV):38** Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

The evidence of having received this baptism is a manifestation of the Spirit, such as speaking in tongues, or prophecy, as we read in **Acts 2 (KJV):4** And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

These tongues are unknown to the speaker, but may be known to the hearers, as we read in **Acts 2 (KJV):5** And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. 6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were

confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. 7 And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? 8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? 9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, 10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

These tongues may also be the tongues of angels, as we read of in **1 Corinthians 13 (KJV):**1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

Another instance of the Baptism with the Holy Spirit is in **Acts 10 (KJV):**44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

And we also read in **Acts 19 (KJV):**6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

Dr. Albert Grimes comments on these instances, as he says, “From these verses one must conclude that as soon as we accept Christ as our Saviour, we can expect to receive the Holy Spirit, for it is a gift to every believer. And as to the actual receiving of the experience, it can come upon us as a sovereign act of God, as we wait, yielded before God as in Acts 2:4, “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Or in a service, listening to the word being preached as in Acts 10:44, “While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.”

Then there is the administration of the laying on of hands in receiving the Holy Spirit. The Samaritans received the Baptism in this way, Acts 8:15,17, “Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit...17 Then laid they their hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost.”

The same administration was given to Paul by Ananias in Act 9:17, “And putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.”

Paul also employed the same method in Acts 19:6, “when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.””

SPIRITUAL GIFTS, Dr. Albert Grimes, page 11-12.

The Baptism of Suffering

This baptism is mentioned in **Matthew 20 (KJV):**20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee’s children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. 21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the

one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. 22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. 23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

Note that James and John were Zebedee's children.

Now all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution, as we read in **2 Timothy 3 (KJV):12** Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

And in **Philippians 1 (KJV):29** For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

But not all will undergo the Baptism of Suffering, but only those to whom it has been given. This is a special calling of the Lord. And James did indeed suffer this baptism, as we read in **Acts 12 (KJV):1** Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. 2 And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

Baptism into the Body of Christ

This is a sovereign baptism by the Spirit of God when we have believed in Jesus Christ. This is mentioned in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):13** For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

This is a sovereign baptism done by the Spirit of God when we believe in Jesus Christ. This is described further in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):18** But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

And in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):27** Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. 28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

This baptism has to do with where God sets us, as members, in the body of Christ. That is, we are set in a particular place as it pleased God. This place has to do with our function, or ministry, in the body of Christ, as we read in **Romans 12 (KJV):3** For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

The word "office" in the Greek is **πρᾶξις** (pronounced prä'-kses), from G4238; practice, i.e. (concretely) an act; by extension, a function:—deed, office, work. **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G4234**

We continue to read in **Romans 12 (KJV):5** So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

As we function in our place in the body of Christ, according to the grace that is given to us, we make increase of the body, as we read in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):15** But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Unto everyone who believes in Jesus Christ is given a ministry gift, that is, a place with a function in the body of Christ. This is what we read in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):7** But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. 8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) 11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

Although we have “gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us”, as in Romans 12:6 above, we all have a place and a function to perform in the body of Christ. So let us “let us wait on our ministering”, in in romans 12:7 above.

Baptism into Christ

This baptism has to do with the sphere of blessings that Christ has obtained for us. We read of this baptism in **Romans 6 (KJV):3** Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

And in **Galatians 3 (KJV):27** For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Being in Christ, we have redemption, as we read in **Romans 3 (KJV):24** Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

There is now no condemnation for those in Christ, as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):1** There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, as we read in **Romans 8 (KJV):39** Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And we are one body in Christ, as we read in **Romans 12 (KJV):5** So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

We are sanctified in Christ Jesus, as we read in **1 Corinthians 1 (KJV):2** Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

And God has placed us in Christ, as we read in **1 Corinthians 1 (KJV):30** But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

And some are babes in Christ, as we read in **1 Corinthians 3 (KJV):1** And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

And we are triumphant in Christ, as we read in **2 Corinthians 2 (KJV):14** Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

And we are a new creation in Christ, as we read in **2 Corinthians 5 (NKJV):17** Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

And we are one in Christ Jesus, as we read in **Galatians 3 (KJV):28** There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

And we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, as we read in **Ephesians 1 (KJV):3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

And we sit together in heavenly places, as we read in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):6** And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

As saints we are in Christ, as we read in **Colossians 1 (KJV):2** To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

And in Him we have peace, as we read in **John 16 (KJV):33** These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Baptism into Christ's Death

This baptism has to do with the sphere of blessings that Christ has obtained for us through His death. We read of this baptism in **Romans 6 (KJV):3** Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? **4** Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

By His death, we were reconciled to God, as we read in **Romans 5 (NASB):10** For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

And in **Colossians 1 (KJV):21** And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled **22** In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

And by His death, we were made near, as we read in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):13** But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

And He tasted death for us, as we read in **Hebrews 2 (KJV):9** But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

So He delivered us from the fear of death, as we read in **Hebrews 2 (KJV):14** Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

And by His death we receive redemption, and the promise of an eternal inheritance, as we read in **Hebrews 9 (KJV):15** And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Then also Dr. Albert Grimes says that this baptism relates to our identification with Christ. He says, "When Jesus died on the cross I died with him. The whole unregenerated man, not just the evil nature, but the whole man. This is the statement of the scripture in 1 Peter 2:24, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ...", the whole man. Romans 6:2, "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Romans 6:6, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed..."

And Dr. Grimes continues, "This old man is the natural man himself, all of him. All that is related to the unregenerated man is now dead. When Jesus died he died with him. The death of the whole unregenerated man is a scriptural fact. Therefore I can, as in Romans 6:11, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

And because of the death which we have now accepted, sin shall not reign in our lives, as stated in Romans 6:12, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." We can let it know in no uncertain terms, that you are dead to all its demands, and you do not have to obey it.

Romans 6:13, "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." **FROM UNREGENERATION TO GLORIFICATION, Dr. Albert Grimes, page 8-9.**

Jesus Is the Door

In order to enter into the kingdom of God, we must enter by the door. Jesus is the door, as we read in **John 10 (KJV):**7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. 9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

Jesus explained how to enter by the door in his dialog with Nicodemus, as we read in **John 3 (KJV):**1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

In verse 5, Jesus was not talking about being born again by water baptism. When He says, "Except a man be born of water", He is speaking of the time when a woman's water breaks just before she gives birth. He is speaking of the natural birth of flesh, as we continue to read in the very next verse, in **John 3 (KJV):**6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

What Jesus is saying is that being born of the Spirit is not something that can be seen. It is like the wind. You hear the sound of the wind, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. The reason is because it is a birth of God, as we read in **John 1 (KJV):**12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Being born of God is not of our will, but of God. He brings it about. We must be born a natural birth, and we must be born of the Spirit. This new birth then is in our spirit, as Jesus says in verse 6, "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit". That we have a spirit is revealed in **1 Thessalonians 5 (KJV):**23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And in **Romans 8 (KJV):**16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

And that our spirit is different from our soul is revealed in **Hebrews 4 (KJV):**12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Jesus explains how one is born again in **John 3 (KJV):**14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: 15 That whosoever

believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

In verse 15 above, whosoever believes in Him has eternal life. In verse 14, Jesus likened this to the time that Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, as in **Numbers 21 (KJV):4** And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. 5 And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. 6 And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. 7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee; pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. 8 And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. 9 And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

So just as the one who lived when he beheld the serpent of brass, so the one who looks to Jesus lives, that is, they are born again and have eternal life.

After we have believed in Jesus Christ, and have been born again, we are to submit to being baptized. Baptism is then our confession of faith in Jesus Christ to the world. We are not baptized in order to believe. We are baptized because we have believed in Jesus Christ. Baptism is our testimony of our commitment to faith in Jesus Christ.

The Washing of Regeneration

We read of the washing of regeneration in **Titus 3 (KJV):5** Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

This washing, or cleansing, has to do with the forgiveness of sins that happens when we are born again, as we read in **Colossians 2 (NASB):13** When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, 14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

We were dead in our “transgressions and the uncircumcision” of our flesh. But He made us “alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions”. And he “canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us”, which is the law, and “He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross”.

The law has been cancelled, and all of “our transgressions” are forgiven. We are not

condemned. We are saved!

We were washed, or cleansed of our sins, when we were born again. This is the washing of regeneration. This is what Jesus was referring to in John 13, when He was washing the disciples feet, as we read in **John 13 (KJV):10** Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

We are cleansed when we are forgiven of our sins. This happened when He made us alive, that is, when we were born again. Now, if we have been born again, we also have a standing of righteousness, having been justified by God, as we read in **1 Corinthians 6 (NKJV):11** And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

When we are justified, God declares us righteous, and imputes or puts His righteousness down to our account. Being washed here in verse 11 does not refer to water baptism, but to the cleansing of our sins when He made us alive, that is, when we were born again.

And having been justified, we have peace with God, as we read in **Romans 5 (NKJV):1** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

The Faith of Abraham

Let us begin reading in **Romans 4 (KJV):**1 What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? 2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. 3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

So Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. In other words, Abraham was saved when he believed.

We continue in **Romans 4 (KJV):**4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. 5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. 6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, 7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

So Abraham didn't do any works in order to be justified. He was "without works", as in verse 6 above, but believed on him that justifies the ungodly, and his faith was counted for righteousness.

We continue in **Romans 4 (KJV):**9 Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. 10 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. 11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: 12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.

So Abraham is the father of all who "walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised". All Abraham did to be justified was to believe on Him who justifies the ungodly. And so God imputed to him righteousness without works, that is, without being circumcised.

We continue in **Romans 4 (KJV):**13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. 14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: 15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. 16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, 17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

So Abraham is the father of us all who are heirs by faith "that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham".

We continue in **Romans 4 (KJV):**18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he

might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. 19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: 20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. 22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; 24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

We have only to read in Romans 4 about Abraham, and how he was justified by faith when he was uncircumcised in Romans 4:10, to know how we are justified by our faith. His faith was reckoned to him as righteousness in Romans 4:9. And then he was circumcised, which was a "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised" in Romans 4:11. And so just as it was for Abraham, so it is for us. So "it is of faith, that it might be by grace". We are baptized because we believe, not in order that we may believe.

Now we may ask, "When was Abraham born again?" The answer is when he believed, as Jesus says in **John 5 (KJV):24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

James shows us that the evidence of a genuine faith is good works, as he says in **James 2 (KJV):18** Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

But Abraham was justified by his faith before he offered Isaac, as we read in **Genesis 15 (KJV):1** After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. 2 And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? 3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. 4 And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. 5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. 6 And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

And Isaac was born in **Genesis 21 (KJV):1** And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken. 2 For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. 3 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

And Abraham continued to be justified as he walked by faith in obedience to the Lord, as we read in **Genesis 22 (KJV):1** And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. 2 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. 3 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto

the place of which God had told him. 4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. 5 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. 6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. 7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? 8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. 9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. 10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. 11 And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. 12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. 13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. 14 And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen. 15 And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, 16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: 17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; 18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

But Abraham did not have to be born again, again, as he walked with the Lord. When he believed, he was born again, and justified by his faith.

So then in one sense we also were justified when we believed, and God imputed His righteousness down to our account as He did to Abraham, as we read in **Romans 5 (NKJV):1** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

We now have a standing of righteousness before the Lord. Then in another sense, we also are justified, as Abraham was when he offered up Isaac in obedience to the Lord, when we do good works. This is putting on the breastplate of righteousness, as in **Ephesians 6 (KJV):14** Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

The Symbol of Our Cleansing

Water Baptism is symbolic of the “washing of regeneration” in **Titus 3 (KJV):5** Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

The “washing of regeneration” refers to the cleansing of our sins when we believe in Jesus Christ, and we confess Him as Lord, and we are born again. Baptism does not regenerate us, that is, cause us to be born again. We are baptized because we have believed in Jesus Christ, and have been born again as a result of our faith.

We have “redemption through His blood”, that is, “the forgiveness of sins”, as we read in **Ephesians 1 (KJV):3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. 7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

And in **Colossians 1 (KJV):12** Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: 14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: 15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

Now Water Baptism is also symbolic of the death and resurrection of Christ. The believer is first dunked in water, which is symbolic of the death of Christ. Then believer is brought up from the water, which is symbolic of the resurrection of Christ, and the new life that is already present in the believer because of His faith in the Gospel message, which is as we read in **Romans 10 (KJV):8** But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Because of this symbolism, water baptism is a testimony to the world that we have faith in Jesus Christ.

The First Baptisms

The first Baptism with the Holy Spirit is recorded in **Acts 2 (KJV)**:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

There were 120 disciples, who were all believers, in the upper room as we read in **Acts 1 (KJV)**:13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. 15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)

This would explain how so many languages were heard when the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, and spoke with tongues, as we continue in **Acts 2 (KJV)**:5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. 6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. 7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? 8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? 9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, 10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. 12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? 13 Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

Peter then explains in **Acts 2 (KJV)**:14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: 15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. 16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: 19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come: 21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Peter explains that the disciples were not drunk with wine, but that they had experienced the outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh that was promised by the prophet Joel, mentioned in **Joel 2 (KJV)**:28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams,

your young men shall see visions: 29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. 30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. 32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.

The Baptism in Jerusalem

Peter then preached the first Gospel message, as we continue in **Acts 2 (KJV)**: 22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: 23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: 24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. 25 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: 26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: 27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. 29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day. 30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; 31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. 32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. 33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. 34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, 35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool. 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Those who believed Peter's message then asked him what they should do, as we continue in **Acts 2 (KJV)**: 37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. 40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. 41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Regeneration

It was those who received Peter's word that were then baptized. And when we receive the word of God, we are born again, as we read in **John 1 (KJV):12** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

We are born again when we receive the word of truth, as we read in **James 1 (NKJV):18** Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

The words "brought us forth" are a translation of the Greek word **ἀποκυέω** (pronounced ä-po-kü-e'-o), from G575 and the base of G2949; to breed forth, i.e. (by transference) to generate (figuratively):—beget, produce. **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G616**

This Greek word is a derivative of two Greek words, **ἀπό** (pronounced ä-po'), a primary particle; "off," i.e. away (from something near), in various senses (of place, time, or relation; literal or figurative):—(X here-)after, ago, at, because of, before, by (the space of), for(-th), from, in, (out) of, off, (up-)on(-ce), since, with. **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G575**

And it is also a derivative of the Greek word **κύμα** (pronounced kü'-mä), from κύω **κύω** (to swell (with young), i.e. bend, curve); a billow (as bursting or toppling):—wave. **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G2949**

So it is the word of the Gospel that we received that caused us to be born again. This birth is of God, by the Holy Spirit. Since we were then born of the Spirit of God, we received a new divine nature in our spirit, as we read in **2 Peter 1 (NKJV):1** Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: 2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; 3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. 4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

So it is not water baptism that causes us to be born again, but it is the word of God preached by the Holy Spirit, who gives us faith, when we hear it, to believe in Jesus Christ. We are then baptized because we have believed in Jesus Christ.

The Baptism in Samaria

Those who believed Philip's preaching in Samaria were baptized after they believed, as we read in **Acts 8 (KJV):12** But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. 13

Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

It was after they had believed that they were baptized. And when they believed, they were born again of the Spirit of God.

The Baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch

We begin reading in **Acts 8 (KJV)**:26 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. 27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, 28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. 29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. 30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? 31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. 32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: 33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. 34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. 36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Philip made sure that the eunuch had faith in Jesus Christ before he was baptized. We continue in **Acts 8 (KJV)**:38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.

The Baptism of Saul

Then Saul believed after he had seen the vision, as we read in **Acts 9 (KJV)**:1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. 3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: 4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 6 And he trembling and astonished

said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

And Saul went into the city, as we continue in **Acts 9 (KJV):7** And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. 8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

While Saul was waiting and fasting, the Lord spoke to Ananias, as we continue in **Acts 9 (KJV):10** And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. 11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, 12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. 13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: 14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. 15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

And Saul, who is also called Paul, was baptized after he had believed, as we continue to read in **Acts 9 (KJV):17** And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. 18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. 19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus.

At the House of Cornelius

Peter had a vision in which the Lord told him to arise and eat animals that were unclean according to Old Testament law. Then three men from the house of Cornelius, a centurion, and a Gentile, came to Peter, and the Lord told Peter to go with them doubting nothing.

So Peter came to the house of Cornelius and began to preach the Gospel, as we read in **Acts 10 (KJV):34** Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: 35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. 36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) 37 That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; 38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. 39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: 40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; 41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. 42 And he commanded us to preach unto the

people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. 43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

So, according to Peter's preaching, whoever believes in Him "shall receive remission of sins". And after Peter said these words, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as we continue in **Acts 10 (KJV):**44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

If the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke with tongues and magnified God, they were born again. Therefore, they were saved before they were baptized with water.

The Baptism of Lydia

We read of the baptism of Lydia in **Acts 16 (KJV):**13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. 14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. 15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

The Lord opened Lydia's heart to attend "unto the things which were spoken of Paul". Then "she was baptized, and her household".

The Baptism of the Keeper of the Prison

We begin reading in **Acts 16 (KJV):**25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. 26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. 27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. 29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, 30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. 32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. 34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

The message Paul preached to them was “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house”, as in verse 31 above. They believed, and so they were baptized.

The Baptism of the Corinthians

We read in **Acts 18 (KJV):7** And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. 8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, as in **Romans 10 (KJV):17** So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

And we are saved by grace, through faith, as we read in **Ephesians 2 (KJV):8** For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

The word “works” in the Greek is ἔργον (pronounced e'r-gon), from a primary (but obsolete) ἔργω érgō (to work); toil (as an effort or occupation); by implication, an act:—deed, doing, labour, work. **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G2041**

A “work” is something we do. We are not saved by anything we do, but by grace, through faith, which is the gift of God.

The Baptism at Ephesus

We read in **Acts 19 (KJV):1** And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, 2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. 3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. 4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. 7 And all the men were about twelve.

So the twelve believed in Christ Jesus, and then were water baptized. Then Paul laid his hands upon them and they were baptized with the Holy Spirit in verse 6.

We read in **Romans 10 (KJV):14** How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? 17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

So faith comes first by the hearing of the Gospel, and then we are water baptized. Then we can receive the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, if we have not already received it, as happened at the house of Cornelius.

Spiritual Fathers

We read of Paul in **1 Corinthians 4 (NKJV)**:14 I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. 15 For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. 16 Therefore I urge you, imitate me. 17 For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.

Paul was the instrument that God used in order to preach the Gospel to the Corinthians. And we notice that Paul says that he had begotten them, or given them birth, through the Gospel. So again, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. It was not through baptism that the Lord, through Paul, gave them birth, but through the preaching of the Gospel, as Paul confirmed in **1 Corinthians 1 (KJV)**:14 I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; 15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. 16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. 17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. 18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

And we read in **Romans 1 (KJV)**:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

And in **James 1 (KJV)**:18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

It is the word of God in the Gospel that is preached by the Holy Spirit that gives us birth by the Holy Spirit. Those whom God uses to preach the Gospel become spiritual fathers to those who believe through their preaching. But this does not mean that all those who preach the Gospel have reached the maturity of a father in the Lord. The stages of maturity in the Lord are mentioned by the apostle John in **1 John 2 (KJV)**:12 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. 13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. 14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

Paul had reached the stage of a spiritual father. He not only was used by God to preach the Gospel by which people were saved, but he also taught them the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, as mentioned in **Hebrews 6 (KJV)**:1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

We are all to grow in grace and knowledge, as Peter taught in **2 Peter 3 (KJV)**:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

Misinterpreted Scriptures

The first is in **John 3 (KJV):5** Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Believers in the early Church thought that the word “water” in verse 5 referred to baptism. But Jesus explains the analogy in the very next verse. In verse 6 He says, “that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”. The water in verse 5 speaks of the water surrounding the fetus which breaks at birth. This refers to our natural birth. Then because we are dead to God in our trespasses and sins, we need to be born of the Spirit of God in order to have relationship with God, who is then our Father.

Next we read in **Ephesians 5 (KJV):25** Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Again, the words, “washing of water”, is thought to refer to water baptism. But verse 26 is about cleansing. The context of the verse makes “washing” simply refer to the cleansing of the word. And the cleansing is by the word of God, the word of truth. This was also referred to by Jesus in **John 15 (KJV):3** Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

And this is stated in **Psalms 119 (KJV):9** Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

Then we read also in **Titus 3 (KJV):4** But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

The “washing of regeneration” simply refers to the remission of sins that happens when we have faith in Jesus Christ, and we are born from above, that is, born again. It is “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy” that “he saved us”. It is not by what we do, but by what we receive that we are saved.

Then we read also in **1 Peter 3 (KJV):18** For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: 19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; 20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. 21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: 22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

Some read this as “even baptism doth also now save us”, as if that was all that was written. However, if we read this in context, we note that the whole verse reads as in **1 Peter 3 (KJV):21** The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away

of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

Kenneth S. Wuest has written this comment on this verse. He says, “The words “the like figure” are in the Greek *ho antitupon*. The question as to whether the word “figure” refers back to the word “ark” or the word “water”, is easily settled by the Greek grammar involved in this expression, for the relative pronoun *ho* is neuter, the word “ark” is feminine, and the word “water” neuter. The relative pronoun agrees with its antecedent in gender. Therefore the word “figure” which is neuter and construed grammatically with the pronoun *ho* goes back to the word “water”. The word “figure” is the translation of *antitupon* which means “the counterpart of reality”. The Greek word “baptism” is in apposition with the word “figure”. Our translation so far reads, “Which (water) also (as a) counterpart now saves you, (namely) baptism”. Water baptism is clearly in the apostle’s mind, not the baptism by the Holy Spirit, for he speaks of the waters of the flood as saving the inmates of the ark, and in this verse, of baptism saving believers. But he says that it saves them only as a counterpart. That is, water baptism is the counterpart of the reality, salvation. It can only save as a counterpart, not actually. The Old Testament sacrifices were counterparts of the reality, the Lord Jesus. They did not actually save the believer, only in type. It is not argued here that these sacrifices are analogous to Christian water baptism. The author is merely using them as an illustration of the use of the word “counterpart”. So water baptism only saves the believer in type. The Old Testament Jew was saved before he brought the offering. That offering was only his outward testimony that he was placing his faith in the Lamb of God of whom these sacrifices were a type. The moment he conceived in his heart that he would bring his offering to the Tabernacle, his faith leaped the centuries to the time when God would offer the Sacrifice that would pay for his sin. Our Lord said, “Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad” (John 8:56). The act of bringing the sacrifice was his outward expression and testimony of his inward faith. Water baptism is the outward testimony of the believer’s inward faith. The person is saved the moment he places his faith in the Lord Jesus. Water baptism is his visible testimony to his faith and the salvation he was given in answer to that faith.” **Word Studies in the Greek New Testament, Kenneth S. Wuest, Volume II, First Peter in the Greek New Testament, page 108-109.**

So in context, we see that the “like figure” in 1 Peter 3:21 is referring to “water”, and is in apposition to “baptism”. So baptism is only symbolic of our salvation, which is by faith in Jesus Christ.

Church History

Irenaeus was a bishop in the early Church. He lived between 120 and 202 A.D., and wrote **Adversus Heresies** in five books. In **Book 3: Chapter XVII**, he wrote, “And again, giving to the disciples the power of regeneration into God He said to them, “Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

He is indicating here that he believed in baptismal regeneration, which is the belief that we are born again when we are baptized with water.

Also, in **Volume 1, Page 183, The First Apology of Justin (born in 114 AD, martyred in 165 AD)**, Justin Martyr speaks of the custom of becoming a catechumen

before baptism, as he says above, “As many as are persuaded and believe that what we teach and say is true, and undertake to be able to live accordingly, are instructed to pray and to entreat God with fasting, for the remission of their sins that are past, we praying and fasting with them.” This also began very early on in the history of the Church.

Then immediately following, Justin speaks of the custom of baptism, as he say, “Then they are brought by us where there is water, and are regenerated in the same manner in which we were ourselves regenerated. For, in the name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water. For Christ also said, “Except ye be born again, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. (John 3:5)”

Irenaeus and Justin Martyr held the belief in regeneration by baptism that is based on **Mark 16 (NIV):15** He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

And on **John 3 (KJV):5** Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

We have already explained that Jesus is referring to the natural birth when he says a man must be “born of water”, for he says in verse 6 that what “is born of the flesh is flesh”, and what “is born of the Spirit is spirit”.

However these Scriptures must be taken in context with the rest of the Scriptures.

It is true that baptism is commanded by the Lord, and we, as believers, should obey that command. But we are also commanded to love one another as we read in **John 13 (NIV):34** “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Fulfilling the commandment to love one another does not save us just as fulfilling the command to be baptized does not save us. Baptism itself has no saving power just as loving one another has no saving power. Love is a fruit of the Spirit, and when we love one another, it is evidence that the Spirit is in us, and that we have been born again. Likewise, baptism itself is only an outward sign of the inward work of the Spirit raising us up to life again by the new birth of the Spirit of God. We only get baptized after we believe. We are born again when we believe the word of God, the Gospel. That is, when we believe that Jesus came in the flesh, and died for our sins, and rose again, and we confess Him as our Lord, and we are saved just as we read in **Romans 10 (KJV):8** But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

One Baptism

We read of “one baptism” in **Ephesians 4 (KJV):1** I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness

and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Some teach that there is only one baptism because of this Scripture. That is, 1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):13, Matthew 3:11, Romans 6:3, Matthew 28:19, and Matthew 20:22-23 all refer to the same baptism, the baptism in water. Verse 5 above does refer to one baptism, that is, water baptism. But the other five baptisms are different.

The “baptism with the Holy Spirit” is referred to in **Matthew 3 (KJV):11** I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

And in **Acts 1 (KJV):5** For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

This baptism is a filling of the Holy Spirit in the believer.

The “baptism into the body of Christ” refers to the placing by God of the believer in a particular place in the body of Christ. This is referred to in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):13** For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

And in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):18** But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

And in **1 Corinthians 12 (KJV):27** Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. 28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

This baptism is a sovereign baptism by the Lord. The moment we believe in Jesus Christ, God places us in the body of Christ in a particular place for a specific purpose according to our individuality that we might function accordingly. This relates to our ministry gift.

Then also, the “baptism into Christ” refers to all of the blessings that are ours in Christ, as we read in **Romans 6 (KJV):3** Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

This verse also refers to “the baptism into Christ’s death”. That is, we are identified with Christ in His death, as we continue in **Romans 6 (KJV):4** Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7 For he that is dead is freed from sin. 8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

Then “baptism in water” is referred to in **Matthew 28 (KJV):19** Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

And in **Mark 16 (KJV):**15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Then the “baptism in Suffering” is mentioned in **Matthew 20 (KJV):**22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. 23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

The “baptism in water”, the “baptism with the Holy Spirit”, and the “baptism in Suffering” happen some time after we believe. But the “baptism into the body of Christ”, the “baptism into Christ”, and the “baptism into Christ’s death” are all sovereignly done by the Lord when we believe in Jesus Christ, and we are born of God.

When I Believe

We read of Peter's testimony in **Acts 10 (NIV):43** All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

In his preaching at the house of Cornelius, Peter says that, "everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name".

And we then read of the result of Peter's preaching in **Acts 10 (NIV):44** While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, 47 "Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." 48 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.

Since they had received the Holy Spirit, it is evident that they were already born again. They were already saved. Peter then ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ as a result of their evident faith.

So what happened when they believed? When they believed in Jesus Christ, they were born again. That is, they were born of the Spirit of God. Jesus spoke of this with Nicodemus in **John 3 (KJV):1** There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

The word "again" in verse 3 in the Greek is **ἄνωθεν** (Pronounced ä'-no-then), from G507; from above; by analogy, from the first; by implication, anew:—from above, again, from the beginning (very first), the top. **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G509**

This Greek word is derived from **ἄνω** (pronounced ä'-no), adverb from G473; upward or on the top:—above, brim, high, up. **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, G507**

So the most literal translation of verse 3 is "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

But Nicodemus doesn't understand, as we continue in **John 3 (KJV):4** Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Jesus explains that there are two births, one of water, speaking of the fleshly birth, and one of the Spirit, speaking of the birth of our spirit by the Holy Spirit.

Nicodemus then asks in **John 3 (KJV):9** Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

Jesus then explains, as we continue in **John 3 (KJV):10** Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? 11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. 12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? 13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven. 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. 15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

And Jesus concludes in **John 3 (KJV):36** He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Jesus never mentions water baptism in this chapter. Jesus is clear here. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life”. And He says more in **John 5 (KJV):24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

So when we believe, we pass from death unto life. That is, we are born from above, or born again, by the Spirit of God. Our spirit then has “everlasting life”, that is, eternal life. Not only so, but our spirit, which was given birth by the Holy Spirit when we believed, now has a new divine nature, as we read in **2 Peter 1 (KJV):4** Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

And when we pass from death to life, God justifies us, as Paul reveals in **Romans 3 (KJV):21** But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

So when I believe in Christ Jesus, God justifies me, for the righteousness of God is “unto all and upon all them that believe” in verse 22. This justification is also correctly translated in the past tense in **Romans 5 (NKJV):1** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

And in **1 Corinthians 6 (NKJV):11** And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

The “washing” that happens at regeneration, that is, when we are born again, is also referred to in **Titus 3 (KJV):5** Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

The word “washing” in this verse in the Greek is **λουτρόν** (pronounced lü-tro'n), from G3068; a bath, i.e. (figuratively), baptism:—washing.

This Greek word is derived from **λούω** (pronounced lü'-o), a primary verb; to bathe (the whole person; whereas G3538 means to wet a part only, and G4150 to wash, cleanse garments exclusively):—wash.

In other words, the “washing of regeneration” is speaking of the cleansing of our sins when we believe in Jesus Christ, and we are born again. This cleansing is also revealed in Ephesians 5:26 where the same Greek word as in Titus 3:5 is used, as we read in context in **Ephesians 5 (KJV):**25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

The cleansing that happens by “the word” is also mentioned in **John 15 (KJV):**3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

And in **Psalms 119 (KJV):**9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

The word of God is like water that we wash ourselves with. The Greek word **λουτρόν** (pronounced lü-tro'n) in Titus 3:5 is used in only one other Scripture, which we just read in Ephesians 5:26. It is not referring to water baptism but to the cleansing of our sins when we are born again.

Then we read of Paul and Barnabas in the Church at Antioch in **Acts 15 (KJV):**1 And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. 3 And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. 4 And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. 5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.

Certain “of the sect of the Pharisees which believed” were saying that it was necessary for the Gentiles to be circumcised, and “to keep the law of Moses”. We continue to read in **Acts 15 (KJV):**6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. 7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. 8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; 9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

Our hearts are purified by faith. There is no mention of baptism here. If baptism were necessary for salvation, why wasn't some mention of it made here? But neither circumcision or baptism is necessary for salvation, for "we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they".

Now it is important what we are inwardly, as Paul taught in **Romans 2 (KJV):28** For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: **29** But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

How does circumcision "of the heart, in the spirit" take place? We read in **Romans 10 (KJV):10** For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

The circumcision that Paul is speaking of is the surrender of the heart to God. It is the surrender of our heart to God that saves us. And having believed, we were sealed, as we read in **Ephesians 1 (NASB):13** In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, **14** who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

There is no mention of baptism here. We are baptized after we believe, as the Samaritans were in **Acts 8 (KJV):12** But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

And when those at the house of Cornelius heard the preaching of the Gospel by Peter, the Holy Spirit "fell on all them which heard the word", as we read in **Acts 10 (KJV):44** While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. **45** And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. **46** For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, **47** Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? **48** And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

The Holy Spirit is not poured out on unbelievers, but on those who believe the Gospel. It is evident that water baptism is only a testimony of those who have believed the Gospel. It is our testimony that we have faith in Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

The different baptisms in the New Testament must be understood in their context. When we understand that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, we understand that it is at the moment that we believe in Jesus Christ that we are born again. Once we are born again, we enter the Kingdom of God. We pass from death to life. Then in order to acknowledge our surrender to the Lord, we submit to being baptized in water. This is only a testimony of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And just as circumcision did not save Abraham, so being baptized in water does not save anyone. So after we have believed in Jesus Christ, and have been born again, we are baptized in water in obedience to the Lord's command. This act of obedience is an evidence of the faith, which we already have, yet being unbaptized. Just as Abraham had faith and was justified before he was circumcised, so we who have believed in Jesus Christ have been justified by our faith before being baptized in water. Baptism in water is only symbolic of the cleansing of our sins which happens when we believe with our heart and we are born from above.