

The Baptism of Our Lord

Matthew 3:13-17

Jesus Baptized by John

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. 14 John would have prevented Him, saying, “I need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?” 15 But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. 16 And when Jesus was baptized, immediately He went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on Him; 17 and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”

(Read also: Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21,22, John 1:29-39)

1 Peter 3:20-22 - (NIV)

God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, 21 and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to Him.



“You are My beloved Son; with You I am well pleased.”

Mark 1:11

What is Baptism?

Baptism is not water only, but it is water used together with God's Word and by His command.

Which is that word of God?

Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Matthew: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," Matthew 28:19

What benefits does God give in Baptism?

In Baptism God forgives sin, delivers from death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe what He has promised.

"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." Mark 16:16

How can water do such great things?

It is not water that does these things, but God's Word with the water and our trust in this Word. Water by itself is only water, but with the Word of God it is a life-giving water which by grace gives the new birth through the Holy Spirit.

St. Paul says in Titus, chapter three: "He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Titus 3:5-7

What does such baptizing with water indicate?

It means that our sinful self, with all its evil deeds and desires, should be drowned through daily repentance; and that day after day a new self should arise to live with God in righteousness and purity forever.

St. Paul writes in Romans chapter six: "We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."

Romans 6:4

(Taken from Luther's Small Catechism)

A Closer Look: Baptism

John had the honor of baptizing Jesus, the Son of God, at the start of the earthly ministry of Jesus. Over 600 years before, Isaiah spoke of John the Baptist as the one to prepare hearts for Jesus arrival. ~ *A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Isaiah 40:3*

1. Prior to the ministry of Jesus, John baptized individuals as a sign of their repentance. ~ *And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the One who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." Acts 19:4*
2. What does it mean to repent? - *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. 1 John 1:9-10*
3. Jesus was sinless. Why was Jesus baptized?
 - a. To fulfill the Old Testament promises - *But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he (John) consented. Matthew 3:15*
 - b. So the world would hear that God the Father was pleased with His Son ~ *And the Holy Spirit descended on Him in bodily form, like a dove; and a Voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son; with You I am well pleased." Luke 3:22*
 - c. Jesus died for our sins, not His own. In the same way the sinless Jesus was baptized for us, bearing our sins. ~ *We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. Romans 6:4*
 - d. The Father filled Him with His Spirit. ~ *You yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: 38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. Acts 10:37-38*

4. How did John know this man, Jesus, was truly the Son of God? ~ *And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on Him. 33 I myself did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' 34 And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."* John 1:32-34
5. The three persons of the Trinity were present at the baptism of Jesus. *(The three persons of the Trinity are the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit)* Tell what the voice of the Father said of His Son. How as the Spirit of God or the Holy Spirit present? *Read Matthew 3:16-17 in this study.*
6. What promise is ours through baptism? ~ *And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to Himself."* Acts 2:38-39 *(Read Also: 1 Peter 3:21-22)*
7. How many times do you have to be baptized? ~ *There is one body and one Spirit just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. Ephesians 4:4-6*
8. We renew or remember our baptism each time we repent of our sins. ~ *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5 He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior. Titus 3:4-6*
9. Do you have to be baptized to be saved? ~ *"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."* Acts 16:30-31