

## Arise, And Be Baptized

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*“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you...” (Matthew 28:18-20)*

### Examples of Baptism

The apostle Peter was there when our Lord gave the commission to preach to all the nations, so he understood very well what was inherently involved in *“making disciples.”* Peter preached exactly what he was supposed to have preached, as a Christian and not as a Jew alone, and baptism was always the outcome. Consider Acts 2:14-38, in which Peter begins his discourse by saying, *“You men of Judea, and all you that dwell in Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and give ear unto my words...”* It is at this point that he preaches Christ and Him crucified, with the result that those listening are *“pricked to the heart”* and ask Peter and the brethren what needs to be done. In response to this inquiry; *“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ”* (Acts 2:38). That day, 3,000 souls were added to the church. The question that we must ask ourselves is what we need to do! When we consider our own sins, and the cruel nature of Christ’s death upon a cross, which one of us will not be pricked in the heart? Which one of us will not bow his head and feel the deep regret that accompanies the guilt of sin?

Philip is another preacher of the Word who understood the details of baptism, because on more than one occasion he was instrumental in convincing others to get baptized. Acts 8:12; *“But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.”* Part of preaching the *“good news about the kingdom of God”* included preaching about baptism. Otherwise, why would these people want to respond to his speech by requesting it? One *cannot* separate baptism from the kingdom! In later verses, Philip is found preaching to a eunuch from Ethiopia (Acts 8:26-39), who questions him about a verse from Isaiah 53. Beginning with that prophecy, Philip *“preached Jesus to him.”* By preaching Jesus and discussing the prophecy of Isaiah, the preacher convinced the eunuch to get baptized. Inherent in *“preaching Jesus”* is preaching baptism. Once again, they cannot be separated.

In Acts 9, Saul (who would later be known as Paul, the apostle) meets Christ on the road to Damascus and is blinded. The Lord says, *“Rise, and enter the city, and it shall be told you what you must do”* (Acts 9:6). Notice that whatever it is that will be told to Saul was *not his choice*. It will be something that he *“must do.”* After meeting Ananias and receiving back his sight, Saul is baptized. Later, Paul explains the event thus, *“And now why do you delay? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name”* (Acts 22:16). It is baptism that washes away our sins. We must also see that baptism is an action that we either decide to take, or decide to reject. We can *“delay”* at it. We must make the choice to *“arise”* to do it – that is, baptism is not just an action that we have done to us (passively), but it is an action that we decisively make.

In Acts 10, the Bible reader is introduced to a man named Cornelius, who is noted for his general kindness and righteousness (Acts 10:1-3). But for all his righteousness, he was not saved. He had not been baptized, because we read in Acts 11:14, in which Peter is recounting the events of his encounter with Cornelius, “*And he shall speak words to you by which you will be saved, you and all your household.*” It is not that Cornelius was *already* saved by his faith or his works according to the Law. He was not saved, and only a relationship with Christ, beginning with belief and baptism, could have saved him. After speaking to Cornelius for most of Acts 10, Peter finally concludes his discourse by saying, “*Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized...’ And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ*” (Acts 10:47-48). Baptism is not just a choice we have, it is the only choice that saves! It is a direct command.

There is no place in the New Testament that teaches that one is saved *without* baptism. In fact, just the opposite is true. Almost every time that belief in the Word or the Gospel occurs, it is followed by obedience (baptism). When Lydia *believed* in Acts 16:14, she was baptized. When the Philippian jailor heard the word spoken by Paul and Silas, he was baptized (Acts 16:32). When the Corinthians *heard* the preaching, “*they believed and were baptized*” (Acts 18:8). The Ephesians also “*heard this, and they were baptized*” (Acts 19:5).