

The background is a teal color with a pattern of water bubbles of various sizes, some in focus and some blurred, creating a textured, aquatic effect.

IS BAPTISM
NECESSARY?

INITIAL OBSERVATIONS

- **As I read through the New Testament, I don't find anybody (who is receptive to the gospel, at least) arguing against the necessity of baptism. Nobody suggests that it is optional. Nobody throws a fit when the apostles repeatedly command their listeners to be baptized. It is accepted as gospel – literally!**
- **Where there was a receptive heart, opportunity always followed. There was never a case of the “what ifs” – rather, God made the way possible, even on a desert road (Acts 8:36).**
- **There is no scripture that either infers or comes right out and states baptism isn't necessary. The exact opposite is true. Many passages plainly explain the role baptism plays in salvation. And even passages that don't *seem* to promote baptism (i.e., Ephesians 2:4–9) include the language and “mechanics” of baptism.**

WHY SO MUCH RESISTANCE?

- **Obviously, I cannot read somebody's thoughts, so a person might be resisting or minimizing the importance of baptism for any number of reasons. Be careful not to assume a motive or lump a person into a category (the quickest way to bring a conversation to an abrupt end).**
- **"Well, my pastor said..." Denominational dogma frequently leads people to minimize or eliminate baptism from salvation altogether.**
- **"I've never heard it put like that..." Some have just never heard baptism described any other way.**
- **"I was baptized, just not how you're describing..." Many believers have been baptized according to the standards or traditions of their own religion. They simply don't recognize a difference.**

SO, IS IT NECESSARY?

- It is as essential to the Christian faith as the fact that there is one Lord, one Spirit, one Father, and one church (Ephesians 4:5).
- It is a functional, necessary part of the great commission, as Jesus explains that part of making disciples is by baptizing them (Matthew 28:18–20).
- It puts us into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13);
- It clothes us with Christ (Gal. 3:27);
- It is an appeal to God for a clean conscience (1 Pet. 3:21);
- It washes away our sins (Acts 22:16);
- It leads to the remission of sins (Acts 2:38);
- It saves us (1 Pet. 3:21)



IS BAPTISM

JUST EMPTY RITUAL?

MOTIVE MATTERS!

- **There is a clear link between internalizing the gospel message and responding in baptism (Mark 16:16). Without belief, ritual means nothing.**
- **There is nothing magical about the water (1 Pet. 3:21). If you are not appealing to God for a clean conscience, the water hasn't done anything to you (except get you wet).**
- **“Well, I WAS baptized in this way (fill in the blank with a denominational or traditional method/motive). Isn't it just important that I got baptized at all?” If it's nothing but empty ritual, then yes. But baptism is about something that happens to your soul. It is not merely a symbol, a ritual, or an initiation ceremony. It is the actual process of the old, sinful man being buried and replaced by the born again, forgiven saint!**

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ROMANS 6

COLOSSIANS 2:12-13

SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **Baptism represents a lifetime commitment. Backsliders are worse off than people who never obeyed in the first place (Heb. 6:4-6, 2 Pet. 2:20-22).**
- **Don't get fooled by strange hypotheticals or excuses. God wants you saved, and is patient enough to give you the time you need (2 Pet. 3:9).**
- **As a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17) I do not have to be tethered to my old habits, bad influences, and prejudices. I have a new life, and I am totally clean (Isaiah 1:18, 1 John 1:7,9, Ephesians 5:26).**
- **You don't have to know everything to know you need to be saved. Extensive Bible knowledge, vast wisdom, and even great maturity (in a sense) are not required to make the commitment to Christ.**