Grace Fellowship; Crossroads International Church (2x) Dr. Rick Griffith

14 June 87; 11 Mar 07; 18 Jan 15 Single Message

NIV 50 Minutes

**Why Get Wet?**

Title

***Romans 1:16-17; 6:1-7 etc.***

Topic: Baptism

Theme: Every Christian should show his or her love for Christ

Thrust: through immersion

Purpose: The listeners will commit themselves to be baptized or make another stand to testify of their faith in Christ.

Reading: Romans 6:1-7

# Introduction

### Interest: The USA shies away from putting “In God We Trust” on a new dollar coin.

Money

### Need: Do you trust in God?

Dollar

#### Christians often are ashamed of the name of Christ.

Close-Up Coin

#### Are you ashamed of Jesus?

Bag

#### Paul was not ashamed of the gospel (Rom. 1:16-17).

Rom. 1:16-17

Neighbor

Ordinances

#### Have you been baptized to testify of your faith in Christ? Why or why not?

### Subject: Today we will answer seven common questions about baptism.

### Background: I have ministered in a multi-national, multi-denominational, multi-mode baptism seminary with unity and harmony—so let’s keep this in perspective!

SBC

#### The church has debated for centuries--how it is to be done, when it should be done, who should be baptized, how many times it should be done, in whose name it should be done. Yet it is a basic that we haven’t addressed for years.

#### Maybe because of all the confusion, some groups, such as the Society of Friends and the Salvation Army, don't baptize at all.

### Text: Today is message 2 of 2 in our Back to Basics series.

Back to Basics

#### We will depart from the normal expositions today with this topical message.

#### Next Sunday we will baptize two of our women.

Jo & Shannah

#### Also, some of us haven't considered it because we don't know what it's all about.

### Preview: So what are the seven questions? You actually have them on your notes. Now let’s answer them!

• Seven Questions

### Transition: The first question to answer is…

Identification

Communities

MP

# 1. What is baptism?

## This ceremony is God’s means of identifying people into a new community.

## The key word is “identification.”

# 2. How is Christian baptism unique?

MP

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## Intertestamental baptism is not what we practice.

Intertest

### Proselytes left they pagan past.

• Proselyte

### Self-immersion was practiced.

• Self

### Women could testify publicly.

• Women

## John’s baptism brought an agent and emphasized repentance.

John

## Early church baptism had contrasts and comparisons with baptisms preceding it.

Chart

# 3. Why be baptized?

MP

## Is baptism needed for salvation? No.

Salvation

### We are saved by belief in Christ.

Devil

### We celebrate each baby’s birth—not through baptism but child dedication.

Godfather

Celebrate

## The New Testament gives at least five reasons why baptism is so important:

7 Reasons

### Baptism shows that you want to live under God's authority like Jesus showed when he was baptized (Matt. 3:13-17).

Authority

#### The meaning of His baptism was different than what Christian baptism symbolizes, yet "there is a sense in which we follow the Lord when we are baptized" (Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 422).

Christ baptized

#### Ephesians 5:1 says, "Be imitators of God…" and baptism is one area in which Christ set the example for us to follow.

Fulfill righteous

#### If Christ, who was perfect, needed baptism in order to "fulfill all righteousness," don't we, who are far from perfect, have this need as well?

(So the first reason baptism is important is because Christ was baptized. A second reason we should see this ordinance as a priority is because…)

Command

### Christ commanded baptism for every Christian (Mat 28:19).

#### "Going," "teaching" and "baptizing" are all important parts to making disciples.

Matt 28

#### Too often we emphasize going and teaching to the neglect of baptism.

#### Since Christ commanded baptism for every disciple, need more be said?

##### The fact that He commanded it makes it non-optional.

##### So if you have not been baptized and are wondering whether it's God's will for you, don't wonder any more.

### Baptism is a sign that God has saved you from your sin (Rom. 6:1-2).

Saved

#### The rainbow is a sign that God will never cause another worldwide flood.

Rainbow

#### The cup of the Lord’s Supper is a sign of the new covenant.

New Cov

(Not only is baptism a sign, but a third reason it is important is that…)

### Baptism identifies you with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:3-7).

Identifies

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#### We are fully submerged in baptism.

Rom 6:3

#### In this we identify with Christ’s death for us.

### Baptism portrays your new life or rebirth given through the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:4)

New Life

#### We come out of the water every time!

#### This symbolizes the new life Christ gives us!

Emerges

### Baptism symbolizes the washing away and cleansing of a life of sin, into the purity of holiness acceptable to God (Acts 2:38).

Acts 2:38

Cleansing

#### Some misunderstand Acts 2:38 as teaching forgiveness *because of* baptism.

#### But it actually refers to baptism because of *forgiveness*!

### Baptism incorporates you into the local church (Gal. 3:26-29; Eph. 2:11-22)

Into Body

#### A person who gets baptized becomes an official member of the church where he or she is baptized.

#### Galatians 3:26-29 considers baptism the great equalizer.

Gal. 3

Review

(So we've seen seven reasons why baptism is so important:

1. Christ was baptized as an example to us of life under God’s authority

2. Christ commanded baptism for every Christian

3. It’s a sign that God saved you from your sin

4. Baptism identifies you with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ

5. Baptism portrays your new life

6. Baptism symbolizes the washing away of your sin to make you holy

7. Baptism incorporates you into the local church

Let's turn our attention now towards the recipients of baptism…)

# 4. Who should be baptized?

MP

## The Who: Believer's. The Bible teaches only believer's baptism. Only those who have placed their faith in Christ should be baptized.

Repentant

Believers
Immersion

## We would like to baptize every believer—but I have refused to baptize believers who I know to be living in unrepentant, public sin. Why? They also make a covenant to live according to Scripture as members. This applies to youth and children. But…

Old enough

## As you well know, many churches practice infant baptism. This is because of three arguments which favor infant baptism (Ryrie, 423):

Babies?

### The Historical Argument

Historical

#### Advocates say the church from earliest times practiced infant baptism—yet it goes back no further than the third century.

• 3rd cent.

#### Just because some church fathers shortly after New Testament times taught something doesn't make it right. They also taught baptismal regeneration which is heretical. The Scripture is our authority.

#### Catholics believe it saves, but if that were so, we should baptize as soon as possible.

Catholics

(2 slides)

Household

#### Luther felt that faith was necessary for baptism, but he believed that the faith of parents and the church to be sufficient for the infant.

Luther

### The Household Argument

#### It argues that the entire households baptized in the Book of Acts almost certainly included infants (e.g., Cornelius, Lydia, Philippian jailer).

#### They say it shows God chose these infants before they chose God. This is true, but the question remains whether baptism is God’s means to teach this!

• Babies can’t

“Believed…then”

Chose

#### Response: The age of the children is never mentioned in any of the household passages, but the verses say that *only those who believed were baptized.* This would then exclude infants.

### The Circumcision Argument

Circum-cision

#### They claim that Colossians 2:11-12 clearly links circumcision and baptism. Since infants were circumcised under the Old Covenant, they should be baptized under the New Covenant.

• Col 2

Chart

Already took place

MP

Invented

• Sickbed

Gibbons

Title

Title

Title

#### Response: The only real comparison between the two rites is that both initiated people into a new community—but whereas circumcision initiated people into a theocracy that included unbelievers, baptism initiates only into a believing community, the church. Many other contrasts exist [explain].

(The evidence seems clear that infant baptism can't be supported from Scripture.)

# 5. Where did sprinkling or pouring come from?

## When was sprinkling invented? No evidence exists for sprinkling in the New Testament.

### The first recorded case of sprinkling was in AD 257 to someone on a sickbed. It was an exception to the rule and brought about fierce opposition from the whole church.

• Accepted for sick

### Not until AD 757 did the church accept sprinkling in such sickbed cases of necessity.

### It wasn't until AD 1311, when the Catholic council of Ravenna, declared that sprinkling was an acceptable substitute for immersion and from that time forward sprinkling replaced immersion in the Roman Catholic Church.

• Accepted for all

### Even many nonimmersionists admit that immersion was the biblical practice:

#### John Calvin [Presbyterian forerunner--a sprinkler] wrote, "It is evident that the term *baptize* means to immerse, and that this was the form used by the primitive Church" (Calvin, *Institutes*, 4:15:19?).

Calvin

#### Cardinal Gibbons (Roman Catholic) observes, "For several centuries after the establishment of Christianity, Baptism was usually conferred by immersion; but since the twelfth century the practice of baptism by affusion has prevailed in the Catholic Church, as this practice is attained with less inconvenience than by immersion" (*Faith of Our Fathers*).

## The arguments for sprinkling are easily answered (summed up by Charles Ryrie, 424):

Blood of Christ

### The case for sprinkling says that:

Sprinkling Texts

#### Certain Old Testament rituals of cleansings involved sprinkling and are classified as "baptisms" ["washings" in NIV, NASB, KJV] in Hebrews 9:10.

#### But these are OT texts that preceded baptism by hundreds of years. Even the texts in the book of Hebrews look back at OT washing or else our hearts being cleansed spiritually.

### They think immersion was improbable or impossible in certain instances:

3000

#### Acts 2:41 Too many people --Enough pools in Jerusalem

Eunuch
(4 slides)

#### Acts 8:38 Too little water in a desert place --Oasis: "Look! There's water!"

Jailor
(7 slides)

#### Acts 16:33 Too little water in a house --Gentile outdoor pools

(If sprinkling can't be supported then what about pouring?)

## The case for pouring (affusion) says that…

Pouring

### Pouring best pictures the ministry of the Spirit coming on and into the believer’s life.

#### But baptism doesn't depict the ministry of the Spirit!

Washing = Pouring?

#### We already saw Romans 6 compares baptism to being buried and raised.

### Many texts are cited that have nothing to do with baptism.

Pouring Texts

### They say that the phrases "into the water" and "out of the water" may equally be translated "to the water" and "away from the water." In other words, the one to be baptized went to the water, perhaps even into the water, but not under the water.

#### But "into" and "out of" are the major meanings of the prepositions.

#### They went into the water and out of it.

### Catacomb drawings show a vessel pouring over the head of one standing in water.

Pouring

#### This only proves that some practiced pouring—as the *Didache* notes.

Didache

#### It doesn’t prove that pouring was biblical.

Rains, pours!

(So what about immersion then? Is there any hard evidence that the New Testament church practiced immersion? I believe there is…)

# 6. Why is immersion is the proper mode?

MP

## The best evidence supports the case for immersion:

### *Baptizo* has as its primary meaning to "dip, immerse" (BAGD) but it is used of dipping only in reference to OT practices. In non-Christian literature it means to "plunge, sink, drench, overwhelm" (BAGD).

Baptizo

### The issue is not place, baptistery, or size.

3 slides of immersion

### The Greek has separate words for sprinkling, pouring and immersion, but only *baptizo* is used for baptism.

Greek
(2 slides)

### The English word “baptize” transliterates the Greek *baptize.*

Transliterate

• Translate
• Transliterate

#### The meaning is *immersion*.

#### It was the only NT mode.

Only mode

#### Unfortunately, both Jerome and Luther did not translate it. Instead, they transliterated it into a new term.

Jerome & Luther

### Baptizing infants in beautiful clothes has changed our view of baptism also.

Clothes

#### Most parents don’t want to mess up the nice clothes.

Baby clothes

#### Some find middle ground between infant sprinkling and adult immersion by immersing infants!

Identify

Infant immersion

### Immersion best shows death to the old life and resurrection to the new (Rom. 6:1-4).

### Immersion best signifies subjection to Christ’s authority (Matt. 28:18-20).

Subjection

Obedience

Much Water

Required

• Instruction

• Fasting

Proselyte Immersion

First Building

Unbaptized

Why not?

Title

Title

### Immersion best signifies obedience and a good conscience (1 Pet. 3:21).

### Immersion could have been done in every case we have discussed—especially since much water was needed.

### Early baptism requirements favored immersion of those who could understand.

#### They needed three years instruction—this excludes infants.

#### The procedure included fasting, instruction, asking and answering questions.

### Proselyte baptism (in Judaism before Christianity) was performed by self-immersion in a tank of water. This mode would naturally carry over to the Christian church.

### The first church building in AD 240 had a room for a baptistery—very necessary with people baptized naked. No room would be needed for sprinkling in the service.

### The unbaptized were not deemed Christians and could not take the Lord’s supper.

### So why not immerse?

#### There is little support for another mode.

#### Exceptions include physical and logistic concerns.

# 7. Should those previously sprinkled or poured upon later be immersed?

MP

## In Acts 19:1-7 we see Paul encountering 12 godly men who had only received John’s baptism. Once they understood about Christ, they were immersed.

Acts 19

## Since these men received immersion twice, it makes sense that we should have no problem receiving immersion once after a former sprinkling.

## I did this. I was sprinkled at 5 months old and immersed at age 14 after I trusted Christ.

Acts 19

(2 slides)

My certificate

# Conclusion

### Every Christian should show his or her love for Christ through immersion (MI).

MI

Christ

### What does baptism mean?

#### We follow Christ’s example. By going down under the water we testify that we are burying our old life, leaving it behind (Rom 6:4a).

#### In coming up out of the water we tell others that we're committed to living a new life (Rom 6:4b)!

Don’t deprive

Dual meaning

### Don’t deprive yourself of the opportunity to proclaim what Christ has done for you.

### There are other questions that I have not had time to answer, but I would be happy to discuss these with any of you.

Next Sunday

Questions

### Those who wish to be baptized next Sunday, please speak with me.

### Let's bow in prayer. The invitation to be baptized is open to everyone here today.

Prayer

#### Have you been baptized since you came to know Christ personally? If not, and you want to, I'd like to ask you to do something right now. Just between you and me and God, if you're interested in possibly being baptized in our service next week slip up your hand so I can see it and I will contact you this week.

#### Maybe you've already been baptized in the past, and, as we've looked into the Word of God about baptism you've been reminded of your own baptism--how special it was, how much joy you knew then, how closely you walked with the Lord. But now what the Lord said to the Ephesians applies to you: "You have lost your first love." How did it happen? What do you need to do in response?

#### "Lord, thank You for giving us the ordinance of baptism as a beautiful reminder of the work you have done in us. Thanks for the privilege of leaving our old life behind and being able to be new creatures in Christ. For those who are not new creatures here today, we ask that they would come to know Christ by faith. For those who are believers and have not yet obeyed in baptism, we pray that Your Spirit would move them to do so. For those of us who are baptized already, we ask to experience the joy of that event anew. In Christ's name, Amen."

# Study Questions (Step 1)

# Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

### God wants us to testify of our faith in Him.

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

### John’s immersion of repentance

# Questions

### What is baptism?

### How is Christian baptism unique?

### Why be baptized?

### Who should be baptized?

### Where did sprinkling or pouring come from?

### Why is immersion is the proper mode?

### Should those previously sprinkled or poured upon later be immersed?

# Tentative Theme/Thrust Statements (Step 5)

We should not be ashamed to testify of what Christ has done for us—and baptism is the best way God says to do this.

# Possible Illustrations (Step 6)

### Buddhist and Hindu parents often don’t mind their children becoming Christians as long as they are NOT baptized—do they understand something about baptism that we don’t?

### Testimony of baptism by Karen Clough

### Acts 8 Visual Bible

### Bluefish baptisms

### Small groups to discuss these questions: Have you been baptized? When will you obey Christ’s command?

### The early church gave an important place to baptism.

#### At the birth of the church on the Day of Pentecost over 3,000 people were baptized after they trusted Christ (Acts 2:41).

#### Throughout the Book of Acts we see baptism in a prominent place in the church:

##### Samaritans (8:12-13)

##### Ethiopian eunuch (8:36, 38)

##### Paul (9:18)

##### Cornelius and other Gentiles (10:47-48)

##### Lydia and members of her household (16:15)

##### Philippian jailer and his family (16:33)

##### Crispus and many Corinthians (18:8)

##### Former disciples of John the Baptist (19:5)

#### The early church baptized people of different ethnic backgrounds, different ages, and different occupations—whoever believed in Christ was baptized!

##### "The early church never conceived of a believer remaining unbaptized" (Ryrie).

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##### "The idea of an unbaptized Christian is simply not entertained in the NT" (Bruce, *Acts*, 77).

### Hebrews 6:1-2 views baptism as a foundational truth.

#### Baptism here is regarded as "no more optional or less significant than the doctrines of repentance, resurrection and judgment" (Ryrie).

#### Once again we see the stress the New Testament places on baptism.

### US coins miss “In God We Trust”

**Updated: 11:23 a.m. ET March 8, 2007**

**PHILADELPHIA - An unknown number of new George Washington dollar coins were mistakenly struck without their edge inscriptions, including “In God We Trust,” and are fetching around $50 apiece online.**

**The properly struck dollar coins, bearing the likeness of the nation’s first president, are inscribed along the edge with “In God We Trust,” “E Pluribus Unum” and the year and mint mark. The flawed coins made it past inspectors and went into circulation Feb. 15.**

**The U.S. Mint struck 300 million of the coins, which are golden in color and slightly larger and thicker than a quarter.**

**About half were made in Philadelphia and the rest in Denver. So far the mint has only received reports of error coins coming from Philadelphia, mint spokeswoman Becky Bailey said.**

**Bailey said it was unknown how many coins lacked the inscriptions. Ron Guth, president of Professional Coin Grading Service, one of the world’s largest coin authentication companies, said he believes that at least 50,000 error coins were put in circulation.**

**“The first one sold for $600 before everyone knew how common they actually were,” he said. “They’re going for around $40 to $60 on eBay now, and they’ll probably settle in the $50 range.”**

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**End of the story…**

**Production of the presidential dollar entails a “new, complex, high-volume manufacturing system” that the mint will adjust to eliminate any future defects, the mint said in a statement.**

**“We take this matter seriously. We also consider quality control a high priority. The agency is looking into the matter to determine a possible cause in the manufacturing process,” the statement said.**

**Guth said it appeared from the roughly 50 smooth-edge dollars he has authenticated that the problem had to do with quality control rather than a mechanical error.**

**“These coins are struck like normal coins, then they go through another machine that adds edge lettering in another process. These apparently skipped that process,” he said. “We’ve seen a couple of instances where the edge lettering may be weak or indistinct, but we’re not talking about that here.”**

**The coin’s design has already spurred e-mail conspiracy theories claiming that the religious motto was purposely omitted. That rumor may have started because the edge lettering cannot be seen in head-on photographs of properly struck coins.**

**It is the first U.S. coin to have words stamped around the edge since the storied 1933 $20 gold “double eagle,” among the rarest and most valuable in the world. In 2002, a 1933 double eagle was sold for $7.59 million — the highest price ever paid for a coin.**

**The Washington dollars are the first in a series of presidential coins slated to run until 2016. After Washington, the presidents to be honored on dollar coins this year will be John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.**

**The 215-year-old Philadelphia mint, located downtown on Independence Mall, employs about 500 people and last year produced about 7.8 billion coins. The overwhelming majority of error coins are caught by inspectors and melted down.**

**Bailey said the striking of the Adams coin, expected to roll out in mid-May, will proceed as planned.**

**“We are adjusting the manufacturing process to try to eliminate the problems,” she said.**

### Born a Baptist

Each Friday night after work, Bubba would fire up his outdoor grill and

cook a venison steak. But all of Bubba's neighbors were Catholic....and

since it was Lent, they were forbidden from eating meat on Friday. The

delicious aroma from the grilled venison steaks was causing such a problem

for the Catholic faithful that they finally talked to their priest. The

Priest came to visit Bubba and suggested that he become a Catholic. After

several classes and much study, Bubba attended Mass.....and as the priest

sprinkled holy water over him, he said, "You were born a Baptist, and

raised a Baptist, but now you are a Catholic."

Bubba's neighbors were greatly relieved, until Friday night arrived, and

the wonderful aroma of grilled venison again filled the neighborhood. The

Priest was called immediately by the neighbors and as he rushed into

Bubba's yard clutching a rosary preparing to scold him, he stopped and

watched in amazement.

There stood Bubba, clutching a small bottle of holy water which he

carefully sprinkled over the grilling meat and chanted: "You wuz born a

deer, you wuz raised a deer, but now you is a catfish.”

### USC Professor Story

**This is a true story of something that happened just a few years ago at USC.**

**There was a professor of philosophy there who was a deeply committed atheist. His primary goal for one required class was to spend the entire semester to prove that God couldn't exist. His students were always afraid to argue with him because of his impeccable logic. Sure, some had argued in class at times, but no one had ever really gone against him because of his reputation.**

**At the end of every semester on the last day, he would say to his class of 300 students, "If there is anyone here who still believes in Jesus, stand up!"**

**In twenty years, no one had ever stood up. They knew what he was going to do next. He would say, “Because anyone who believes in God is a fool. If God existed, he could stop this piece of chalk from hitting the ground and breaking. Such a simple task to prove that He is God, and yet He can't do it."**

**And every year, he would drop the chalk onto the tile floor of the classroom and it would shatter into a hundred pieces.**

**All of the students would do nothing but stop and stare.**

**Most of the students thought that God couldn't exist. Certainly, a number of Christians had slipped through, but for 20 years, they had been too afraid to stand up.**

**Well, a few years ago there was a freshman who happened to enroll. He was a Christian, and had heard the stories about his professor.**

**He was required to take the class for his major, and he was afraid. But for three months that semester, he prayed every morning that he would have the courage to stand up no matter what the professor said, or what the class thought.**

**Nothing they said could ever shatter his faith... he hoped.**

**Finally, the day came. The professor said, "If there is anyone here who still believes in God, stand up!" The professor and the class of 300 people looked at him, shocked, as he stood up at the back of the classroom.**

**The professor shouted, "You FOOL!!! If God existed, he would keep this piece of chalk from breaking when it hit the ground!"**

**He proceeded to drop the chalk, but as he did, it slipped out of his fingers, off his shirt cuff, onto the pleat of his pants, down his leg, and off his shoe. As it hit the ground, it simply rolled away unbroken. The professor's jaw dropped as he stared at the chalk. He looked up at the young man, and then ran out of the lecture hall.**

**The young man who had stood, proceeded to walk to the front of the room and shared his faith in Jesus for the next half hour. 300 students stayed and listened as he told of God's love for them and of His power through Jesus.**

# Grace Fellowship Evangelical Free Church Rick Griffith

June 14, 1987 Message 1 of 1

NIV 25 Minutes

Baptism-The Christian's Testimony

Selected Passages (Topical Sermon)

**Topic:** Baptism

**Subject:** Believer's baptism by immersion

**Complement:** is the Christian's responsibility and privilege before God and man.

**Purpose:** The unbaptized listeners will be baptized two weeks from today.

 The baptized believers will witness for Christ through other means similar to their baptism.

**Attribute:** We worship God as the Giver of New Life

**Meditation:** 2 Corinthians 5:17

**Children's Story:** "More Than Wet" (Original story #2 attached)

**Reading:** Romans 6:1-14

**Introduction**

1. A Presbyterian and a Baptist minister were discussing baptism. After a beautiful dissertation of the subject by the Baptist minister, the Presbyterian minister asked if the Baptist considered a person baptized if he were immersed in water up to his chin. "No," said the Baptist.

 "Nose?" "No"

 "Eyebrows?"

 "You don't seem to understand," said the Baptist. "He must be immersed completely in water--until his head is covered."

 "That's what I've been trying to tell you all along," said the Presbyterian, "it's only a little water on the top of the head that counts" (Tan 4069).

2. Baptism is one of those subjects that the church has debated for centuries--**how** it is to be done, **when** it should be done, **who** should be baptized, **how many times** it should be done, in **whose name** it should be done.

3. Unfortunately, perhaps because of all the confusion, some groups, such as the Society of Friends and the Salvation Army, don't baptize at all.

4. We do, though. In fact, two weeks from tonight we'll have our second baptism since we've existed as a church. It will be at Charlie and Martha Jean's home on Lake Worth. Five persons are interested in being baptized to date.

Sub. 5. However, perhaps some of us haven't considered it because we don't know what it's all about. This is the reason for my message today--to explain…

a. the importance of baptism (why)

b. the meaning of baptism (what)

c. who should be baptized

d. when baptism should take place

e. and how the Biblical method of baptism should be administered.

**I. The Why: Important. Baptism is very important.**

 **Scripture places a greater importance on baptism than most Protestants do.**

The New Testament gives at least five reasons why baptism is so important:

A. Christ was baptized (Mat 3:13-17).

1. The meaning of His baptism was different than what Christian baptism symbolizes, yet "there is a sense in which we follow the Lord when we are baptized" (Ryrie, *Basic Theology* :422).

2. Ephesians 5:1 says, "Be imitators of God…" and baptism is one area in which Christ set the example for us to follow.

3. If Christ, who was perfect, needed to be baptized in order to "fulfill all righteousness," don't we, who are far from perfect, have this need as well?

(So the first reason baptism is important is because Christ was baptized. A second reason why we should see this ordinance as a priority is because…)

B. Christ approved of His disciples baptising (John 4:1-2).

(Not only did the disciples baptize, but a third observation which stresses the importance of baptism is that…)

C. The early church gave an important place to baptism.

1. At the birth of the church on the Day of Pentecost over 3,000 people were baptized after they trusted Christ (Acts 2:41).

2. Throughout the Book of Acts we see baptism in a prominent place in the church:

a. Samaritans (8:12-13)

b. Ethiopian eunuch (8:36, 38)

c. Paul (9:18)

d. Cornelius and other Gentiles (10:47-48)

e. Lydia and members of her household (16:15)

f. Philippian jailer and his family (16:33)

g. Crispus and many Corinthians (18:8)

h. Former disciples of John the Baptist (19:5)

3. Baptism was practiced by the early church on people of different ethnic backgrounds, different ages, different occupations--**whoever** believed in Christ was baptized!

a. "The early church never conceived of a believer remaining unbaptised" (Ryrie).

b. "The idea of an unbaptised Christian is simply not entertained in the NT" (Bruce, *Acts* :77).

(We've seen so far that baptism is important because it was practiced on Christ, by the disciples and by the early church. A fourth reason it should be priority is simply because…)

D. Christ commanded baptism for every Christian (Mat 28:19).

1. "Going," "teaching" **and** "baptising" are all important parts to making disciples.

2. In many churches there's an emphasis on going and teaching to the neglect of baptism.

3. Since Christ commanded baptism for every disciple, need more be said?

a. The fact that He commanded it makes it non-optional.

b. So if you have not been baptized and are wondering whether it's God's will for you, don't wonder any more.

(How about a fifth and final reason why baptism is so important?)

E. Hebrews 6:1-2 views baptism as a foundational truth.

1. Baptism here is regarded as "no more optional or less significant than the doctrines of repentance, resurrection and judgment" (Ryrie).

2. Once again we see the stress the New Testament places on baptism.

(So we've seen five reasons why baptism is so important:

1. Christ was baptized

2. The disciples baptized

3. The early church baptized

4. Christ commanded baptism for every Christian

5. Baptism is a foundational truth

Let's turn our attention now towards the significance of baptism. What does it signify?)

**II. The What: Identification. Baptism symbolizes our identification with Christ.**

 **Baptism is a ritual which pictures Christ's death, burial and resurrection.**

A. Romans 6:3-4 probably illustrates the meaning of baptism better than any other passage.

1. "In baptism the believer testifies that he was in Christ when Christ was judged for sin, that he was buried with him, and that he has risen to new life in him" (Thiessen).

2. "Theologically, baptism may be defined as an act of association or identification with someone, some group, some message, or some event…" [read entire paragraph in Ryrie, *Basic Theology* :422].

3. So what does it mean to be baptized?

a. By going down under the water we testify that we are burying our old life, leaving it behind (Rom 6:4a).

b. In coming up out of the water we tell others that we're committed to living a new life (Rom 6:4b)!

c. BAPTISM pictures leaving old life

(Now whenever talking about baptism it's important to point out that…)

B. Baptism is a ritual which provides no special benefit. It especially doesn't save us!

1. It's an **important** symbol, but it's still only a symbol! (BAPTISM symbol of salvation)

2. Some religious groups teach that baptism is necessary to be saved, and even some passages **seem** to teach this.

a. However, to add anything to faith is to **deny** salvation by faith by adding works.

b. Also, a study of every passage which is often used to teach that baptism saves reveals something very interesting: Repentance, faith and/or forgiveness **always** comes first.

c. Faith in Christ and baptism are so closely related that they are often expressed as one act.

(This leads us to our third area of consideration regarding baptism. I've addressed the why question and the what question. Now, the who. Who does the Bible say should be baptized?)

**III. The Who: Believer's. The Bible teaches only believer's baptism.**

 **Only those who have placed their faith in Christ should be baptized.**

A. As you well know, many churches practice infant baptism. This is because of three arguments which favor infant baptism (Ryrie:423):

1. The Circumcision Argument.

a. Stated: Colossians 2:11-12 clearly links circumcision and baptism. Since infants were circumcised under the Old Covenant, they should be baptized under the New Covenant.

b. Response: The only real comparison which can be made between the two rites is that both initiated people into a new community--but whereas circumcision initiated people into a theocracy which included **unbelievers**, baptism initiates only into a **believing** community, the church.

2. The Historical Argument.

a. Stated: Infant baptism has been practiced by the church from earliest times.

b. Response: Just because some church fathers shortly after New Testament times taught something doesn't make it right. They also taught baptismal regeneration which is heretical. The Scripture is our authority.

3. The Household Argument.

a. Stated: Entire households were baptized in the Book of Acts which almost certainly included infants (e.g., Cornelius, Lydia, Philippian jailer).

b. Response: The age of the children is never mentioned in any of the household passages, but the verses do say that only those who believed were baptized. This would then exclude infants.

(The evidence seems clear that infant baptism can't be supported from Scripture.)

B. The Scriptural order is always believe then be baptized:

1. In John's baptism it says "confessing their sins, they were baptized…" (Mat 3:6).

2. At Pentecost Peter exclaimed, "Repent, and be baptized" (Acts 2:38).

3. Every single time in the New Testament that baptism was performed it came only after faith in Christ.

(Allow me to address the fourth question about baptism: If only believers should be baptized, **when** should they be baptized?)

 **IV. The When: ASAP. Believers should be baptized soon after salvation.**

 **In the N.T. Christians were baptized immediately.**

A. Although we don't practice this much today, the pattern of the early church was to baptize at the earliest possible time after conversion.

1. Sometimes we think that having too many people baptized at once is logistically impossible.

a. I was baptized at age 14 with one other teenager and have never seen more than 15 people baptized in one service.

b. However, at Pentecost even though 3,000 believed in one day they were all baptized that same day [Acts 2:41]!

c. On April 17, 1971 about 2,000 persons participated in a mass baptism by ministers with Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa, California. It was performed in the Pacific Ocean at Corona del Mar (Tan 4065).

2. The Apostle Paul was baptized the same day he was saved [Acts 9:18].

3. The Ethiopian eunuch was baptized as soon as they reached enough water [Acts 8:36-38]. Maybe this would be a good policy for us as a church?

(I can already hear some of you saying…)

B. What about baptising children who believe but don't yet understand the significance of baptism?

1. I don't know of any Scriptural examples of children who understood enough to trust Christ yet weren't baptized because they didn't understand baptism.

2. But let's suppose your child receives Christ and afterwards you talk to him or her about baptism and the child responds, "Oh, that sounds great! I really love swimming and getting wet!" You might want to wait.

3. I can also see validity encouraging people to hold off because you're not really sure the individual is saved (ILL: Pilgrim Baptist Church basketball player's "salvation" and "baptism").

(But as I said before…)

C. The general principle in Scripture is not to hold off baptism any longer than necessary.

1. Perhaps the sooner the person is baptized, the more it confirms his faith in Christ.

2. Scripture records no probationary period, but the proper timing must be left up to the individual, and, in the case of children, the parent's input.

(Now, one last question about baptism--the one you've been waiting for! How should people be baptized? By sprinkling, by affusion [pouring], or by immersion?)

 **V. The How: Immersion. It's easiest to see immersion as the Biblical mode.**

 **No good evidence exists for sprinkling or affusion in the New Testament.**

The arguments for each method are summarized by Charles Ryrie (p. 424):

A. The case for sprinkling says that:

1. Certain Old Testament rituals of cleansings involved sprinkling and are classified as "baptisms" ["washings" in NIV, NASB, KJV] in Hebrews 9:10.

--these are OT

2. Immersion was improbable or impossible in certain instances

a. Acts 2:41 Too many people --Enough pools in Jerusalem]

b. Acts 8:38 Too little water in a desert place --Oasis: "Look! There's water!"

c. Acts 16:33 Too little water in a house --Gentile outdoor pools

3. Most churches don't practice immersion.

--Our authority is Scripture, not the majority of churches

(If sprinkling can't be supported then what about pouring?)

B. The case for pouring (affusion) says that:

1. Pouring best pictures the ministry of the Spirit coming on and into the life of the believer.

--Baptism doesn't depict the ministry of the Spirit!

2. The phrases "into the water" and "out of the water" may equally be translated "to the water" and "away from the water." In other words, the one to be baptized went to the water, perhaps even into the water, but not under the water.

--"Into" and "out of" are the major meanings of the prepositions.

3. Catacomb drawings depict pouring from a vessel over the head of one standing in water.

--This only proves that pouring was practiced by some, not that it was Biblical.

(So what about immersion then? Is there any hard evidence that immersion was practiced by the New Testament church? I believe there is…)

C. The best evidence supports the case for immersion:

1. *Baptizo* has as its primary meaning to "dip, immerse" (BAGD) but it is used of dipping only in reference to OT practices. In non-Christian literature it means to "plunge, sink, drench, overwhelm" (BAGD).

2. Immersion best signifies death to the old life and resurrection to the new (Rom 6:1-4)

3. Immersion could have been done in every case [see above].

4. Proselyte baptism (in Judaism before Christianity) was performed by self-immersion in a tank of water. This mode would naturally carry over to the Christian church.

5. Pouring, not sprinkling, was the first exception to immersion and was allowed in cases of sickness. This was called "clinical baptism" (Cyprian, ca. 250 A.D.).

6. Even many nonimmersionists admit that immersion was the biblical practice (Wm. Sloan, YFBC, *Pastor's Class Manual* ):

a. John Calvin [Presbyterian forerunner--a sprinkler] wrote, "Among the ancients they immersed the whole body in water. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the early church" (Calvin, *Institutes*, 4:15:19?).

b. Cardinal Gibbons (Roman Catholic) observes, "For several centuries after the establishment of Christianity, Baptism was usually conferred by immersion; but since the twelfth century the practice of baptism by affusion has prevailed in the Catholic Church, as this practice is attained with less inconvenience than by immersion" (*Faith of Our Fathers* ).

**Conclusion**

1. Obviously no one's salvation is dependent upon whether he's immersed or sprinkled, baptized as a child or adult, saved or unsaved when baptized. The real issue is trusting Christ for salvation.

M.I. 2. Believer's baptism by immersion is the Christian's responsibility and privilege before God and man.

3. Let's bow in prayer. The invitation to be baptized is open to everyone here today.

a. Have you been baptized since you came to know Christ personally? If not, and you want to, I'd like to ask you to do something right now. Just between you and me and God, if you're interested in possibly being baptized in our service two weeks from today slip up your hand so I can see it and I will contact you this week.

b. Maybe you've already been baptized in the past, and, as we've looked into the Word of God about baptism you've been reminded of your own baptism--how special it was, how much joy you knew then, how closely you walked with the Lord. But now what the Lord said to the Ephesians applies to you: "You have lost your first love." How did it happen? What do you need to do in response?

4. Prayer: "Lord, thank You for giving us the ordinance of baptism as a beautiful reminder of the work you have done in us. Thanks for the privilege of leaving our old life behind and being able to be new creatures in Christ. For those who are **not** new creatures here today, we ask that they would come to know Christ by faith. For those who **are** believers and have not yet obeyed in baptism, we pray that Your Spirit would move them to do so. For those of us who are baptized already, we ask to experience the joy of that event anew. In Christ's name, Amen."

5. It's very fitting that we turn our attention now towards Hymn #458 *Take My Life*.

# Outlines (Steps 2-5)

**Title**

***Passage***

**Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)**

# Exegetical Idea (CPT):

# I.

# II.

# III.

**Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)**

**The listeners will**

**Homiletical Outline (Cyclical inductive form)—Steps 5-6**

# Subject:

# Introduction

### Interest: As the USA now shies away from printing “In God We Trust” on the new dollar coin, so Christians often are ashamed of the name of Christ. Are you?

### Need: Have you been baptized to testify of your faith in Christ? Why or why not?

### Subject: Today we will answer, “Why should we be baptized?” and six other questions.

### Background: I have ministered in a multi-national, multi-denominational, multi-mode baptism seminary with unity and harmony—so let’s keep this in perspective!

### Text: We will depart from the normal exposition pattern today with this topical message.

### Preview: So what are the seven questions? You actually have them on your notes. Now let’s answer them!

### Transition: The first question to answer is…

# I. What is baptism?

# II. How is Christian baptism unique?

# III. Why be baptized?

# IV. Who should be baptized?

# V. Where did sprinkling or pouring come from?

# VI. Why is immersion is the proper mode?

# VII. Should those previously sprinkled or poured upon later be immersed?

# Conclusion

### Every Christian should show his or her love for Christ through immersion (MI).

### Exhortation: A student demonstrated his faith in Christ at USC.

### Application: Be baptized on April 1.

 Pastor Rick Griffith

11 March 2007

Why Get Wet?

Introduction

Questions About Baptism

1. What is baptism?

2. How is Christian baptism unique?

3. Why be baptized?

4. Who should be baptized?

5. Where did sprinkling or pouring come from?

6. Why is immersion is the proper mode?

7. Should those previously sprinkled or poured upon later be immersed?

Conclusion

Main Idea:

**Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)**

The listeners will

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)

# Introduction

### Interest:

### Need:

### Subject:

### Background:

### Preview:

### Text:

(Transition into MPI here.)

# I.

[Restate MP here.]

(Transition into MPII here.)

# II.

[Restate MP here.]

(Transition into MPIII here.)

# III.

[Restate MP here.]

(Transition into the MI here.)

# Conclusion

###  (MI).

### Main Points

### Exhortation/Application



**Rick Griffith**

18 January 2015

Message 2 of 2

**Why Get Wet?**

***Romans 6:3-4 and Selected Texts***

# Introduction

**Questions About Baptism**

**1. What is baptism?**

**2. How is Christian baptism unique?**



**3. Why be baptized?**

**4. Who should be baptized?**

**5. Where did sprinkling or pouring come from?**

**6. Why is immersion is the proper mode?**

**7. Should those previously sprinkled or poured upon later be immersed?**

# Conclusion

### Every Christian should show his or her love for Christ through \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ answer (Main Idea).

### What should you do now?

**Thought Questions**

1. Read Romans 6:1-14 and Colossians 2:11-12. List what they say about these topics:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Spiritual Birth** | **Baptism** |
| Receiving grace should lead to holiness (Rom. 6:1) | Signifies our being dead to sin when going under the water (Rom. 6:3) |
| Set free from the power of sin, though not from the presence of sin (Rom. 6:4) | Signifies that Christ’s resurrection gives you new life and eventual physical resurrection (Rom. 6:5; Col. 2:12B) |
| Likened to physical circumcision in that both i | Must be by faith (Col. 2:12) |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |

1. What question do you have about baptism that was not answered in today’s sermon?

Text