

What Is Baptism? – No. 1

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There is no single teaching of the New Testament over which more controversy has raged than the subject of baptism. There is only one reason why any controversy at all ever arose concerning the subject. It was not because the New Testament is ambiguous in its teaching on the subject, nor that man is incapable of understanding its teaching. Men have simply been unwilling to submit to the clear and simple teaching of God's Word on this subject. In this and subsequent articles we will explore this great subject. It is not our purpose to merely prove that some are right and others wrong on this topic, although we will not apologize for this result. It will be our premise that whatever the New Testament teaches on this subject is from God and man is obligated to submit to it or jeopardize his eternal salvation. If it makes a difference what the New Testament teaches on any subject, then what it teaches on **this** subject must make a difference. If it matters not what the New Testament teaches on this subject, one cannot logically contend that any New Testament teaching matters. Lamentably, it appears that most of our world has been hoodwinked by agents of Satan – and many of them claiming to be theologians – into believing that the teaching of the Bible is of no consequence. We trust that our readers have deeper faith and greater intelligence for the most part, than to be shaken by such infidels. Now let us begin our study of this important subject.

What is the meaning of the term *baptize*? *Baptize* and its related forms was not an English word originally. It was transliterated or Anglicized, simply transferred directly from the Greek word *baptidzo* into the English word, *baptism*. One may consult any standard lexicon of the Greek New Testament (e.g., *Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich*, p. 131; *Thayer*, p. 94; *Harpers Analytical*, p. 65, etc.) and learn that *baptidzo* means to dip, plunge, submerge or immerse, literally and metaphorically to overwhelm. Other lines of evidence will be produced to show the meaning of this important term as you read subsequent articles.

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