

## What Is Baptism? – No. 2

Dub McClish

It is our premise that the New Testament is God's verbally inspired Word and that what it teaches on any subject is God's Will. This is true of the subject of faith, the virgin birth, moral laws, and every other subject, including baptism. Our intent is to simply see what the Bible teaches on this great subject and to point you, as a serious Bible student, to that teaching in your own Bible. But more than this, we would hope that upon perceiving the teaching of Truth on this subject, you may be encouraged to act on it.

In the previous article, we have seen that *baptize* literally means to dip, plunge, submerge or immerse. If the Greek word *baptidzo* were actually translated, the New Testament would read *immerse* everywhere it presently reads *baptize*. This may be confirmed by consulting any standard Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament.

Not only by definition, but also by description, the New Testament teaches that baptism is a complete immersion or overwhelming of the subject being baptized. In the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch by Philip, Luke says that "...they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water..." (Acts 8:38-39). What words could be found to describe the immersion of this man more plainly? Not once, but twice, Paul tells us that baptism is a burial, which requires a complete covering of the subject (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12). Moreover, in both of these passages, he draws an analogy between the literal death, burial and resurrection of Christ and the sinner's death to sin in repentance, burial in a grave of water, and resurrection from that watery grave (Rom. 6:3-6). Those who substitute some other action besides immersion and call it baptism, destroy this beautiful analogy. Furthermore, this makes it impossible or there to be a **resurrection** by the sinner to a new life if there is no **burial**. This passage shows us that the action of baptism was not merely left to man's choice, but it was specifically designed by God to follow the doctrinal form or pattern of Christ's redemptive act for us (Rom. 6:17-18).

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