



## ***Those Who Received His Word Were Baptized***

Acts 2:41

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**Overview:** Baptism is one of two ordinances that Jesus instructed the church to provide for its members. Unlike the Lord's Supper, which is to be observed regularly, baptism is a once-and-for-all visible demonstration of our believing the gospel. Due to its symbolic nature, the age of the recipient and the amount of water can either communicate or confuse the gospel message. Although Christians have baptized believers and infants of believing parents, the strongest biblical evidence indicates that baptism is the natural response to becoming a disciple of Jesus. The practice of immersion, rather than affusion or sprinkling, captures the meaning of baptism in its broadest and most particular senses—cleansing from sin and union with Christ. The best way to live out our baptism is to walk with Christ with a community of believers that seek to mutually edify one another and advance the gospel to the entire world.

**01. For those who have not been baptized, it is imperative that you believe the gospel of Jesus Christ and openly confess Him as Lord of your life.**

**02. For those who were baptized before coming to faith, give thanks to God for pursuing you before you ever pursued Him.**

**03. For those who have been baptized as believers, continue to live according to the grace which you have received.**

THIS PROMISE IS FOR YOU AND FOR ALL

1. Have you been baptized? If you were baptized as a believer, how were you instructed in the faith prior to baptism? If you were instructing someone preparing for baptism, what thoughts might you offer to help them in the process of baptism and as a disciple?

2. Proponents of infant baptism point to the rite of circumcision in Genesis 17:9-14 as a precursor to the practice of baptism in the New Testament (see also Colossians 2:11-12). Do you find this connection to be valid? Does the practice of household baptisms in Acts 16:11-15, 25-34 offer any additional insight into the proper age of baptismal recipients?

3. Read Romans 6:1-11. What does this passage teach about our union with Christ as believers? What does this passage teach about the meaning and mode (method) of baptism? In what ways does baptism by immersion symbolize the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ? Why is it important to be intentional about what we communicate when we are using symbols?

4. According to Acts 2:41-47, the natural response to faith in Christ is baptism, and the natural response from those who have professed faith in Christ is to belong to a church body. Why do you think people dismiss the importance of church membership? How would you respond to a person who says he or she is a Christian, but doesn't need to be baptized or belong to a church in order to be saved?

**For Further Reading:** David Wright, editor. *Baptism: Three Views* (IVP Academic, 2009).

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