



Where Does God Put Baptism?

DISCOVERING GOD'S WORD BIBLE STUDY SERIES

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The Scriptures frequently teach about the subject of baptism. Most honest people will conclude that God wants people to be baptized. But, the majority of them still do not put baptism where God puts it. Consider the following four questions.

1) Does God put baptism before or after salvation? Many religious people will respond that God put baptism *after* the point of salvation. They believe that baptism is an important thing to do, but claim that it is *not* necessary for salvation. But, where does God put baptism relative to an individual's salvation? Mark 16:16 says, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." 1 Peter 3:20-21 teaches that just as Noah and his family were "saved through water," baptism "now saves us." God puts baptism *before* an individual is saved – as a requirement for salvation!

2) Does God put baptism before or after the forgiveness of sins? Many religious people will respond that God put baptism *after* the point at which an individual is forgiven of his sins. They believe baptism is an important thing to do, but claim that it is *not* necessary to having the forgiveness of sins. But, where does God put baptism relative to an individual's forgiveness? Acts 2:38 records the instruction to "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Acts 22:16 says, "And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord." God puts baptism *before* an individual is forgiven of sin – as a requirement for forgiveness!

3) Does God put baptism before or after becoming a Christian? Many religious people will respond that God put baptism *after* the point at which an individual becomes a Christian. They believe baptism is a good thing that everyone who is a Christian should do, but claim that it is *not* necessary to becoming a Christian. But, where does God put baptism relative to becoming a Christian (i.e. being "in Christ")? Galatians 3:26-27 says that we are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus and says that "as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Similarly, 1 Corinthians 12:13 says that we are all "baptized into one body" (i.e. Jesus' church).

God puts baptism *before* an individual becomes a Christian – as a requirement for becoming a Christian and entering His church!

4) Does God put baptism before or after the newness of life? Many religious people will respond that God put baptism *after* the point at which an individual begins a new life in Christ Jesus. They believe baptism is an outward demonstration of this new life, but claim that it is *not* necessary to having new spiritual life in Christ Jesus. But, where does God put baptism relative to experiencing newness of spiritual life in Christ Jesus? Romans 6:3-4 says that we are buried with Christ through baptism into His death, “that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” God puts baptism *before* an individual has this new spiritual life in Christ – as a requirement for having this life!

Evaluate the Scriptures for yourself. Just listen to where God puts baptism with regard to these four things. Although many religious people believe that baptism comes *after* salvation, the forgiveness of sins, becoming a Christian, and having new spiritual life, God puts it *before* them all! Determine that you will listen to God rather than to men!

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