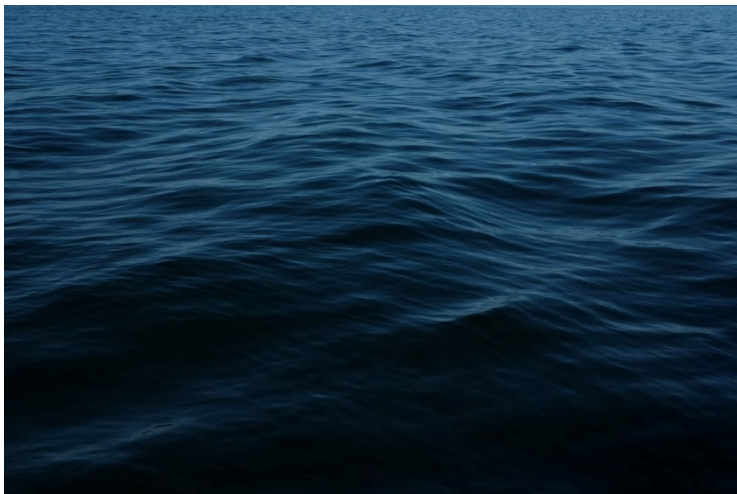




Bible Based Hope

# WATER BAPTISM

*6 Key Questions Asked And Answered*



Ram Krishnamurthy

# WATER BAPTISM

*6 Key Questions Asked  
And Answered*

Ram Krishnamurthy

**This work may be freely copied and used without the author's permission. Author credit is not required.**

Independently Published

**Editorial Assistance:** Melissa Sheridan

### **Scripture Credits:**

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version® NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. Used with permission. All rights reserved worldwide and The Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright ©1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

### **Contact Us:**

We would love to hear from you. Visit us at <https://biblebasedhope.com/>. You can also write to [hello@biblebasedhope.com](mailto:hello@biblebasedhope.com) or [Rk2serve@yahoo.com](mailto:Rk2serve@yahoo.com).

*We are grateful to provide this resource at no cost. If you feel led to support the ongoing printing and distribution of Bible-based materials like this, you may contact Profit Design (999 4185 909) for giving details. Any amount is appreciated and a blessing.*

# CONTENTS

---

|                                                                                       |    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| First Steps.....                                                                      | 1  |
| Question 1: Why Should A Believer Be<br>Baptized in Water?.....                       | 5  |
| Question 2: What Does Water Baptism<br>Mean?.....                                     | 8  |
| Question 3: Why Was Jesus Baptized in<br>Water? .....                                 | 10 |
| Question 4: How Should Water Baptism Be<br>Done?.....                                 | 12 |
| Question 5: What is the Relationship<br>Between Water Baptism and<br>Salvation? ..... | 16 |
| Question 6: What About Infant Baptism? .                                              | 20 |
| Final Thoughts .....                                                                  | 22 |
| About the Author.....                                                                 | 28 |

To Jesus, the Son of God, who came  
to

*“Fulfill all righteousness.”*

—Matthew 3:15

# FIRST STEPS

---

The Bible teaches two main ordinances that every believer should follow after accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior:

1. Water Baptism
2. The Lord's Supper (also called *Communion* or *Breaking of Bread*)

These two differ in practice. Water Baptism is a **one-time act of obedience**, while participating at the Lord's Supper is an **ongoing act of remembrance**.

This booklet answers six key questions about the first ordinance of **Water Baptism**.

Water Baptism is the believer's *first step of obedience* after repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. Though Scripture speaks clearly on

this subject, many still delay or neglect this simple, essential command.

*Baptism is the believer's first step of obedience after repentance and faith.*

### Common Reasons People Avoid Baptism

- **Ignorance** – Some have never been clearly taught what baptism means or why it matters.
- **Spiritual Pride** – Admitting a delay in obedience can be humbling. Many hesitate because baptism would publicly acknowledge their past disobedience. So, they prefer temporary comfort now over standing approved before Christ later.
- **Casual Attitude** – Others view baptism as non-urgent, saying, “I’ll deal with it later.” They do not reject it outright but never make it a priority.

- **Fear of Confession** – Some fear publicly declaring their faith. For a few, it's because they are still holding onto sin and feel baptism would expose hypocrisy. Others fear what family or society might think, especially where baptism could bring rejection or conflict.
- **Lack of True Faith** – In some cases, a person has not truly been born-again. Without the Holy Spirit, there is no desire to obey God's command. Such individuals may attend church and even take communion, but do not yet truly belong to Christ.

There may be other reasons, but this booklet will focus mainly on the first: **ignorance**.

By asking and answering six basic questions from Scripture, we hope to bring clear understanding of this important command of baptism. Each reader is encouraged to seek the

Lord in prayer, examine these truths, and respond with obedience.

Let's begin with the first question.

# QUESTION 1: WHY SHOULD A BELIEVER BE BAPTIZED IN WATER?

---

The New Testament gives **three main reasons** why every believer should be baptized in water.

## 1. Jesus Commands It

Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

—Matthew 28:19

Notice that Jesus said, “in the **name**,” not “in the **names**.” This singular form reminds us that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are equal persons within one

true God. Through baptism, the believer is publicly identified with this triune God.

*Through baptism, the believer is publicly identified with the one true God—Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.*

## 2. The Apostle Peter Affirmed It

On the Day of Pentecost, when the Church was born through the preaching of the gospel, Peter told the crowd:

Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.  
—Acts 2:38

Peter's words show a clear sequence: first **repentance** and **faith**, then **baptism**. Baptism does not create salvation but follows genuine repentance and belief in Jesus Christ.

### 3. The Early Church Practiced It

Those who accepted [Peter's] message were baptized...that day. —Acts 2:41

But when [the Samaritans] believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. —Acts 8:12

[The Apostle Paul, immediately after his conversion,...]...was baptized. —Acts 9:18

These examples (and many more which we will see later) show that baptism was the natural and immediate response to faith in Christ.

**Therefore, every believer should be baptized in water** because Jesus commanded it, His apostles affirmed it, and the early Church practiced it.

## QUESTION 2: WHAT DOES WATER BAPTISM MEAN?

---

Water baptism is an outward sign of an inward change. It shows on the outside what has already taken place inside the believer's heart when they were born-again. It is a physical act that pictures a spiritual truth that believers have been united with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection.

The Apostle Paul explains this clearly in **Romans 6:3–5**:

Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by

the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives.

Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was.

In simple words, baptism is a living picture:

- Going under the water shows that we have died to sin.
- Coming up from the water shows that we have new life in Christ.

Water baptism also points to our future hope. Just as Christ was raised from the dead, believers who are united with Him will also be raised to eternal life.

*Water baptism is a picture of the believer's union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection.*

## QUESTION 3: WHY WAS JESUS BAPTIZED IN WATER?

---

The baptism of Jesus, as recorded in Matthew 3:13–17, was more than an approval of John the Baptist’s ministry. It was a **public declaration of His identification with sinners**—the very ones for whom He would later die and rise again.

*Though sinless, Jesus identified with sinners through His baptism.*

Though Jesus was sinless, He entered the waters of baptism to show His unity with fallen humanity. He alone fulfilled everything God requires, living a perfectly obedient life that we could never live. This truth reminds us that

salvation is **not earned by our works** but received **through faith in Jesus Christ alone**.

Jesus also demonstrated the importance of **complete obedience** to the Father's will. He never chose which commands to follow and which to ignore. Instead, He willingly and joyfully submitted to all the Father's instructions, showing us the attitude every believer should have toward God's Word.

*Jesus' baptism models humble obedience to the Father.*

## QUESTION 4: HOW SHOULD WATER BAPTISM BE DONE?

---

This question often causes confusion and division among Christians. Some ask, “*Should baptism be by immersion, or can a person simply be sprinkled?*” The best way to answer is to look directly at **Scripture** and the **meaning of the words** used for baptism in the New Testament.

Two Greek words are commonly used: **bapto** and **baptizo**.

- *Bapto* means “to dip,” and was used for dyeing a garment or drawing water by dipping a vessel into another.
- *Baptizo* means “to dip completely” or “to immerse.”

From this understanding, we see that **baptism signifies immersion, being fully placed under water.** The New Testament gives no example of baptism by sprinkling or touching the forehead with water. In every case, a person was baptized *into* water.

- **Jesus Himself was baptized by immersion.** Matthew 3:16 says, “As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water.” The phrase “up out of the water” clearly shows immersion.
- **John the Baptist also baptized by immersion.** Matthew 3:6 says, “They were baptized by him in the Jordan river.” John 3:23 says, “Now John was also baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water.” If sprinkling were enough, “plenty of water” would not be required.
- **The early Church continued this same practice.** In Acts 8:38, Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch “both Philip and

the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.” Once again, “went down into the water” signifies immersion.

These verses show that **immersion** was the clear New Testament method of water baptism. It fits the spiritual picture perfectly that at salvation the believer is *immersed with Christ* into His death, buried with Him, and raised to new life with Him.

*Only immersion fits the spiritual truth of dying, being buried, and rising with Christ.*

Sprinkling or simply touching the head with water is not the biblical mode of baptism. Historically, immersion remained the common practice until about the thirteenth century when the Roman Catholic Church introduced sprinkling. Later, several Protestant denominations (such as Presbyterian, Methodist, and Lutheran) followed that tradition.

*Baptism in Scripture always means immersion, being fully placed under water.*

## QUESTION 5: WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WA- TER BAPTISM AND SALVATION?

---

Is water baptism necessary for salvation? When we study the overall teaching of the New Testament, the answer becomes clear: Salvation comes by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone.

*We are saved by grace through faith—not by baptism.*

A person is saved when they repent of their sins and place their trust in Jesus as Lord and Savior. Scripture repeatedly confirms this truth (Mark 1:15; John 3:16; John 5:24; Acts 20:21; Romans 4:5; Romans 10:9–13; Ephesians 2:8–9; Titus 3:5).

**Trusting in Jesus alone saves a person.** Baptism, however, is the believer's **public declaration** of that inner faith. It confirms outwardly what has already taken place inwardly.

Some Bible passages seem to link baptism closely with salvation because *true faith always leads to obedience*. The first step of obedience for every new believer is to be baptized—to publicly confess Jesus before others.

The Book of Acts gives several examples of immediate obedience:

- Those who accepted [Peter's] message were baptized...that day. —Acts 2:41
- But when [the Samaritans] believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news...of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. —Acts 8:12
- [Peter upon seeing the conversion of Cornelius and his household who

believed immediately] ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. —Acts 10:47-48

- The Lord opened [Lydia's] heart to respond to Paul's message [and] she and the members of her household were baptized. —Acts 16:14-15
- [The Philippian Jailer and his household believed and] immediately he and all his household were baptized. —Acts 16:32-33
- On hearing [the message of salvation...the Ephesians who believed] were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. —Acts 19:5

These examples show a consistent pattern: **Baptism always followed genuine acceptance of the gospel.** While baptism does not bring salvation, it naturally follows true saving faith as an act of obedience and public witness.

## WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WATER BAPTISM AND SALVATION?

---

*True salvation produces obedience, and baptism is the believer's first step of obedience.*

## QUESTION 6: WHAT ABOUT INFANT BAPTISM?

---

The New Testament makes it clear that a person must first repent and believe in Christ before being baptized. For that reason, infant baptism is not supported by Scripture. An infant cannot repent, believe, or personally confess faith in Jesus Christ. Nowhere in the Bible do we find a command to baptize infants or a clear example of infant baptism.

Some people connect infant baptism with the covenant sign of circumcision in the Old Testament. But the Bible never directly teaches that baptism replaces circumcision in that way. Instead, the New Testament teaches that we are joined to the new covenant by faith in Christ and baptism is an outward symbol of that covenant.

Water baptism is for those who have heard the gospel, understood it, repented of their sins, and trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for forgiveness. For those believers, baptism by immersion is the first step of obedience, and it should not be delayed. That is the pattern we see in the New Testament.

*The biblical pattern is clear: repent, believe, and then be baptized.*

## FINAL THOUGHTS

---

I hope the reader now sees the importance of water baptism. Satan wants to confuse this simple truth because, from the very beginning of the Christian life, he wants believers to disobey. If he cannot prevent salvation, he still seeks to weaken them by leading them to disregard this first and fundamental command. And if he can cause a believer to disobey here, he can more easily lead them to disobey in other areas as well. That is his strategy.

*Satan loves to confuse baptism because disobedience weakens the Christian from the start.*

Baptism is also a good test of whether a new believer is willing to count the cost of following Jesus. If a person refuses to publicly declare “*Jesus is Lord*” through the waters of

baptism, there is reason to question whether they truly repented and turned to Christ. Baptism can therefore be a helpful way to see whether the heart has truly been transformed, whether the person is truly a Christian, born again, and turned from sin to Jesus.

*Baptism is a test of whether a person truly repents and believes in Christ.*

### **What If I Was Baptized Before, But Not Sure If I Was Saved?**

Some who were baptized earlier in life struggle to know if they genuinely repented and believed in Jesus at that time. This is especially common for those raised in Christian homes. They now know that they believe in Christ, that He is the Lord of their lives, and that they belong to Him. Yet they are uncertain about the genuineness of their repentance and faith at the time of that earlier baptism.

This uncertainty may come from a long period of disobedience, followed by a later

decision to walk in obedience. Rather than simply calling those years “*backsliding*,” I urge such a person to honestly evaluate their earlier baptism. It may very well be that there was no genuine work of salvation before that baptism. It may have been an emotional decision or one made under pressure from family, the church, or the influence of friends.

### Should I Be Re-Baptized?

In such a case, the question becomes: *Should I be rebaptized?* The answer is: **If you have not yet been baptized according to the New Testament pattern—after genuine repentance and faith in Christ—then you must be baptized again and by immersion.** Your previous baptism, even if it was by immersion, means nothing if it was not preceded by true faith.

*If your earlier baptism did not follow genuine repentance and faith, you should be baptized again.*

**However, there is a word of caution here.**

You should recognize that spiritual growth normally deepens as your understanding of the Scriptures increases. The faith you had when you were first saved may have been genuine, even though you understand much more now.

If we were to be baptized every time we came to know God more deeply or understood His grace in a new way, we would never have confidence in the reality of our faith. We need to remember that genuine faith does not depend on the depth of our knowledge, but on reliance upon the finished work of Christ.

So, seek the Holy Spirit's help as you examine your heart to see if you had a genuine conviction of sin that led you to turn to Christ and trust in Him alone for the forgiveness of your sins.

- If the answer is yes, then you do not need to be rebaptized.

- If your answer is no, then prayerfully take the needed steps toward baptism.

Water baptism is not merely a ritual of being dunked in water, though it can be treated that way. Our Lord instituted this as a **sacred command**, not a meaningless tradition.

Every command of the Lord is to be obeyed with a glad heart, not with reluctance.

It is good to remember the words of the LORD to Samuel: “People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.” It is comforting to know that the Lord looks at the heart. But it is also sobering to know that He sees the true intent of our hearts (Revelation 2:23).

*The Lord looks at the heart—not just at the water.*

If our faith is genuine, our repentance will also be genuine. False repentance fears only the *consequences* of sin, while true repentance fears the *sin itself*. True repentance hates sin for what it is—an offense against a holy God.

Knowing that sin is evil and that God hates it spurs the genuinely repentant person to turn from it and to Christ.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

---

Ram Krishnamurthy is the founding pastor of Grace Bible Church in Windsor, Ontario, Canada, where he has been serving for more than two decades. He is married to Geetha, and together they have two adult children, both of whom are married. He is also the author of *Attributes of God: Understanding Who the God of the Bible Truly Is* and *Beatitudes: Pursuing the Counter-Cultural Life Jesus Lived to Perfection*. More information about him can be found at [gbc-windsor.org](http://gbc-windsor.org) and [biblebasedhope.com](http://biblebasedhope.com), where he maintains a multilingual blogsite.



*We are grateful to provide this resource at no cost. If you feel led to support the ongoing printing and distribution of Bible-based materials like this, you may contact Profit Design (999 4185 909) for giving details. Any amount is appreciated and a blessing.*

**Water baptism is one of the first and most important steps of obedience for every believer.** Yet confusion and delay are common.

In this clear, biblically grounded booklet, you will explore six key questions about water baptism:

- Why should a believer be baptized?
- What does baptism mean?
- Why was Jesus baptized?
- How should baptism be done?
- What is the relationship between baptism and salvation?
- What about infant baptism?

Along the way, you'll see how baptism is not a mere ritual, but a **public declaration of faith, a test of obedience, and a picture of union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection.**

If you have ever wondered about water baptism, postponed it, or are unsure about your earlier baptism, this booklet will help you respond to this sacred command with understanding, confidence, and joy.



Find a free digital copy of this booklet and other helpful resources at [www.biblebasedhope.com](http://www.biblebasedhope.com)