

## ***BAPTISM IS DISTINCT FROM THE GOSPEL***

If Paul received the gospel from Christ alone, and he did, (Gal. 1:11-12); and if we are saved by believing the gospel, and we are, (Rom. 1:16); and the gospel is distinct from baptism, which it is, (1 Cor. 1:17); – then it is VERY CLEAR that we are saved by believing the gospel and not by the ritual of water baptism. However, having believed the gospel we are then IMMEDIATELY commanded to be baptized as a testimony of our faith and of having been cleansed by the blood of Jesus.

At Corinth, the saints were becoming followers of men instead of singularly putting the focus on Christ. Paul challenged them saying, “Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?” (1 Cor. 1:13). The point is that in baptism, they were IDENTIFIED with Christ and what He has done for them. Paul then made it clear that the place of baptism is distinct from that of the gospel.

### **1 Corinthians 1:17 (NKJV)**

**17** For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel...

The gospel is one thing and baptism is another as made plain here by Paul.

### **Romans 1:16 (NKJV)**

**16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

The GOSPEL is “the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes.” The gospel is the message of the PERSON and WORK of Christ that is BELIEVED! It’s all about Christ and what He has done for us (1 Cor. 15:1-4). We simply BELIEVE it! This is distinct from BAPTISM that follows as a testimony of faith and our UNION with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. Baptism is an outward physical act that is done. It is a WORK! Indeed, it is an act (work) of obedience, but we are not saved by works (Eph. 2:8-9).

Water baptism is a very important step of obedience to the Lord. However, as noted, baptism does not have anything to do with saving a person, but rather is a testimony that they have already been saved and that they now belong to Jesus Christ.

It’s not a water ritual that pays for and cancels out our sin debt, but rather the BLOOD OF CHRIST AND HIS BLOOD ALONE! BAPTISM DOESN’T

CHANGE OUR STATE, BUT RATHER STATES OUR CHANGE. Water baptism is simply **a picture** of death, burial (as one is immersed in the water), and resurrection (as one is brought up out of the water) to new life. It pictures what Christ has done for us and that by faith we now IDENTIFY with Him. He died our death. His burial was our burial. His resurrection life we now share in.

WHAT A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE AND TESTIMONY IT IS!