

Baptism 2

Many ways to Baptise.

Certainties: **we are told to do it (and that should be sufficient reason to do it)**, it involves water, it is an initiation/declaration, it is to be a unifier of believers.

Instructions **to** Baptise are clear.

Instructions on **how to** Baptise are not.

So, either God forgot to tell us, or, he is saying why you do it is the issue, not what you do.

Some examples of scripture are very detailed, --last chapters of Ezekiel, details of the Tabernacle, explanation of the Tabernacle in Hebrews, for example; so God is not averse to giving detail. The only sensible conclusion is that he has chosen not to.

Why we do it is the important issue, not what we do.

In our church and tradition we totally immerse believing adults who have asked to be baptised.

Here are some reasons why.

Leaving Egypt, entering Canaan: leaving the old life, entering the new

1 Cor 10:1-4

10 I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea,

2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,

3 and all ate the same spiritual food,

4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.

ESV

Short history

Journey

Left Egypt, arrived in Canaan one generation later; SO THIS IS NOT A SINGLE EVENT

The army of Egypt was washed away. Then struggle. Then arriving. Then circumcision (which followed obedience and faith)

Total immersion portrays this story and imagery.

John the Baptist would have been referring to this when he baptised in the Jordan. He was offering Baptism as a re-commitment, and so Baptising in the Jordan, the entering into the Promised Land, was especially poignant.

Jesus was baptised by John to continue with this imagery.

Jesus disciples baptised followers in the Jordan while Jesus was with them.

So early church baptisms in Acts would have been following on in this tradition

Acts 2:34-41

For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, "'The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand,

35 until I make your enemies your footstool.'

36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

37 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

38 And Peter said to them, "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.

39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself."

40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation."

41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

Does this mean total immersion?

Possibly, possibly not, but it did mean a river, with prepared baptismal places (Google: baptismal site Jordan).

Buried with him

Rom 6:3-5

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

4 We were **buried** therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

ESV

Col 2:9-12

9 For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,

10 and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.

11 In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,

12 having been **buried** with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.

buried

sunthapto (soon-thap'-to); from *sun* and *thapto*; to inter in company with,

sun (soon); a primary preposition denoting union; with or together (but much closer than *meta* or *para*),

thapto (thap'-to); a primary verb; to celebrate funeral rites, i.e. inter:

Total immersion symbolises death, going down, coming out, (of the tomb, not the grave, Lazarus).

Same message: leaving the old life and entering the new.

Finally,

Sometimes we don't need explanations, just obedience

Acts 2:41

So those who received his word were baptized.