

# “New” Baptism

Jesus, with all authority in heaven and on earth, makes baptism a condition of salvation for the sinner outside of Him: *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”* People may not realize that in many of the letters written to Christians, the significance of baptism is pointed out again and again to them though they had been baptized already.

## New Creatures

Christians are new creatures because they have been baptized. Writing to the Christians in Rome, Paul said, *“Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?”* (**Romans 6:3**). Paul also writes: *“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come”* (**2Corinthians 5:17**). Paul, therefore, would have Christians remember the significance of their baptism into Christ, into his death, that because of their baptism they became new creatures, with old things, old sins, passed away. Through Jeremiah God had made a promise that when people entered into the new covenant he would be merciful unto their iniquities and would remember their sins no more (**Jeremiah 31:31-34**; see also **Hebrews 8:8-12**). Baptism, then, holds great significance to Christians, for at this point they experienced the new birth, they became new creatures, with every past sin blotted out.

## New Life

Christians walk in newness of life because they have been baptized and are new creatures. Continuing to the Romans Paul wrote: *“Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life”* (**Romans 6:4**). Christians walk in newness of life because by the forgiveness of their sins they have become new creatures. In their conduct they walk in newness of life because they have *“laid aside the old self with its evil practices”* (**Colossians 3:9**). Writing to those who had been baptized, Paul said, *“Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God”* (**Colossians 3:1-3**).

## New Worship

Christians are continually devoted to worship because they have been baptized. In **Acts 2:41** we read, *“So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.”* And in the very next verse we read, *“They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”* That which they did was to continue in the study of God’s word, in the sharing of their means, in partaking of the Lord’s supper, and in prayer. When people gladly receive the word of God and are baptized, this is the result. They are now continually devoted.

## New Action

Christians teach and preach the gospel because they have been baptized. The ninth chapter of Acts tells of the conversion of Saul. We find that he “*got up and was baptized.*” Then we see that “*he took food and was strengthened. Now for several days he was with the disciples who were at Damascus, and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, ‘He is the Son of God’*” (Acts 9:19-20). Paul had come to know that there is a power—the gospel—to save man from sin and its terrible consequences. Knowing this, and having become the beneficiary of this power in his obedience to the gospel, he was compelled to tell others the wonderful story of the cross. People, then, who are baptized are stirred to tell others of this matchless mighty power to save.

## New Relationship

Christians are united because they have been baptized. Not only did Paul discuss the significance of baptism to Christians in Rome (Romans 6:3,4), in Corinth (1 Corinthians 12:13), in Colossae (Colossians 2:12), but also to the brethren in Galatia. In that letter, he wrote: “*For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus*” (Galatians 3:26-28). Whatever people are, whoever people are, from whatever walk in life they maybe, when they are baptized into Christ, they are “all one in Christ Jesus,” they are united in Christ. Christ prayed for this unity (John 17: 20-21). Paul taught that God’s people must strive diligently “*to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*” (Ephesians 4:3). The unity of the children of God is maintained by all walking only in the light of God’s word. “*But if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin*” (1 John 1:7).

## New Joy

Christians experience a true and genuine joy because they have been baptized. Philip preached Jesus to the eunuch as they rode in the chariot. “*As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, ‘Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?’ ... they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch no longer saw him, but went on his way rejoicing*” (Acts 8:35-39). When one is baptized, and he becomes a new creature in Christ, with the old things passed away and all things become new, he has right to rejoice with exceeding great joy. Some, however, try to get the joy ahead of the place where God has promised the forgiveness of sins. They find it in a feeling of salvation before and without baptism, even though God, who does the forgiving, has said plainly that our sins are blotted out when we are baptized, when we come to the death of Christ, when we reach out to the blood of Christ (Romans 6:3,4).

Though baptism is repudiated by the multitudes as being of little or no consequence, to the true child of God it holds deep significance as God has set forth in His holy word.