

## Promotion by Execution

This article is about Baptism.

Make no mistake. Baptism is a death. It is not a "bath"; it is immersion, and complete surrendering one's self to be overwhelmed by the baptism. It is the only way to be "promoted" in the Kingdom of God.

Mark 16:16

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. NIV

{mospagebreak title=What is Baptism?}

What is Baptism?

Baptism is immersion. Baptism is an overwhelming and irrevocable experience. There are many baptisms (Hebrews 6:2) but we are always being baptized into the same Spirit, the Spirit of God. (Ephesians 4:4-6).

First let's look at some definitions from the Strong's Concordance, a dependable resource for word study and definition.

Baptism - Strong's NT:907 baptizo (bap-tid'-zo); from a derivative of NT:911; to immerse, submerge; to make overwhelmed (i.e. fully wet); used only (in the N. T.) of ceremonial ablution, especially (technically) of the ordinance of Christian baptism:

KJV - Baptist, baptize, wash

While were at it what does it mean to be "saved";

Saved &dash; Strong's NT:4982 sozo (sode'-zo); from a primary sos (contraction for obsolete saoz, "safe"); to save, i.e. deliver or protect (literally or figuratively):

KJV - heal, preserve, save (self), do well, be (make) whole.

We can see from these definitions that in order for us to be completely delivered healed, preserved and made whole, we must experience immersions. At times we will be overwhelmed. The truth of this scripture goes far beyond a simple one time experience of dipping in a river or a tub if some sort that makes us wet with water and then we move on.

It is often taught that baptism is a ritual that you must do in order for your "believing" to have its full effect and thus insure your being "saved". The interpretation given to the word "saved" is often "saved from Hell and allowed entrance into Heaven in the after life". I believe that this picture misses a much greater truth concerning the operation of the Kingdom of God in our lives. First this verse says that those "who do not believe" will be condemned, not those who are not "baptized".

Believe what? — Believe the Gospel of the Kingdom that Jesus preached and later instructed His disciples to preach throughout the world. Matthew 24:14

(Remember always — "Without faith it is impossible to please God" - Hebrews 11:6)

Secondly, I am convinced that whoever believes WILL EXPERIENCE Baptism as a natural and unavoidable consequence of their choice to (really) believe. These baptisms are more than multiple dunkings in water. Baptism(s) are specific and individual places of transition where we completely abandon the former realm of living for a new one that God has prepared. I am not advocating the removal of traditional water baptism (immersion) services and events from our gatherings, but I am sure that Baptism is more than a ritual. There are many baptisms in a person's life of fellowship with the Lord — Hebrews 6 talks about the doctrine of baptisms (notice the plural!) as one of the foundational truths of the Church.

{mospagebreak title=Baptism is a Death}

Baptism is death

Make no mistake. Baptism is a death. It is not a "bath", it is immersion, and complete surrendering one's self to be overwhelmed by the baptism. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). The price remains fixed, the consequences are unchanged. But the GIFT of God is eternal life (Romans 6:23). This is Life that outlives death. Old things are passed away and all things become new (2 Corinthians 5:17). We reckon (recognize) that the old man is dead (Romans 6:1-14, Ephesians 4:22, Colossians 3:9).

The principle is really quite simple. I have missed it, avoided it, denied it, and tried to circumvent the process many times,

yet the Truth still stands and God has not changed the operation of His Kingdom. If you want to advance in the Kingdom of God (and God is not pleased if we do not advance and move forward) you do so by destroying of the former things and moving on toward the goal. (What is the goal? &ndash; see Philippians 3:10-16 ). I am not talking about a gradual transition that might resemble a walk through the woods on a summer afternoon. I am talking about execution, separation by death to everything preceding. There is no going back, no free trial period that you can wrap up and send back for a refund if you are not satisfied.

Rom 6:23

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.NIV

Paul said:

Phil 3:10-16

I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

15 All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. 16 Only let us live up to what we have already attained. NIV

Col 2:9-12

For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10 and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. 11 In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. NIV

{mospagebreak title=Baptism is a Mystery}

In Baptism there is a "Mystery";

There is a spiritual reality and operation of the Kingdom of God that defies explanation of our natural reasoning. When we immerse believers in water or when the Spirit of God overshadows and overwhelms us in a "Baptism of fire"; and the gifts are transferred or ignited - these are benchmarks and permanent transitions in our lives. They are real, divinely inspired, they are required for us to attain the high calling of God.

Rom 6:3-12

don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

5 If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. 6 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin- 7 because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. 10 The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. NIV

Jesus spoke of his own death on the cross as a baptism:

Luke 12:49-52

"I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished! Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division. NKJV

This is promotion by execution.

Phil 2:8-11 And being found in appearance as a man,

he humbled himself

and became obedient to death-

even death on a cross!

9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place

and gave him the name that is above every name,

10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father. NIV

Heb 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. NIV

{mospagebreak title=Many Baptisms}

## Many Baptisms

- The world was once baptized in a cataclysmic flood that destroyed all life except those creatures and people that stayed in the ark. (Genesis 5-9, 1Peter 3:18-22)
- The nation of Israel was baptized in the Red Sea shortly after deliverance from Egypt. (Exodus 14,15 1 Corinthians 10:2)
- They were later baptized in the Jordan as they entered the Promised Land. (Joshua 3,4)
- John the Baptist preached a baptism of repentance and preparation for the appearance of Jesus. (Matthew 3:5,6 Mark 1:4))
- John spoke of a greater baptism of fire that would be given by Jesus himself. (Luke 3:16; John 1:33-34)
- Jesus was baptized in water just before His public ministry of healing and preaching the Kingdom of God began. (Matthew 3:16)
- Jesus even referred to his death on the cross as a baptism. (Luke 12:49-52)

Baptism is not about doing something to attain favor; baptism is the form and method of transformation from living in one realm of life to living in a higher realm. It requires death to the former realm. The result is resurrection into the new.

Part of the problem is that we have turned baptism into ritual, rules, and fake righteousness which has resulted in division, confusion, and a degree of blindness in the Church today. This mentality leads to questions like: If I am not baptized (speaking of immersion in water) will I still be saved? Subsequent inquiries follow such as "Must I be baptized right away?" and "What if someone believed Jesus died for their sins and asked to be received into the Kingdom of God, but they died before they got to the baptism service, would they go to hell and not get saved because they were not yet baptized? And so on&hellip;&hellip;

## The Miraculous Electron

The miraculous electron:

Baptisms resemble how electrons change their orbits. Electrons are one of the three "mass" components of every atom. They are the sub-atomic particles that spin around the nucleus of the atom which is composed of protons and neutrons. The electrons kind of resemble planets orbiting around in a solar system but their orbits are fixed. Electrons orbit only in these set orbit sizes and they are not found "between" the orbits at any time.

When a substance is heated and the electrons increase in energy, they "jump" from one fixed size orbit to the next. This is an instantaneous (and really miraculous) event. The electron "disappears" from its first orbit and at the exact same moment "appears" in the higher orbit. It does not just "spin out" from one to the next, and there can be absolutely no time delay between the positioning in the two orbits or there would be a violation of the law of conservation of matter and energy. The electron cannot "disappear" from one place and "reappear" even a nanosecond later somewhere else, it must exist at every single moment, so the best way to characterize it is that it "jumps" and yet there is no transitional position of the electron it is simply "here" in orbit one and then "there" in orbit two with no other places between and no portion of time where it is out of existence.

Pretty amazing considering that this happens constantly with every substance in the universe with a countless ka-zillion billion of billions of electrons. It is happening right now; perhaps we will notice it more in the future.

This I believe is a good picture of what happens in a baptism. "Baptism" means immersion and dash; to dip or to dunk. With water baptism - You go in and you come out again. You go in a regular son of Adam, or you go in a believer entangled by some form of carnal or other ungodly influences, but when you go into the water you are suddenly and instantaneously identified with the death of Christ dash; that is to say - you have a whole new identity, every part and speck of Adam's weaknesses dash; everything that is still with you from "Egypt" with is gone. It is gone because you have been executed with Christ and suddenly, instantly, actually just a little quicker than instantly, you are found in Christ!

Pop! - Like the little electron you have been transformed dash; promoted in the Kingdom of Heaven. You never once ceased to exist, and yet it is no longer you that lives, but Christ in you the hope of glory (Galatians 2:20). Every new realm of living that is set before you in the Christian life is accomplished the same way.

The only way that we advance in the Kingdom of God is by Death and Resurrection. You can say Death and Re-birth if you like but it is the same principle and it has never changed.

{mospagebreak title=All Promotion Comes by Execution}

All promotion comes by execution.

One time the LORD brought restoration to Israel with these words:

Jer 1:9-10

"Behold, I have put My words in your mouth.

10 See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms,

To root out and to pull down,

To destroy and to throw down,

To build and to plant." NKJV

The building and the planting ALWAYS follow the destruction of the former. This eliminates mixture, and it removes any possibility of turning back. It seems harsh, and yet we see over and over in scripture where God works through people to build some place for His NAME, and then it is destroyed. Yet God is eternal, His mercy enduring forever, His purposes and plans stand unaltered, and His Love continues to conquer all.

Promotion by execution:

It is foolishness to the wise, it is a mystery of the Kingdom, but it is the only way to Holiness, health, and full restoration of our lives and our identities.