

**(d) Therefore, we are to receive our baptism with faith
... and CONTINUE to do so**

Westminster Shorter Catechism Q. 91

Q: How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?

A. The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that doth administer them; but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit in them that by faith receive them.

The whole Christian life is meant to be an unpacking of our baptism.

- E.g holiness, Romans 6
- E.g. confession, Mark 1

Think...

NOT: "I have been baptised"

BUT: "I am baptised"

1. What is the point of baptism?

While waiting to begin...

If you have been baptised: WHO baptised you? Discuss!






Introduction

Matthew 3:13-17; Matthew 28:19.

1. What is the point of baptism?
2. How important is the mode of baptism?
3. Who should be baptised?

1. Baptism is a sign and a seal of God's covenant

(a) God gives covenant signs all the way through the Bible...

Noah – Gen. 9:11-13 	Abraham – Gen. 17:7, 10 	Moses – Exodus 12:13 
	New covenant – Matt. 28:19 	- 1 Cor. 11:23-26 

(b) ... As signs of covenant-belonging

- 1 Cor. 12:13, "For in one Spirit we were all baptised into one body."
- Genesis 17:14, Exodus 12:48, - it's SERIOUS

(c) ... and as seals to strengthen faith

Romans 4:11, "He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith."

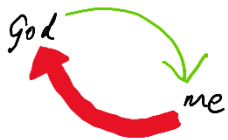


2. Baptism is a gift FROM GOD to us

***Christian baptism is something done TO me, not BY me ***

Diagram 1:

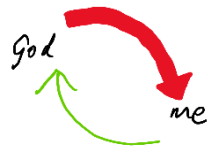
= What we often think



"Christian baptism... is an act of obedience symbolising the believer's faith"
(*Southern Baptist Faith & Message 2000*)

Diagram 2:

= What the Bible says



Titus 3:5: "he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit"

3. The invisible blessings of baptism are only obtained by faith

(a) Baptism has two parts to it (e.g. Mark 1:8, Titus 3:5):

an inward/invisible part

an outward/visible part

(b) The Bible connects the inward and outward aspects of baptism

Acts 22:16 "And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name".

1 Peter 3:21, "Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you..."

Romans 6:3-4, John 3:5

Also Scriptures that say the *outward* sign IS the covenant (e.g. Genesis 17:10,13 and 1 Corinthians 11:25)

(c) What have different Christian groups done with baptism?

Roman Catholics don't distinguish outward & inward baptism.

Evangelicals separate outward & inward baptism (an empty sign)

Reformed: distinguish outward & inward baptism, but don't *separate* them.