

What does the Catholic Church teach about Baptism?

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that Baptism is “the first and chief sacrament of the forgiveness of sins: it unites us to Christ, who died and arose, and gives us the Holy Spirit”. (CCC #985)

“When we made our first profession of faith while receiving the holy Baptism that cleansed us, the forgiveness we received then was so full and complete that there remained in us absolutely nothing left to efface, neither original sin nor offenses committed by our own will, nor was there left any penalty to suffer in order to expiate them...” (CCC #978)

Is Baptism mentioned in the Bible?

By searching the Holy Scripture, we find that Baptism is not only frequently mentioned in the New Testament, but is found symbolically in the Old Testament as well.

1 Corinthians 10:1, 2 1. Moreover, brethren, I would not that you should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and passed through the sea; 2. And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;”

Here, Paul is relating the salvation of the Israelites from the Pharaoh, to salvation today. God made a way for the Israelites out of the bondage they were in, and provided a man to lead them (Moses). When they passed through the Red Sea to the other side, their salvation was complete.

1 Peter 3:20 “Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.”

Here, Peter is relating the salvation of Noah, his wife, his sons and his sons' wives, to the salvation that is made available to us today. God prepared a way out for the family of Noah (the ark), and used Noah to lead the way. This was symbolic of the salvation of Jesus Christ which was to come the same way that this verse makes reference to an Old Testament prophecy.

What is Baptism?

The Greek word that was translated to baptism is *baptisma*, which is derived from the word *baptizo*, which means "to make whelmed". This is the word (*baptizo*) that is used in every instance that the word *baptize* is used in the New Testament. The word *baptisma*, is used in every instance the word baptism is translated in the New Testament. So, how then could the baptism of the Israelites (*1 Cor. 10:2*) be related to the baptism of water referred to in *Matthew 3:6*? This is how...

Comparative to these symbolic Old Testament situations, God made a way out of bondage for sinful man. Jesus Christ died, was buried, and rose again, and He paved the way for us to follow Him to salvation. God provided the man Moses; he led the Israelites out of bondage, the Red Sea symbolic of dirt, and the Israelites passed through death unto new life on the other side. The same symbolism exists with Noah and the flood and with Abraham and Isaac when God provided the ram.

In Matthew 3:11 John the Baptist said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: **He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.**"

When John the Baptist was baptizing with water, there was no salvation granted yet because the sacrifice had not yet been made, he said he was baptizing with water unto repentance. John the Baptist was symbolically baptizing un-repentant people. He was prophesying the Baptism that was to come (*Matt. 3:11*).

The Baptism of Jesus:

Matthew 20:22, 23 But Jesus answered and said, ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to **be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?** They say unto him, we are able. 23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and **be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with:** but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father.

Baptism does not always mean to immerse in water, it means to "make whelmed", which can be to immerse in water, but in the above text it means to completely forsake the bondage of sin (**repentance**), trust Jesus Christ as the propitiation for your sins and follow Him (**death**), and He will give you new life (**resurrection**). (*Matt. 20:22, 23*)

When you don't take one portion of scripture out of text and look at salvation in the entire text of the Bible it is very clear that Baptism (by water) is not necessary for salvation (*Romans 10:9*). We are though, instructed to be baptized after we believe as a profession of our faith, (*Matt. 3:16* *Matt. 28: 19, 20*, *Acts 2:41, 42*, *Acts 8:36-39*, *Romans 6:3-5*, *Col. 2:12*)

Baptism (by water immersion) is merely an outward profession of faith, the water symbolizing dirt, and the believer being buried with Christ, and raised with Him, it is also the first act of obedience to Christ, as Christ was first suffered to be baptized by John the Baptist before He began his ministry. (*Matt. 3:16*)

So Are You Saying Obedience is not necessary For Salvation? (Water Baptism)

Absolutely!

In a 1 Peter 3:20, which was quoted earlier, Peter said “eight souls were saved by water”. It would seem that Peter was alluding to water baptism, but look at the verse immediately following...

1 Peter 3:21 "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (**not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,**) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:"

It is not the water baptism that saves us, but “**the answer of a good conscience toward God**”, which is the spiritual baptism of the Holy Ghost that water baptism is the symbol of.

In Matthew 28:19 and *Mark 16:15*, Jesus tells us to evangelize the world, and baptize them.

Mark 16:16 says "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

If you compare the two statements above you will see in the first part of *Mark 16:16* that Jesus said you must "believe and be baptized". But, in the last part of the verse He left off being baptized. This is because believing leads to baptism (in the spiritual sense). "But he that believeth not shall be damned", If you "believe not" you will be damned because you cannot possibly be baptized until you believe, (baptism by the Holy Spirit), meaning, repentance, death to self, and new life in Jesus.

John 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: **but he that believeth not is condemned already**, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 3:18 basically says the same thing except, Jesus did not say that he that believeth on Him and is baptized is not condemned, He said that "**He that believeth on Him is not condemned**". If water baptism was vital to salvation Jesus would not have made this statement.

Luke 8:12 b,"...then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should **believe and be saved.**" I didn't read anything about baptism there.

Hebrews 10:39 b"...but of them that **believe to the saving of the soul.**" No baptism there either.

over please

As for obedience, the Bible does not say that any act of obedience is necessary for salvation, disobedience is sin and we are sinful creatures, disobedient in every way. If obedience was all that was necessary for salvation why would we need the righteousness of Jesus?

Salvation is the free gift of God.

Ephesians 2: 8, 9 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the **gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.**"

What Must I do then to be saved?

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5:16 "And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the **free gift** is of many offences to justification."

Just as death was imputed to man as a result of Adams' sin, the righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to man when he accepts the **free gift**. Jesus Christ became the propitiation for our sins. He is the sacrifice provided by God (*Gen. 22:8*), offered as the complete atonement for sin.

1John 2:2 "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Ephesians 1:7 "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;"

This sacrifice was so complete that there is nothing else we can do to obtain salvation, but to accept the "**free gift**".

The Catholic Church teaches that before a person can be accepted as a Christian they must partake of the sacraments of Baptism, Holy Eucharist, and Confirmation. But according to the Bible, there is no required initiation. These sacraments, that the Catholic Church claims will bring grace are based on "works" (or acts that the penitent must perform in order to receive the grace of God), but, this is contradictory to the scripture (which by the way is the written Word of the One from whom the grace comes).

Eph. 2:8 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

Romans 11:6 "And if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."

Revelation 20:13-15 "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man

according to their works. *14.* And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. *15.* And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

If every man will be judged according to his works, and if grace cannot be obtained by works, then it stands to reason that, for a person's name to be written in the book of life and to be spared the torment of hell requires something other than works.

So, how do we receive this "**free gift**", and obtain the mercy God has offered through the blood of Jesus Christ? Well, the word of God tells us...

Romans 10:9 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, **thou shalt be saved.**"

Romans 10:13 "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, **shall be saved.**"

Notice, in both of these verses, the phrase "shall be saved". God didn't say that you might be saved, or, if you're not baptized, you didn't partake of the Eucharist, or you're not confirmed you won't be saved...He said, **YOU SHALL BE SAVED!**

If you would like to have assurance that you will go to heaven when you die, and know that you are saved, you can call upon the Lord, and say something like this...

"Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I can do nothing to earn my way to heaven. I accept the payment you made for my sins when you died on the cross for me. Please forgive me of my sins and take me to heaven when I die. Amen."

If you just prayed that prayer, and you believe that God raised Jesus from the dead, **YOU ARE SAVED!**

Romans 10:10 "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

J. W. Hardin

If you have accepted Christ as your Savior, or you have any questions regarding this tract we would like to hear from you, please contact:

THE NECESSITY OF BAPTISM

**A discussion on the
Sacrament of
"Baptism" as taught
By the Roman Catholic
Church.**