

Water Baptism - A Covenant

Scripture reading: Matthew 3:11 & 1st Corinthians 12:13

Water Baptism is an act of Covenant, just as a Marriage Ceremony. When we accepted Jesus Christ as our Saviour, there was no cost accrual to us. Our salvation was bought and paid for by The Blood of Jesus Christ. Now that we are Christians, God is asking us to reciprocate. If we want to be a part of the Body of Christ, our first act would be to make a covenant with the Body of Christ, or in other words, declare our loyalty and love by some act of our will. We, therefore, must renounce the former things, and declare our stand for Christ, thus becoming dead to sin and alive unto God.

1. Natural - Matthew 3:11
Baptism in water
Baptizer is man
2. Spirit - Matthew 3:11
Baptism in Holy Ghost
Baptizer is Jesus
3. Fullness - 1st Corinthians 12:13
Baptism into Christ
Baptizer is Holy Ghost



As the chart shows, let us look at the three dimensions which God has ordained for us to operate.

(1) **NATURAL** - The First dimension is always the natural. Every principle of God is first given to us in the natural. If we allow our understanding to remain in the natural, then it has no real meaning, since the natural will pass away, and at best is temporary. **THE NATURAL BAPTISM, THEN, IS IN WATER, AND PERFORMED BY A HUMAN PERSON.**

(2) **SPIRITUAL** - The Second dimension is always spiritual. The spiritual, therefore, is the real purpose for the natural, and it is upon a higher plane. The spiritual baptism is called the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. This is the entering in of the Holy Spirit into the spirit of the individual. In this baptism, instead of being covered over with water, one is covered over with the Holy Spirit, inside and outside. The pattern, however, was laid by the water baptism. Just as the water covered the believer, so also the Holy Spirit covers him, and the Baptizer is Christ Himself.

(3) **FULLNESS** - The Third dimension is the absolute fulfillment of both natural and spiritual. If we then understand the water baptism, then we will easily understand what the fullness of baptism will be. In this baptism, we are immersed into Christ by the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 6:2 speaks of "*baptisms*," while Ephesians 4:5 tells us that there is only "*one baptism*." These are reconciled when we understand that in the one there are three. Matthew 3:11 tells us that John the Baptist baptized with water, but Jesus would baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire. That gives us the scripture for the first two. The third is found in 1st Corinthians 12:13, where it states that the Holy Spirit baptizes us into Christ.

An example would be in order at this point. There was a natural man named Israel, and he produced a people named Israel. If this was the end of the story, then it would be a sad one indeed, but the natural Israel produced a man named Jesus Christ, who became the Saviour and Lord of a spiritual nation, and then some of the promises which it was impossible for natural Israel to walk in, the spiritual Israel are walking in. However, this spiritual Israel is just as unsatisfactory before God as the natural Israel. God, therefore, must bring another Israel to be made out of both, which He calls Zion (The Body of Christ), which will be the perfection of Beauty.

(Excerpt from *The Pattern*, pg. 56-57)

Thought for today: We, therefore, must renounce the former things, and declare our stand for Christ, thus becoming dead to sin and alive unto God.