



[Understanding the Christ](#)

## **Episode 14 - Escaping the Flood of Misunderstandings: Baptism's True Meaning**

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In this insightful episode, Scott Stanley from DTG Ministries explores the complexities surrounding the concept of baptism and its significance in Christian faith. Raised within various denominations, Scott shares his personal journey of rediscovering truth through scripture, questioning long-held beliefs, and understanding the profound spiritual essence of baptism beyond its traditional interpretation.

Diving into theological discussions, Scott elaborates on passages from 1 Peter, Romans, and Galatians, dissecting the symbolic parallels between Noah's Ark and baptism, and how this ancient rite signifies redemption and union with Christ in his death and resurrection. He challenges the mainstream belief of water baptism as essential for salvation, proposing a deeper spiritual rebirth and understanding as true salvation.

This episode encourages listeners to transcend denominational constraints, inviting them to engage with biblical truths at a deeper level, and embracing the genuine transformation that comes with spiritual baptism.

Modified Transcript:

Scriptures are transcribed directly with notations. Refer to KJV for verbatim wording.

Hi. This is Scott Stanley with DTG Ministries, considering things about Jesus Christ that, for me, were held back from me when I was in the universal churches. Raised a Baptist, partook of Pentecostalism for a while, and Seventh-day Adventism for a while, until finally realizing something isn't right.

Everywhere I look, I'm seeing problems, and I had to get away from the denominational thinking to be free enough to search the scriptures and let the Lord lead to help me determine truth. So there is something I want to talk to you about today. It's a big subject, and trying to cover all of this in one podcast or videocast, I'm not sure I can do this, but I'm going to try. I want to begin reading in 1 Peter. I want to share a verse with you that, somehow, the way it's worded, it was just hard to grasp exactly what he was saying. But this is in 1 Peter chapter 3, reading from verse 19.

1Pe 3:19 By which also he, Jesus, went and preached unto the spirits who are now in prison;

1Pe 3:20 Which sometimes were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared. Wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water (King James put "by water." It's "through water.")

1Pe 3:21 The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us. It's 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.

So what's hard about that? Right now, I don't want to get into the fact that Jesus was preaching to spirits who are now in prison. I believe that it is very simple to understand. He was speaking through Noah to people who were alive when Noah was building the ark. Now they are imprisoned in the grave.

But what does he mean, "Even now does baptism save us"? The reason I wanted to cover this is that I'm seeing things from the teachers, the preachers, on YouTube and elsewhere. They are saying that water baptism is the regeneration. You cannot be saved without water baptism.

Of course, they're looking at the word "saved" as being forgiven and going to heaven. I look at the word "saved" as "being redeemed from iniquity, and I am saved from myself"

because God gives me a better understanding of holiness, of his understanding, and he gives me the tools to overcome sin. He redeems me from iniquity. Hence, he is saving us from ourselves.

But what does he mean by "Even now baptism saves us"? Well, looking closely at what we just read, people were saved through the water by getting in the ark. They were saved by the ark. In the next verse, they're saved by baptism. It took me a long time to understand, "how is baptism like the ark"? If the ark saved Noah and his family through that water, how does baptism save me, and is it saving me from water?

Good question. Well, the Lord's given us the answer. I want you to turn to Galatians chapter 3, starting at verse 26.

Gal 3:26 For you are all the children of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Gal 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

So that word "put on" means "to sink into." *As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.* When I was baptized, I was told that Jesus died to pay my sin debt and that by me being baptized, the water I was being baptized in represented the grave and that I would be put in the grave and resurrected back out of it. Hence, baptism was a picture of the grave, of the death, and the resurrection.

But, again, Paul says, *"As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."* So I was told through the baptism, when I come up out of that water, I have put on Christ, and God, when he looks at me, does not see me. He sees Jesus. This is, again, this is what the universal church told me. Well, I want you to compare this with Romans chapter 6. I want to start reading at verse 1.

Rom 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

Now the word "sin" has the definite article in front of it, and it actually reads "the sin." 1 John 3:4 tells us the sin is iniquity. Even if it means literal sin, without the definite article in front of it, you're not going to have sin without iniquity.

Rom 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in iniquity, that grace may abound?

Rom 6:2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to iniquity, live any longer in it?

Rom 6:3 Know ye not, that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ (what we just read in Galatians 3) were baptized into his death?

Gal 3:4 Therefore, we're buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life.

Gal 3:5 For if we have been united or planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection.

Now, for me, the people who baptized me told me Jesus died to pay my sin debt. So when I got baptized, they said, "We baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," and resurrected me out of that water. In their mind, I was united in his death. Now what actually happened? Before you go get in that tank of water, somebody has to tell you something. They told me Jesus died to pay my sin debt, which is not scriptural. It's not even in the Bible, but that this baptism would be a symbol of that, that I'm accepting the death of Jesus.

But no one ever explained the death of Jesus. Again, they said he died to pay my sin debt. Titus 2:14 says, *he died to redeem me from iniquity*, and if you're going to baptize somebody in a tank of water, the actual baptism takes place before they go into the tank of water. The actual baptism is the baptism of the water of the word. *Out of your belly, your mind... out of your belly will flow rivers of living water. This spake he of the Spirit, which was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified* (Jhn 7:38-39).

So if you're going to baptize somebody, they have to be baptized into his death. That means his death needs to be explained to them. The people I went to church with could not explain that. If they're saying he died to pay a sin debt, then you have not been baptized into his death... if that's what they said to you. On the cross, Jesus portrayed the soul of humanity: A crown of thorns with the guilt, the stripes on the back with the unforgiveness- unable to forgive the people who have hurt you, the nakedness and the darkness- no understanding of God.

That is what Jesus portrayed on the cross. He was portraying you and me. When he said, "Why have you forsaken me? Father, why have you forsaken me?" ... That is how the

crown of thorns and the stripes on your back, the nakedness and the darkness, that is how those things make you feel- you feel forsaken of God. "Nevertheless, I thirst. I still want truth. I still want to have answers. Why have you forsaken me? Nevertheless, I thirst." And I quit doing this myself. "Into your hands, I commit my spirit."

When he said, "It is finished," he didn't mean your sin is now paid for. He is saying, you, coming into the truth, finally reach a point where you're finished doing this yourself. "Father, into your hands, I commit my spirit. I'm giving it all to you."

What I am describing to you is the Father's understanding of humanity, of the iniquity of humanity, and how to come out of it. You find death to self. That is what he means, being baptized into his death. As Paul said in Romans, "*We unite with him in that death*" (Rom 6:5). There is no such thing as praying a prayer, and now, suddenly, you're saved. That is not what salvation is.

Salvation happens when you work out your own salvation with fear and trembling (Php 2:12). The baptism of the water of the word gives you the tools to do that. And for you to be literally, physically dunked under the water, that is supposed to be a picture of that, not that he died to pay your sin debt. "Now that we baptized you, you're a member of our church." They baptized you into their church, not into the death of Jesus.

So I'm reading these verses about baptism, and there is something that we need to understand about it. There's something more that we need to understand. Again, before I move on, we just read what Peter said, how the ark saves us through the water, like baptism saves us. That baptism puts you in the ark. That is what he means in Galatians 3. *You're baptized into Jesus*. That ark is Christ, and you've got to get in the boat to be saved from the water of iniquity.

Like Jesus said in Mat 24:37, *Just like in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of man*. How? Because God sent water from heaven or gave you his understanding, and instead of just letting that come into your earth, water from the earth came up and clashed with the water from heaven and created a flood (Gen 7:11). It's no different than telling somebody, Jesus is the Holy Spirit. You give them water from heaven. Again, *out of your belly flows rivers of water* (Jhn 7:38).

But they reject that truth, and water or understanding from the earth springs up out of the earth and clashes with the heavenly water you just told them, creates a flood, and they are carried away by the flood. They are carried away from the truth of God by means of that flood, which they created when you gave them heavenly truth.

People need to be baptized. You need to be told the truth about the death of Christ. That's the baptism: You're told the truth about the death of Christ, and when you're told, you need to believe it. That will put you in the boat, and it will save you from the water of iniquity that has covered the earth today. The earth is covered by iniquity. It's everywhere you look. God is trying to get us in the ark so we can be saved through the water. Now that's what's happening. But I want to keep going about baptism for a minute. Baptism... let's turn to John chapter 3.

In John chapter 3, starting at verse 1.

Jhn 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

Jhn 3:2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said, Rabbi, we know you're a teacher come from God: for no man can do these signs that you're doing, except God be with him.

Jhn 3:3 Jesus answered and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Jhn 3:4 Nicodemus said, How can a man be born when he's old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

Jhn 3:5 And Jesus said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born of water and of Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Jhn 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Question: *"To be born of water and Spirit..."*, is he talking about you getting in a tank of water and somebody dunking you under? "If you don't do that, you'll never see the kingdom." I literally have watched people on YouTube try to explain this, that, "Yeah, you have to get in the water. That's water regeneration, so you have to get in that water." And they have a verse here: *"You have to be born of water and spirit."* One fella goes on to show the rest, and I'm going to go ahead and put this on the screen for you, too. In John 3:22, this is after the Nicodemus story.

Jhn 3:22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea. There he tarried with them, and baptized.

So here you have baptism, but Jesus must be talking about baptism earlier in the chapter, verse 23.

Jhn 3:23 And John was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there. And they came, and were baptized.

Jhn 3:24 For John was not yet cast into prison.

Jhn 3:25 Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying (speaking of baptism).

Jhn 3:26 They came to John, and they said, Rabbi, he that was with you beyond Jordan, to whom you're bearing witness (that he's the Son of God), the same is baptizing, and all are coming to him.

Jhn 3:27 And John said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

Chapter four verse 1.

Jhn 4:1 When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,

Jhn 4:2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

Here, we're talking about baptism, after he tells Nicodemus, "*You must be born of water and Spirit.*" But it always bothered me. Why wasn't Jesus baptizing? Why were his disciples doing that, but Jesus, who is Messiah... he's supposed to be saving us from our sin, but he won't baptize you? Now they're going to have all kinds of reasons why that is, but I want to show you another verse. This is in 1 Corinthians 1:14.

1Co 1:14 I thank God (that word "God" has the definite article in front of it. I thank the God, the Divine One), that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius;

1Co 1:15 Lest any should say that I baptized in my own name.

1 Co 1:16 I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized anybody else.

1 Co 1:17 Christ didn't send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel (which is spiritual baptism): not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

Interesting, isn't it? If I find life in literal, physical, getting in a tank of water baptism, why in the world would Paul say, *"I thank God I didn't baptize any of you. I think maybe I baptized this family. I don't know about the rest of you. He didn't send me to do that."* That's pretty hard to get around. Because of these things, I know there is a deeper meaning to what Christ is saying to Nicodemus. I want you to look at Jesus's baptism with me.

Mat 3:13 Then comes Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized.

Mat 3:14 But John forbade him. He said, I have need to be baptized of you, and you're coming to me?

Mat 3:15 Jesus said, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness. Then John suffered him.

Mat 3:16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Jesus.

Mat 3:17 And a voice came from heaven. It said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Well, what we need to understand is that when Jesus was baptized by John, first of all, John was directed by God to go baptize Israel so that the children of Israel would be able to recognize Messiah. John came preaching the baptism of repentance- you repent of your sin. John was in the wilderness, which gives us a spiritual picture. He was to baptize and watch to see the heavens open and the dove come down, and when that happens... God said, *"That's your Messiah."* John was waiting to see that happen (Jhn 1:33-34).

So this happens, and a voice comes out and says, *"You are my Son in whom I am well pleased."* This was a fulfillment of a prophecy found in Psalm 2. Reading from Psalm 2, verse 4.

Psa 2:4 He that sits in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

Psa 2:5 Then shall he speak to them in his wrath, and trouble them or vex them in his sore displeasure.

Here's the Father. Yet... why say "yet"? Because they took counsel together against him and his Anointed One. They were taking counsel together against.

Psa 2:6 Yet have I set (or anointed, poured upon) my king upon my holy hill of Zion. (Here I've anointed my king. This is Messiah. Then Jesus speaks.)

Psa 2:7 I will declare that decree...

What decree? The anointing. See. *"I have anointed my king,"* and Jesus says, *"Well, I'll declare that decree."*

Psa 2:7 ... The Lord told me, You are my Son. This day have I begotten you.

What happened right there? Why is that such a big deal? Because this is the baptism of Christ. God says, *"I anointed him."* Jesus says, *"Well, I'll tell you what he said. He said, 'You're my Son. This day have I begotten you.'"*

Now there are a lot of things we can get into right here, and, eventually, we will. But speaking of baptism, Jesus, when God said, *"You're my Son,"* that was the anointing that made him the Christ. *"This day,"* he says, *"have I begotten you."* That "begotten" is not talking about his physical birth because he had already been born in Bethlehem, and because we know the truth about the Son of God, he had been born in eternity, too. So what do you mean by *"This day have I begotten you"*? The begotten spoken of here is spiritual rebirth. God said, *"You're my Son. Today, I've begotten you."*

Now, let me tell you something that I just haven't said, and it's upsetting to the universal church. When he says, *"This day have I begotten you,"* that is born again. That is what he is telling Nicodemus. Nicodemus says, *"We know you're a teacher come from God... We know you're a teacher come from God."* Jesus said, *"You have to believe I'm the Son of God."* Is that what he said? He said, *"You need to be born again. You need to be born from above. You think I'm a teacher come from God? You need to be born from above, too. I'm the Son of God."* That is what he was saying.

Who spoke to Jesus and said, "You're my Son"? God the Father. *"Nicodemus, you think I'm a teacher come from God? You need to be born from above by God. God needs to speak to your heart that 'I am his Son.' I am not just simply a teacher come from God. I am the Son of God."* When you believe that truth, you are born from above. Jesus said, *"You must be born of water and spirit."* This has nothing to do with literal physical water. When you look at his baptism, God spoke and said, *"You're my Son in whom I'm well pleased."* Prophecy: *"This day I have begotten you."*

Jesus said, *Water and Spirit* (Jhn 3:5). Where's the water, and where is the Spirit? You have to be born from water and Spirit. It was the water of the word: "You are my Son." Spirit: It was the voice of the Father saying, "You are my Son." To say "You are my Son" is the water and the Spirit. Remember in John 6:63,

Jhn 6:63 ... The words I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life.

It is no different when God speaks. If Jesus speaks spirited life, I'll tell you so does the Father. He speaks Spirit and life, too. It is the Father who will give you the truth, the awareness that Jesus is the Son of God. There is life in that truth because Jesus, as the Son, has life in himself. For you to believe he's the Son of God, there is life in that. For you to believe because God has inspired you unto that belief, that Jesus is the Son of God... He has just put you on the narrow path, and *few there be that find it* (Mat 7:14).

If I could sum all of this up, John was baptizing in the wilderness. John was a picture of people who did not understand, they were not in the kingdom of God. Remember when Jesus made the statement, *"No greater prophet has been born of women like John? But those who are in the kingdom are greater; the least in the kingdom is greater than he is"* (Mat 11:11), because John wasn't in the kingdom. To be in the kingdom is to have the understanding of God. That is what it means to be in the kingdom.

It's just like God gives Abraham a promise: *You'll be the father of many nations*. That promise being in the mind of Abraham, Abraham dwelt in the land of promise (Gen 12:1-3). See, we keep trying to make this all outward, literal. It isn't. Sure, he dwelt in this land, but the land God promised him was that *"You'll be the father of many nations. You're going to bless the world, and so is your seed."* If Abraham really thought God had given

him that land, why did he buy a grave for Sarah (Gen 23)? Why would he do that? (*God gave me this. This is mine.*)

Because in Hebrews, he looked for a city to come *whose builder and maker is God*, a city that has foundations (Heb 11:8-10). That city is New Jerusalem. New Jerusalem is a symbol. It's the city of God. It is the Holy Spirit... which Abraham never received that promise. He believed it, but he never received that inheritance. He will receive it when he's raised from the dead.

So the baptism you want is to be told the truth- that Jesus is the Son of God. That is what John the Baptist was saying in the wilderness. He wasn't in the kingdom. He was in the wilderness. Also in the wilderness, Jesus' disciples were baptizing, but not Jesus because, spiritually speaking, he wasn't in the wilderness. His disciples were. They might have believed he was the Son of God, but they were in the wilderness.

So what must you do to be saved? Repent of your sin in the name of Jesus. He's the Son of God. Repent of your sin in the name of Jesus and be baptized with the baptism of words of his death, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit because that is what the Holy Spirit is (Act 2:38). It is the explanation of his death and when you hear that, you can unite with him in that death. "Father, I feel forsaken. I still want the truth. I'm finished trying to do all this myself. Into your hands, I commit my spirit."

That is the baptism that brings life. That is the baptism that gives you the tools to overcome all sin. I am not saying nobody get baptized in water, but the people who will do that, telling you you're saved... All of them are in the wilderness.

None of them knows God. None of them can help you be saved. But they can baptize you in water. Jesus will baptize you in Holy Spirit and fire. That is what will save your soul.