

**Today's Order of Worship**

Announcements: Greg Lowery

Song Leader: David Key

Opening Prayer: Lannie Key

On the Table: Head - Eddy Dickinson  
Servers - Ralph Burleson  
Billy Box  
Josh Berryhill

Closing Prayer: Gary Addison

Preparing the Lord's Supper Michelle Lowery

**Weekly Service Times**

Sunday

Bible Study 10:00 am  
Morning Worship 10:45 am  
Evening Worship 5:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:00 pm

**Visit Our Website**

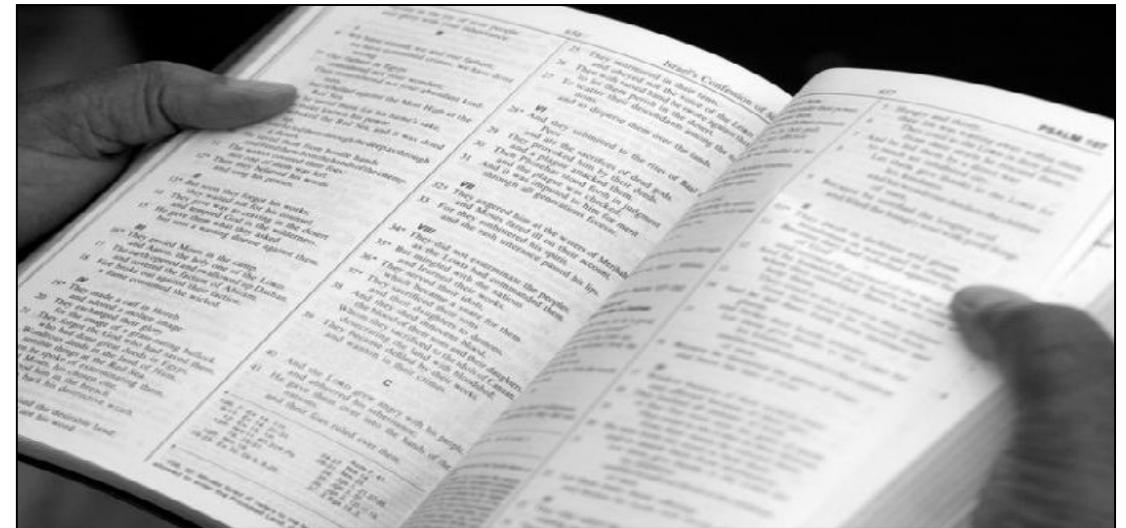
[www.brilliantchurchofchrist.org](http://www.brilliantchurchofchrist.org)

Elders: Deacon: Al Corkren  
Leonard Key / David Key  
Billy Box / Eddy Dickinson Minister: Greg Lowery

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# Water Salvation?



*The  
Brilliant  
Beacon*



**New Testament Baptism: In Water or the Spirit?**

By Wayne Jackson

“How would you respond to those who make the claim that passages such as Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:3,4; Colossians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 12:13, and 1 Peter 3:21 — refer to a ‘Spirit’ baptism, rather than to ‘water’ baptism?”

Some years ago I had a series of public debates with a gentleman who contended that there is no divinely-authorized “water” baptism today. The water baptism specifically mentioned in the book of Acts (e.g., Acts 8:36; 10:47), he opined, was merely a “Jewish purification” ritual. He claimed that this ceremonial act was terminated with the close of the book of Acts, and that the only baptism in vogue today is a “Spirit baptism.”

This dogma is quite erroneous, and it can be refuted effectively.

In response I must first point out that it is generally agreed that whatever the baptism is — in those passages that associate the rite with salvation — it is the same type of baptism in all the verses.

In other words, the baptism of Matthew 28:19 is of the same kind as that in Acts 2:38, 22:16; Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21; etc.

My debate opponent, mentioned above, happily conceded this point.

In view of this, consider the following:

**Human Administrators**

The baptism mentioned in Matthew 28:19 had human administrators.

**THOSE WHO NEED OUR PRAYERS**

Faye Cotton: she will be starting new treatments soon, please continue to pray that she continues her fight against cancer and she will win

Denise Kimbrell: still taking treatments and has been diagnosed with Rheumatoid Arthritis; please be praying that with med’s all of this can be controlled

Rosa Melton: her surgery went well to remove cancer from her womb, please be praying that she will make a quick recovery and no more will be found cancer

Kay Dodd: is continuing to take treatments, please continue to pray that this cancer will stay in remission

Barbara Wilkinson: still having problem with infection on her feet, please pray that the medicine she is taking will cure this infection

Mable Weeks: has several health problems and has been placed under hospice care, please continue to keep her in your prayers

Sandy McCaleb: has started cancer treatments, please be praying that this cancer can be treated and defeated

Charles Gay: last scan showed shrinkage with his brain tumor, attends the Cleveland congregation, please pray for him and his family

Adam Stidham; (co-worker of Al) has been diagnosed with leukemia, please pray that this will be treatable

Barbra Fields: is undergoing cancer treatments, please pray that with these treatments cancer will be in remission.

Larry Metcalf: has been diagnosed with lung cancer; please pray that he can receive treatments that will defeat this cancer

**THOSE WHO NEED OUR PRAYERS**

Kristy Ingram: was diagnosed with cancer and is presently undergoing treatments, please pray that these treatments will work

Vertie Mae York: knee replacement surgery went well, please pray that she can make a quick and full recovery

Alice Foster: was diagnosed with congestive heart failure and having problems with her lungs, please keep her in your prayers

Mary Box: the new spots are cancerous and she is taking radiation treatments, please pray that these treatments will defeat this cancer

Patty Berryhill: having complications from a hernia, please pray that the doctors can help her with this problem

Mary Rainey: she has bone cancer throughout her body, please be praying for her and her family

Maylene McWhirter: her blood gases are showing signs of myeloid leukemia, please be praying for her and her family

Christ commissioned the apostles to go and make disciples, baptizing them into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Inasmuch as an apostle could not baptize “in the Spirit” (only Christ could do that — Mt. 3:11), one is forced to conclude that the baptism of Matthew 28:19 is water baptism, not Spirit baptism.

I am unaware of any reputable Bible scholar who contends otherwise. If, then, the other passages that mention baptism (see above) are of the same import, it follows that they likewise refer to water baptism, not Spirit baptism.

Baptism is immersion

Both Romans 6:3-4 and Colossians 2:12 make it clear that the baptism of these passages involves both an immersion in something, and a being raised from the same substance. This makes perfectly good sense if water baptism is in view.

On the other hand, if the Spirit is the element of the baptism, this would suggest that one is buried in the Spirit, and subsequently raised from the Spirit.

This would imply further that the new convert would not have the Spirit, and therefore, would not belong to the Lord (Rom. 8:9; Gal. 4:6). This conclusion obviously is wrong — thus demonstrating that the element of the baptism in Romans 6:3-4 and Colossians 2:12 is not the Holy Spirit.

By default, it must be water baptism.

**Water connected to baptism**

Water is specifically associated with baptism in 1 Peter 3:20-21.

*“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. 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:”*

If the allusion here, then, is to water baptism, and yet 1 Peter 3:21 refers to the same sort of baptism as the other passages cited, then clearly they speak of water baptism as well. Baptism places one into the kingdom

The passage that would come closest to teaching a “Spirit” baptism would be 1 Corinthians 12:13, but, the fact is, a careful analysis of related passages reveals that not even this text teaches a baptism in the Spirit.

Note the following logic: The baptism of 1 Corinthians 12:13 puts one into the one “body,” which is the same as the “church” (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18,24). But the church is identified with the kingdom of Christ (Mt. 16:18-19). Thus, the baptism of the text under consideration introduces one into the Lord’s kingdom.

However, a related passage demonstrates that it is through the birth of “water” that one enters Christ’s kingdom (Jn. 3:3-5). One is forced to conclude, therefore, that the baptism of 1 Corinthians 12:13 is water baptism.

In this connection, one should also carefully study Ephesians 5:26, and note the reference to the “washing of water.”

### **Bible words defined by how they are used**

Finally, there is a principle of interpretation that is paramount in sound Bible exegesis. Frequently it is the case that Bible words will form a pattern. That is, a consideration of several passages containing a term will reveal that the word has a commonly understood significance.

Such being the case, that normal meaning is to be attached to the term unless an exceptional context suggests that it has taken on a special significance (i.e., a figurative sense).

The term “baptize,” and its cognate “baptism,” occur together about 100 times in the New Testament. A consideration of these passages will reveal that the word may, on occasion, take on a figurative application (cf. Mt. 3:11; Lk. 12:50; Acts 1:5).

Unless, though, there is clear contextual evidence that a symbolic sense has been employed, the conclusion must be that the common usage (an immersion in water) is in view.

In view of this principle, there is no reason to conclude the baptism mentioned in Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 22:16; Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12, and 1 Peter 3:21 is anything other than water baptism — an act of obedience, predicated upon faith and repentance, which secures forgiveness of sins and brings one into union with Jesus Christ.

To all of this we add this point.

The clear cases of water baptism in the book of Acts (chapters 8 and 10) very obviously were not examples of Jewish ritualism. The indisputable fact is that the Mosaic law had been abolished by the cross (Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14), and no Jewish rite was henceforth tolerated in connection with the salvation process (cf. Acts 15:1; Gal. 5:2-4).

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### **Upcoming Events**

Today	Nursing Home	2:00 pm
November 19 <sup>th</sup>	Fellowship Meal	
November 19 <sup>th</sup>	Singing & Prayer Night	5:00 pm