

## I. Know the Plan - 2 Peter 3:16-18, Acts 2:38 - Baptism

Where in the past these Jews looked on Him as a blasphemer, they now have been convicted in their conscience and have perceived in their minds that He is instead the Christ.

The aorist active imperative of *metanoeo* means to once and for all repent, that is, believe in Jesus as the Christ and be saved.

At this point, each one of the Jews listening to Peter were commanded to then make an individual decision which is expressed in the third person singular, aorist passive imperative of the verb: *baptizo* - "to be baptized."

This verb in context had to do with participation in a ritual which involved being immersed into water.

In the classical Greek it meant to identify a first thing with a second thing so that the characteristic of the first thing was changed. Therefore, the interpretation of the word "baptism" has to do with permanent identification.

There is nothing permanent about water baptism. You cannot remain immersed or you drown. Evaporation causes the person to dry off after having become emersed out from the water.

Consequently, that which has permanent status is a spiritual baptism; a spiritual immersion which occurs under the power of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation—i.e., repentance—your change of mind—toward Jesus as the Christ.

Under the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we are identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection and entered into union with Christ at the right hand of the Father.

This spiritual baptism is described in Romans 6:

**Romans 6:3** - Are you ignorant that all of us [believers] who have been immersed [baptized] into Christ Jesus have been immersed into His spiritual death?

**Romans 6:4** - Therefore, we have been buried together with Him through the baptism of the Holy Spirit into His death in order that as Christ has historically been resurrected from deaths, through the glory of God the Father, so also we might have the option to walk [change of lifestyle] in newness of life.

**Romans 6:5** - If we have become intimately united with Him in the likeness of His death, and we in fact have, not only this but also we shall in fact be intimately united to the likeness of His resurrection.

**Romans 6:6** - Be knowing this, that our sinful nature has been crucified together with Him in order that the human body with reference to its sinful nature might be rendered powerless for the purpose that we should no longer be slaves to sin.

**Romans 6:7** - For he who has died has in fact been acquitted from the power of the sinful nature.

**Romans 6:8** - Now if we have died with Christ and we in fact have, we also believe that we shall in fact live in association with Him.

**Romans 6:9** - Knowing from doctrine resident in our streams of consciousness that because of the fact Christ has been resurrected from deaths, it is a perpetual fact that He can never die; it is a perpetual fact that death no longer exercises rulership authority over Him.

**Romans 6:10** - For the death which He in fact has died, He died with the existing result that it was a once for all action with reference to the sinful nature; but the resurrection life which He in fact perpetually lives, He in fact continuously lives with reference to God.

**Romans 6:11** - So also, on the one hand, all of you consider yourselves to be perpetually dead with reference to the sinful nature but, on the other hand, currently living with reference to God in Christ Jesus.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit results in what is called theologically, “*positional truth*.” Positional means a relative place, situation, or standing which confers advantage and preference.

By virtue of faith in Christ we are spiritually identified with Him through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We have been identified with Him in His death and in His resurrection.

Consequently, positional truth is classified in two categories:

1. **Retroactive Positional Truth:** We are immersed into Jesus Christ in His spiritual death, physical death, and burial which results in the positional death of our sinful nature. This means our sinful nature has lost its power over us and is in effect positionally dead. Only our volition can revive it.
2. **Current Positional Truth:** We are immersed into Jesus Christ in His resurrection, ascension, and session resulting in eternal life forever.

Since we have the availability of the Holy Spirit’s guidance, mentorship, and power, we need never again submit to the authority of the sinful nature, although we inevitably do. Recovery is provided through confession alone to God alone.

Regardless of our spiritual status—whether in or out of fellowship—we perpetually maintain our current positional status of eternal life since we are perpetually immersed into our Lord's resurrection. Positionally, we are currently seated with Christ at the right hand of the Father which is precisely where we will be experientially the moment after our physical death.

All of this enables us to enjoy what Paul calls in Romans 6:4, “*newness of life*.”