

THE BOOK OF ACTS

OUTWARD SIGN, INWARD COMMITMENT

MARCH 15, 2026

SCRIPTURE

And God gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision. And so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day. Acts 7:8

WHAT IS A COVENANT?

A covenant is a binding agreement between two parties, often ratified by a sign or act.

A person born under the Old Covenant received the sign of circumcision. A person **born again** under the New Covenant receives the signs of the indwelling Holy Spirit, communion, and water baptism.

Some have suggested that water baptism replaces circumcision as a sign:

Circumcision – Old Covenant	Baptism – New Covenant
Circumcision – Physical Sign	Baptism – Spiritual Sign
Circumcision – Law & Works	Baptism – Love & Grace
Circumcision – Social Status	Baptism – Spiritual Standing
Circumcision – Points Forward	Baptism – Points Backward
Circumcision – Your Blood	Baptism – Christ's Blood

WHY SHOULD A PERSON BE WATER BAPTIZED?

We are water baptized to follow Jesus' example.

Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. Matthew 3:13

We are water baptized to obey God.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, **baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit**, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
Matthew 28:18-20

An unbaptized Christian is saved but living in disobedience.

We are water baptized to show others our allegiance to Jesus.

We died and were buried with Christ by baptism. Romans 6:4

We are water baptized to remind ourselves of what Christ has done.

"Baptizatus Sum!"

WHO SHOULD BE WATER BAPTIZED?

We embrace credobaptism.

We do not embrace paedobaptism or proxy baptism.

WHERE SHOULD A PERSON BE WATER BAPTIZED?

Now John also was baptizing...near Salim, because there was plenty of water. Jn 3:23

WHEN SHOULD A PERSON BE WATER BAPTIZED?

If a person is a Christian, they should be baptized immediately!

HOW SHOULD A PERSON BE BAPTIZED?

The Greek word for baptize is *baptizo*, which means to fully submerge.

When others baptize differently, it shouldn't be a point of contention among the saints.

CAN A PERSON BE RE-BAPTIZED?

The Bible doesn't forbid or condone multiple baptisms.

IS BAPTISM NECESSARY FOR SALVATION?

And Peter said to them, "**Repent and be baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:38

The language carries a dual meaning.

The most evangelistic book in the Bible never speaks of water baptism.

The apostle Paul states a division between salvation and water baptism.

The book of Acts reveals a sequence towards water baptism.

The early church practiced the same sequence.

Water baptism does not secure or present salvation. It is a matter of obedience.