

A SKETCH ON BAPTISM FROM ACTS 2:38

Virgil Warren, PhD

Repent be baptized into the name of Jesus Messiah remission of sins
the Holy Spirit as a gift
membership in Christ's body

Identity with Jesus the Messiah

means **commitment** to him:

total (every aspect)

permanent (all life long)

exclusive (vs. all other

parallel possibilities)

Notations

The remission is based on identity with the One who is what we are called to be and aspire to be. God is willing to consider us righteous on the basis of identity with the One who is righteous. The remission is not based on the act of baptism *per se*, but on the One we commit to in doing it. [**identity with Messiah**]

We do not cause the remission by being baptized. We only meet the condition God has appointed for his choice to pronounce the remission on the terms he chose. [**God's choice**]

The change from "lost" to "saved" does not occur in us, but in God's choice based on the Messiah. We simply indicate our willingness for that to happen—our willingness to accept the remission as indicated by our being baptized into him—including all that identity with him entails. [**condition, not cause**]

The shorthand expression "baptism for remission of sins" can be misheard by other people who are concerned that what we do does not save us. Characteristically using the shorthand expression may also unconsciously mislead us into misunderstanding the value we should attach to what we do in the matter.

Baptism in water has an appointed meaning, not an inherent one. It would not have to mean what it does if it were not for God's appointing that meaning to it. Other meanings could be, and have been, assigned to the act: Baptized to Moses (1 Corinthians **10**:1-2)

Baptized to Paul (1 Corinthians **1**:14-15)

Baptized to repentance (Acts **19**:4)

Proselyte baptism

Baptism into (identity with) Messiah

**KEEP BAPTISM IN ITS INTERPERSONAL CONTEXT
SO IT DOES NOT BECOME A RITUAL, A LEGAL ACT.**