Answer: According to Scripture, baptism should be performed only once in a person’s lifetime, provided they meet the following two essential conditions:

1. The person must understand the meaning of baptism and have repented:

Baptism symbolizes the burial of the old self and the resurrection to a new life. This is not just a symbolic act but a profound spiritual transformation. The Bible teaches that baptism is not simply a ritual but an essential step in embracing the gospel and identifying with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Romans 6:3–4 (NIV) says,

> Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Baptism represents the death of the old sinful nature (our old self), burial with Christ, and resurrection to a new, transformed life. For this reason, the person must truly understand the significance of this spiritual act before being baptized.

If a person understands the purpose of baptism—to publicly declare their faith in Christ, to die to sin, and to live in newness of life in Christ—then that is the first condition for the validity of their baptism.

Jesus Himself emphasized the importance of repentance before baptism. In Mark 1:15, He said, “The time has come,” He said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” Repentance is a necessary part of baptism because baptism symbolizes the washing away of sin and the turning from an old life to a new one in Christ.

This is why children, who do not yet have the capacity to understand the gospel or make a conscious decision to follow Christ, are not baptized. Instead, they may receive the laying on of hands as a blessing, as seen in Mark 10:16: “And He took the children in His arms, placed His hands on them, and blessed them.” Therefore, a person baptized as a child must be baptized

again once they come to a full understanding of the gospel and make a personal decision to follow Jesus.

2. The type of baptism performed:

This is the second critical condition. If a person was baptized in the manner described in the Bible—through immersion in water and in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19)—then their baptism is valid. The word “baptize” (Greek: baptizo) literally means to “immerse” or “dip.” Therefore, the proper form of baptism is by full immersion, which symbolizes the total burial of the old self and the rising up into new life in Christ.

Matthew 28:19 (NIV) records Jesus’ command to His disciples:

> 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.

Similarly, Acts 2:38 (NIV) teaches that baptism is in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins:

> Peter replied, ‘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.

Thus, baptism must be done in the name of the Triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) or in the name of Jesus Christ, as both are consistent with biblical teaching.

If a person was baptized using a small amount of water (e.g., sprinkling or pouring), even if they had repented of their sins, they must be baptized again by full immersion, as the Bible does not support sprinkling or pouring as valid forms of baptism. The act of immersion itself serves as a vivid picture of being buried with Christ and raised to new life, as Romans 6:4 explains.

Acts 19:3–5 (NIV) also illustrates this point when the Apostle Paul encounters believers who were baptized by John but had not yet been baptized in the name of Jesus:

> So Paul asked, ‘Then what baptism did you receive?’ ‘John’s

> baptism,’ they replied. Paul said, ‘John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.’ On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

These early Christians had been baptized in John’s baptism, which was a baptism of repentance, but they had not yet received the correct baptism in the name of Jesus. After understanding the full gospel, they were baptized again in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Why is it important to be baptized correctly?

The Bible teaches that baptism is not just a ritual, but a powerful means by which God works to spiritually transform us. 1 Peter 3:21 (NIV) says,

> And this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Baptism is a means of grace that strengthens a believer’s faith. It represents the believer’s identification with Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection, as well as their commitment to live a new life in Him. It’s important to remember that baptism itself does not save us—it’s faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that saves us (Ephesians 2:8-9). However, baptism is the outward sign of that inner transformation, a necessary step in fully surrendering to Christ.

The Bible also emphasizes that those who have been properly baptized should live out their faith steadfastly. Colossians 2:12 (NIV) reminds us,

> Having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through your faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

This verse shows that baptism is a sign of our faith in God’s work in our lives. It’s meant to empower us to live according to the will of God, in the new life that Christ has provided.

What if I was baptized incorrectly?

If your baptism was not done according to the teachings of Scripture (such as by sprinkling or in the name of someone other than Jesus), it is not a sin to be re-baptized. In fact, it is recommended that you receive baptism again in the proper biblical manner to ensure it aligns with the teachings of Jesus and His apostles.

As seen in Acts 19:5, the believers who had received the wrong baptism were re-baptized in the name of Jesus. Therefore, if your baptism was not fully in accordance with Scripture, it is advisable to undergo baptism again in the correct manner.

Conclusion:

Baptism is a sacred act that signifies a believer’s identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. If you were baptized correctly, with full immersion and in the name of the Lord Jesus, there is no need to be baptized again. However, if your baptism did not meet the biblical standard, it’s important to undergo baptism again in the proper manner.

If you haven’t been baptized yet or want to be re-baptized, please contact us at 0789001312. We’ll help you understand the significance of baptism and, if you’re in our area, we’ll baptize you for free.

May God bless you abundantly.

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