Spring Valley Baptist Church

Confused: Difficult Verses In The Bible

1 Peter 3:18-22 - Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit (some translations say “in the spirit). **19** After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits— **20** to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, **21** 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, **22** who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

Does Baptism Save?

The word “baptize” comes from the Greek word “*baptizo.*” The word means “to immerse.” It does NOT always mean to immerse in water. Baptism was seen as way of identifying oneself with something or someone or to completely give oneself to something or someone. We often say that a person immersed themselves into their work, a relationship, or the church.

Acts 2:36-38 - Peter said, “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.” **37** When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” **38** 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.”

In Acts 2:38, Peter was calling Jews to publicly profess their faith in Jesus by being baptized. This was a huge statement in that culture because openly declaring that you “immersed” yourself into Jesus as Messiah would cause problems for the person being baptized.

Mark 16:15-16 - Jesus said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. **16** Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”

What Does 1 Peter 3 Mean?

1 Peter 3:19-22 - After being made alive, he (Jesus) went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits— 20 to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, 21 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, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

- **Noah was not immersed in the flood waters. The flood did two things:**
  1) **Brought God’s judgment against the wicked.**
  2) **Lifted Noah out of the judgment.**
- **Noah was immersed (*baptizo*) in the ark.**
  The ark was a place of safety from the judgment of God. It literally saved them from death. The ark is also a symbol of what happens when we immerse ourselves (baptize) into Jesus. He saves us from the eternal judgment of God. The ark was a picture of salvation.
- **When we immerse (baptize) our lives into Jesus, He lifts us out of judgment and saves us from judgment.**
- **Physical baptism is a visible picture of God saving us from eternal judgment .**