

Let us turn to our normal passage of Scripture and see the purpose for which Paul wrote. The purpose for his changing his mind and writing instead of visiting, at least in part (in addition to not wishing to give them the appearance of a disheveled, uneasy apostle): To interrupt some grief they were inflicting upon another (read 2 Cor 2:5-9).

Now that we have read today's passage, it seems like we should deal with a particular topic within the Corinthian context. This particular topic is occurring for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time since I have been the pastor here at Sandy Ridge: Baptism.

Turn to Acts 18:1-8 and let me just say in passing that if you will observe this passage where it lies in the book of Acts, a couple of things become obvious:

1. This is Paul's missionary journey.
2. Baptism already has an understanding of requiring much water (Eunuch)

It seems there are some other things we learn from this record of the first trip to Corinth:

1. Jesus was declared in the town already. As a matter of fact, He was declared near unto the synagogue (vv 5-7).
2. Baptism was more than a Jewish thing (or else the ruler of the synagogue wouldn't have bothered with it; v 8)
3. When the head of house gets saved, gets baptized, and fears God, typically the whole house follows suit (v 8).
4. Baptism was not private, but rather public and caused many problems (v 9-15). Why? It's what Christians do!
5. This was followed up with an expectation that a new way of life had begun and this new way of life continued with worship and instruction with the church (v 11, 17). Why? It's what Christians do!

Now, let's go to the 2<sup>nd</sup> letter Paul wrote<sup>1</sup> to the Corinthians which we call "1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians," and let's find more information about the "baptism and the believers at Corinth." There are a few things that are still glaringly evident:

1. Some time has passed
  - a. this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> letter since they became Christians
  - b. They have enough believers to have some factions (1:11-14).
2. The formula being stated is not as important as the intent behind the baptism (1:12-14).
3. Baptism is not part of the Gospel (1:17).

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<sup>1</sup> Apparently, he wrote another letter 5:9.

Now that we have reviewed all of this, let us consider that baptism is found two other times in this book. One of them is found in chapter 15 and describes a certain group of people that were “baptized on behalf of dead folks.” Mormons love this verse, and we’ll discuss that briefly in our Sunday night series beginning next week.

The other time it’s found is in chapter 12:12-13. Let’s go there. What is evident is that Paul, having used “baptism” only in relation to water in this letter so far; and only using it as “water baptism” in that zany idea later in the book; and not bringing it up again in the 2<sup>nd</sup> letter, is comparing water baptism to this “baptism of the spirit” by using the word “baptism.” If that’s true. If water baptism was to picture spirit baptism, then

1. What is true about spirit baptism—which takes place for every believer (remember, baptism doesn’t do the transaction, the Gospel does)—is pictured by water:
2. It is to be the beginning to life with the body of Christ. I am assuming that you get the local significance of the body of Christ.
  - a. Paul is not talking to people who never meet.
  - b. Paul is not talking to people in separate towns.
  - c. Paul is not talking to people in different churches.
  - d. Paul is not talking to people who believe different things.
  - e. No, Paul is talking to a single group of people in a single house-church in a single town who always meet in worship and discipleship and says “you are the body.”
3. It is to acknowledge, as one of many being likewise water baptized, that we belong to that body. No preacher should ever baptize somebody if they are not going to be a part of the body He is shepherding.
  - a. You are needed. (vv 4-11)
    - i. Even if you don’t feel needed.
    - ii. Even if you don’t feel acknowledged as a “need.”
  - b. You need others in your church.

### **Conclusion:**

Baptism is immersion.

Baptism is for all believers.

-Baptism does not help the unbeliever in any way.

All believers are to be in a local church, and thusly baptized publically.

When one is saying “I wish to be baptized,” they are saying “I have been washed by the Spirit of God because I have believed the Gospel of Jesus, and I submit to my Lord’s requirement to be a faithful, thriving, part of the believers here at this assembly.”