

"319. How would you give Baptism? (i.e., in cases of necessity when there is no priest)

I would give Baptism by pouring ordinary water on the forehead of the person to be baptized, saying while pouring it: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." . . .

- (d) The sacrament of Baptism may be validly administered:
first, by immersion;
second, by pouring;
third, by sprinkling

Christ commanded Baptism by water; He did not prescribe the manner of applying the water."

-- *Baltimore Catechism No. 3*

This question of which mode(s) Christians have accepted, affirmed, preferred, and practiced is important. However, the question of which mode(s) Scripture teaches is even more important.

We will examine four lines of consideration relevant to the questions of the scriptural mode of Christian baptism: (a) grammatical considerations; (b) historical considerations; (c) practical considerations; (d) theological considerations.

a. Grammatical Considerations as to Mode

(1) Usage of relevant words in the classical Greek

Edmund B. Fairfield calls attention to the general usage of the word BAPTIZO in the classical Greek. He writes:

"I have before me a volume published by the American Bible Union. . . a volume in which they profess to give all the passages in Greek literature in which the word occurs; and so far as I know it is complete and exact.

Now what do I find in the examination of these passages, numbering in all a little more than one hundred and fifty? I find that twenty times it was used of a ship that was going to the bottom of the sea; eighteen times of one sinking or drowned as the result of his immersion; nineteen times of dipping into oil; six times of plunging something, as a sword, into the human body; of land overflowed by water twice; of the difficulty of sinking things into very salt water, four times; of dipping into milk, vinegar, vine, honey wax, fire, ointment, etc., twenty times.

Besides these, about seventy examples are given of its figurative use of being sunken, or overwhelmed in cares, debts, ignorance, sleep, passion, drunkenness, taxes, crimes, vices, sorrows, affliction, calamities, punishments, difficulties, etc.; every time in a bad sense.

-- Edmund B. Fairfield, *Letters on Baptism*
(printed privately, n.d.), pp. 21-22.

Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti, translated, revised, and enlarged by Joseph Henry Thayer, Fourth Edition (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901), states, under the heading BAPTO and BAPTIZO, the following: