

Baptism - It's Original Meaning and Subsequent Perversions

baptizo, bap-tid'-zo; to make whelmed (i.e. fully wet); used only (in the N.T.) of ceremonial ablution, espec. (techn.) of the ordinance of Chr. baptism:--baptist, baptize, wash. (Strong's Dictionary. "baptizo")

Testimony of Religious Leaders, Scholars and Lexicographers

- *Martin Luther*: "Baptism is a greek word, and may be translated immersion, as when we immerse something in water, that it may be fully covered."
- *John Calvin*: "The word baptize signifies to immerse, and it is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church."
- *John Wesley*. "We are buried with him--alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion."
- *Lyman Coleman*: "The primary signification of the original is to dip, plunge, immerse; the obvious import of the noun is immersion."
- *Edinburgh Encyclopedia*: "In the time of the apostles the form of baptism was very simple. The person to be baptized was dipped in a river or a vessel."
- *Liddell and Scott*: "Baptizo: to dip in or under water."
- *Henry Thayer*: "Baptizo: to dip repeatedly, to immerse, submerge."
- *Greek Catholic (Orthodox) Church*: testifies that immersion was the original practice, and continues to practice immersion.
- *Roman Catholic Church*: admits that immersion was the original practice.
- *Church of England*: admits that immersion was the original practice.
- *Methodist Church*: approves of immersion and immerses those who request it.

Baptism By Afflusion (Pouring)

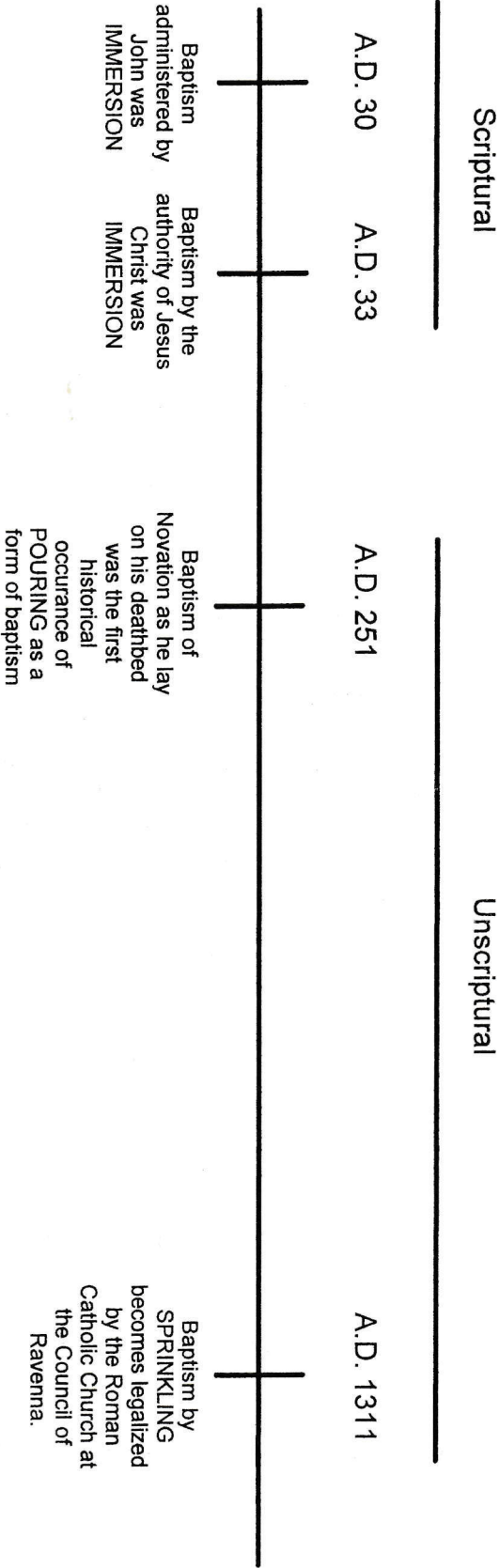
The first recorded case of baptism by afflusion (pouring) was that of Novation (A.D. 251). It was initially viewed as an exception to the rule, being administered to the sick only, but through conditioning became the accepted practice. "The church has always been tender toward the sick; and for that reason she introduced 'clinical' baptism." (Karl Hefele, Roman Catholic Bishop in "History of Church Councils," p. 153.)

Baptism By Sprinkling

Sprinkling for baptism was not authorized until A.D. 1131 by the Roman Catholic Church. "The Council of Ravenna, 1311, legalized the baptism of sprinkling, but the practice of 'clinical,' or bedside baptism had long been in use and had spread from the sickroom to the churches." (Johnson's Universal Cyclopedia, vol. 1, p. 488.)

Charting Changes in the Doctrine of Baptism

Scriptural to Unscriptural



Miscellaneous References To The Original Requirements Of Baptism With Regard To Water

- Required water (Acts 8:36)
- Required much water (John 3:23)
- Required a going unto the water (Acts 8:36)
- Required a going down into the water (Acts 8:38)
- Required that both the immerser and the one to be immersed go down into the water (Acts 8:38-39)
- Required a burial (Romans 6:4)
- Required a resurrection (Col. 2:12)
- Required a birth (John 3:5)
- Required that the body washed (Hebrews 10:22)
- Required a coming up out of the water (Acts 8:39; Matthew 3:16)