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# WEST VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

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9:30 am Bible Class—all ages  
10:30 am Sunday Worship  
5:00 pm Proverbs study (online)  
7:00 pm Wednesday Bible Class

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**December 5, 2021**

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## One Thing You Should Know About One Baptism

I wonder what first century readers would have thought when they saw “one baptism” placed alongside of those six other unifying “ones” in Ephesians 4:4-6. They obviously would have known that the statement couldn’t have reference to an occasion or event, as by the time of Paul’s writing people at any number of places and times had been baptized. No, I think they would have understood Paul’s statement to refer to this reality: though there are many methods of baptism and many motivations for baptism, Christians find “the unity of the Spirit” (Ephesians 4:3) only when they have been baptized with the right method (immersion in water), with the right understanding (in the name of Jesus Christ), and for the right reasons (for the remission of sins).

The story of how Paul planted the church at Ephesus provides some insight into how those Ephesians would have received his words. When Paul first arrived in Ephesus, he found a group that identified as disciples (Acts 19:1). Believing all things just as any Christian should (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:7), I think Paul genuinely believed he had found a group of Christians. Just as we see Peter and John doing in Samaria (Acts 8:14-18), Paul began to offer to use his power as an apostle to give them the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:2). However, when he found out that they had never even heard of the Holy Spirit, he wondered: what understanding did they have when they were baptized? He found out that they had obeyed “John’s baptism,” i.e., the baptism taught by John the Baptizer prior to Christ’s ministry (Acts 19:3). This meant that like Apollos before them, they did not understand everything they should about the Lord’s way (cf. Acts 18:26). After teaching them the truth, Paul baptized them again, this time, “in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 19:4-5).

Why did Paul baptize those disciples again? The answer to this question is even more important when you understand how and why John the Baptizer baptized. John baptized where there was “much water” (John 3:23), and his baptism involved “coming up from the water” (Mark 1:10). It’s safe to assume from these details that he practiced immersion – just like the apostles of Jesus did (Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12). Also, John baptized “for the remission of sins” (Mark 1:4), which is the same reason the apostles gave for baptism when the church was born (Acts 2:38). So, when you think of those disciples Paul met in Ephesus, their method of baptism would have been right and their reason for baptism would have been right. So, again, why baptize them again?

Consider what Paul told the church at Colossi about their baptism: “buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God” (Colossians 2:12). This verse brings together the three aspects of the one baptism: 1) the method (“buried”); 2) their understanding (“raised with Him through faith”); 3) their reason (“the working of God”). What was missing for those Ephesian disciples in that formula was their understanding. If they knew only John’s baptism, there’s a possibility that they didn’t even know that the Lord had been raised from the dead. In any event, their lack of understanding meant that they had not been baptized the same way others who became Christians were and therefore had to be baptized again.

The one thing that you need to know about the one baptism is this: how you were baptized and what you understood before getting baptized are tied to what God does (or doesn’t do) in baptism. Ultimately, it’s God who saves you, not merely your immersion or your faith in Him. However, the example of the Ephesians as well as Paul’s words – “one baptism” – make it pretty clear that there’s only one set of circumstances in which God will offer His precious gift of salvation.

Have you submitted to the one baptism? Reach out to us if we can help you do so or help you to learn more about it!

Order of Worship	Upcoming Events
<p>Welcome/Opening Prayer - John Waid</p> <p>Song Leader - Russ Colville</p> <p>Song #755 – When the Roll is Called up Yonder</p> <p>Song #709 - Tis Midnight &amp; on Olive Brow</p> <p>Communion - Lee Ramey</p> <p>Serve—David Estrada/Rick McCool</p> <p>Song #226 - How Great Thou Art</p> <p>Sermon – To Be Announced</p> <p>Song #197-Have Thine Own Way Lord</p> <p>Offering</p> <p>Song #611-Take the name of Jesus with You</p> <p>Closing Prayer - Gary Cope</p> <p>Usher - Chris Schoenbeck</p>	<p>December 12-Men’s Business Meeting following AM Services</p> <p>December 12-PM Bible services at 5:00 pm will be held on the W.V. U Tube channel. Pat-rick has prepared a video lesson that will premier at that time.</p> <p>December 18-Walking with the Word-8:30 am @ South Mountain Park</p> <p>December 19-Holiday Party following Sunday PM Bible Study (held at building). You can bring a \$10 wrapped gift if you wish to participate in the gift exchange.</p> <p>January 4, 2022-Ladies Bible Class 10 am</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Announcements</u></b></p> <p>Sunday, January 1, 2022 in-person PM services begin.</p> <p>Beginning in January 2022 the Ladies Bible Class will meet on the 1st/3rd Tuesdays each month at the building at 10 am</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Current Prayer Requests</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amy Waid’s aunt Diann Hill as she recovers from her surgery for esophageal cancer. Amy Waid’s dad David Pruit with medical issues</li> <li>• Teresa Rockwood’s aunt and Audrey’s sister Irene as she suffers from a variety of illnesses.</li> <li>• Sara Hartley as she travels to Oklahoma for a funeral</li> </ul>	