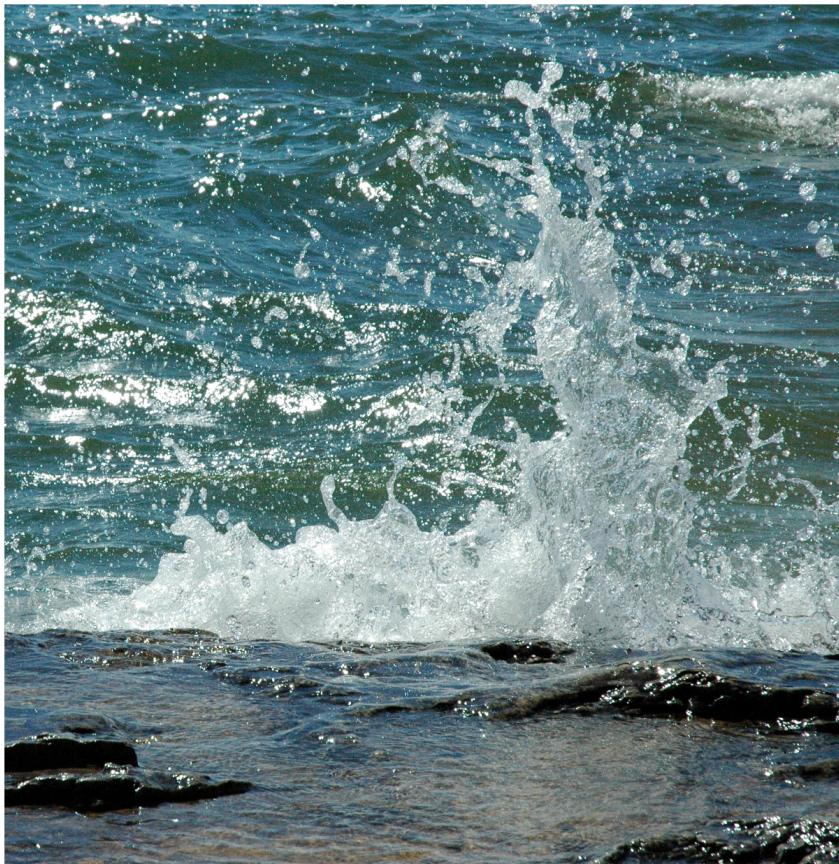


Apostolic Baptism

A Review of the Apostles' teaching on baptism



Simon Peter Chappell

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*To the Lord Jesus Christ, my lovely bride Shawna, my minions
Emily, Kate and Peter and my congregation.*

*A special thank you to my Bible study mentor Karl Wickerath. I
miss you greatly and I'll see you around the throne!*

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Introduction To Baptism

Baptism seems to me to be one of the least well understood aspects of the apostles teaching on the Plan of Salvation. There are many opinions and ideas about baptism. These often seem to get in the way of people abiding by the simple teachings of the scriptures.

To that end, I wanted to write a small book that explains baptism: what it is, how we conduct it, what the spiritual significance is and to do so by using only contextually valid scriptures. After all, the final authority on any matter to do with the Lord, is his word. And his word is clear on the subject of baptism.

The Reader Of This Book

Every author finds they do well when they keep a consistent picture of their readers in mind while they write. I knew that I wanted to write the kind of book that I would have been happy to discover when I first came into the apostolic church. So my audience during the process has been the younger version of me.

Many others will also benefit from reading this book. If you have recently arrived at an apostolic church and you have been baptized in Jesus name and want to understand some of the spiritual meaning behind it, you are also my target audience. If you are keen to know exactly what the apostles taught about baptism rather than what the majority of churches now teach, then you are also my target audience. If you are studying for your ministerial license with an apostolic organization, then you are very much my target audience.

If you are uncertain what baptism is and whether you need it, you are not my target audience. It is not my desire to strong-arm you to

be baptized. Your bible study teacher or your pastor will be better suited to explain to you how baptism fits into your life.

My desire is to educate you about baptism by reviewing the teaching of the apostles and the recorded instances of baptism that we find in the book of the Acts of the Apostles. Many churches teach many different things about baptism, but only the word of God is definitive. All of the teaching in this book is supported by contextually valid scripture and has been reviewed by some of the finest men and women of God I know.

An Outline Of The Book

The first chapter reviews the words in the original text translated as baptism, or one of its close relations. This is important because Greek is a precise language in most matters. Understanding the Greek words will aid our contextual understanding of them.

The second chapter reviews all the scriptural accounts of baptism. These nine specific accounts are all found in the book of The Acts of the Apostles (or Acts to its friends).

The third chapter reviews the place of baptism in the Plan of Salvation. Baptism is a key component of salvation. This chapter will outline the other elements and the relationship that baptism has with each of them.

The fourth chapter examines the purpose and effects of the act of baptism. Baptism is more than just getting wet, or at least it should be. This chapter looks at what happens to us in a spiritual sense during baptism.

The fifth chapter casts a light on the types and shadows of baptism that we find in the Old Testament. Several of the New Testament writers use them when they are explaining the meaning of baptism. Understanding these Old Testament types enhances our understanding of baptism in the New Testament.

The sixth chapter is an exercise in detective work. We review the book of Acts and view the salvation events where there is no specific mention of baptism.

The seventh chapter is a collection of the baptism scriptures in the New Testament. This is for reference purposes and is not intended to act as page filler. Having access to the applicable scriptures is useful when reviewing a broad subject area like baptism.

The intent of this book is to teach what baptism is. Chapter eight covers mis-comprehensions that some have about proper apostolic baptism.

Finally, a selection of further material for those who desire to read further on the matter.

Words For Baptism In The Original Text

βαπτω *bapto* (Strong's: G911)

This is the root word for the other Greek words that we are studying here. The word *bapto* is not used in the context of baptism in the scriptures. This is because the word *bapto* means an act of immersion that is not intended to produce a permanent change.

The classic explanation that many sources offer to explain the difference between *bapto* and *baptizo* is also given in the entry for *bapto* at the Blue Letter Bible website:

This word, *baptizo* (G907), should not be confused with *baptô* (G911). The clearest example that shows the meaning of *baptizo* (G907) is a text from the Greek poet and physician Nicander, who lived about 200 B.C. It is a recipe for making pickles and is helpful because it uses both words. Nicander says that in order to make a pickle, the vegetable should first be 'dipped' (*baptô*) into boiling water and then 'baptised' (*baptizô*) in the vinegar solution. Both verbs concern the immersing of vegetables in a solution. But the first is temporary. The second, the act of baptising the vegetable, produces a permanent change.

Blue Letter Bible (<http://blueletterbible.org/>)

βαπτιζω *baptizo* (Strong's: G907)

The root word for *baptizo* is *bapto*. This word appears 73 times in the New Testament. It is translated as *baptize* (9 times), *baptized* (57

times), *baptizest* (once), *baptizeth* (twice) and *baptizing* (4 times). It is the primary word used to describe the act of baptism. As such, it is important that we understand it correctly.

The word means “to cleanse by dipping or submerging”. As already indicated in the entry on *bapto*, *baptizo* indicates that a long-term change is effected by the immersion.

βαπτισμα *baptisma* (G908)

The root word for *baptisma* is *baptizo*. *Baptisma* is a noun indicating the rite or ceremony surrounding the act of *baptizo*. It is the baptism ceremony itself.

The word *baptisma* appears 22 times in the New Testament.

βαπτισμος *baptismos* (G909)

The root word of *baptismos* is *baptizo*. *Baptismos* refers to any washing or purification ceremony effected by water. We find this used only once in the New Testament (Hebrews 6:2) where the context indicates that the writer is drawing a contrast between Old Testament washings and New Testament baptisms.

βαπτιστης *baptistes* (G910)

The root word of *baptistes* is *baptizo*. *Baptistes* means one who baptizes and is also used as the surname of John the Baptist.

All Baptism Scriptures In Sequence

A list of all scriptures that include one or more of the words: *baptism, baptisms, baptize, baptized, baptizest, baptizeth* and *baptizing*. References to *baptist* and *baptist's* have been omitted as these concern the person of John the Baptist and not the act of baptism.

Note: the word baptism (and its related terms) do not specifically appear in the Old Testament. Equivalent terms and types are discussed in the chapter on typology.

⁶And were **baptized** of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁷But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his **baptism**, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Matthew 3:6-7

¹¹I indeed **baptize** you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall **baptize** you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire:

Matthew 3:11

¹³Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be **baptized** of him. ¹⁴But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be **baptized** of thee, and comest thou to me? ¹⁵And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer

it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

Matthew 3:13-15

¹⁶And Jesus, when he was **baptized**, went up straight-way out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

Matthew 3:16

²²But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be **baptized** with the **baptism** that I am **baptized** with? They say unto him, We are able. ²³And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be **baptized** with the **baptism** that I am **baptized** with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father.

Matthew 20:22-23

²⁵The **baptism** of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

Matthew 21:25

¹⁹Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Matthew 28:19

⁴John did **baptize** in the wilderness, and preach the **baptism** of repentance for the remission of sins. ⁵And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all **baptized** of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

Mark 1:4-5

⁸I indeed have **baptized** you with water: but he shall **baptize** you with the Holy Ghost. ⁹And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was **baptized** of John in Jordan.

Mark 1:8-9

³⁸But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be **baptized** with the **baptism** that I am **baptized** with? ³⁹And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the **baptism** that I am **baptized** withal shall ye be **baptized**:

Mark 10:38-39

³⁰The **baptism** of John, was *it* from heaven, or of men? answer me.

Mark 11:30

¹⁶He that believeth and is **baptized** shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Mark 16:16

³And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the **baptism** of repentance for the remission of sins;

Luke 3:3

⁷Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be **baptized** of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Luke 3:7

¹²Then came also publicans to be **baptized**, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

Luke 3:12

¹⁶John answered, saying unto *them* all, I indeed **baptize** you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall **baptize** you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

Luke 3:16

²¹Now when all the people were **baptized**, it came to pass, that Jesus also being **baptized**, and praying, the heaven was opened,

Luke 3:21

²⁹And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being **baptized** with the **baptism** of John. ³⁰But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not **baptized** of him.

Luke 7:29-30

⁵⁰But I have a **baptism** to be **baptized** with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

Luke 12:50

⁴The **baptism** of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

Luke 20:4

²⁵And they asked him, and said unto him, Why **baptizest** thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? ²⁶John answered them, saying, I **baptize** with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

John 1:25-26

²⁸These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was **baptizing**.

John 1:28

³¹And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come **baptizing** with water.

John 1:31

³³And I knew him not: but he that sent me to **baptize** with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which **baptizeth** with the Holy Ghost.

John 1:33

²²After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and **baptized**. ²³And John also was **baptizing** in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were **baptized**.

John 3:22-23

²⁶And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same **baptizeth**, and all *men* come to him.

John 3:26

¹When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and **baptized** more disciples than John, ²(Though Jesus himself **baptized** not, but his disciples,)

John 4:1-2

⁴⁰And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first **baptized**; and there he abode.

John 10:40

⁵For John truly **baptized** with water; but ye shall be **baptized** with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

Acts 1:5

²²Beginning from the **baptism** of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

Acts 1:22

³⁸Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be **baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 2:38

⁴¹Then they that gladly received his word were **baptized**: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.

Acts 2:41

¹²But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were **baptized**, both men and women.

¹³Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was **baptized**, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

Acts 8:12-13

¹⁶(For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were **baptized** in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

Acts 8:16

³⁶And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be **baptized**?

Acts 8:36

³⁸And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he **baptized** him.

Acts 8:38

¹⁸And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was **baptized**.

Acts 9:18

³⁷That word, *I say*, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the **baptism** which John preached;

Acts 10:37

⁴⁷Can any man forbid water, that these should not be **baptized**, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? ⁴⁸And he commanded them to be **baptized** in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

Acts 10:47-48

¹⁶Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed **baptized** with water; but ye shall be **baptized** with the Holy Ghost.

Acts 11:16

²⁴When John had first preached before his coming the **baptism** of repentance to all the people of Israel.

Acts 13:24

¹⁵And when she was **baptized**, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained *us*.

Acts 16:15

³³And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was **baptized**, he and all his, straightway.

Acts 16:33

⁸And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were **baptized**.

Acts 18:8

²⁵This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the **baptism** of John.

Acts 18:25

³And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye **baptized**? And they said, Unto John's **baptism**. ⁴Then said Paul, John verily **baptized** with the **baptism** of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. ⁵When they heard *this*, they were **baptized** in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 19:3-5

¹⁶And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be **baptized**, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

Acts 22:16

³Know ye not, that so many of us as were **baptized** into Jesus Christ were **baptized** into his death? ⁴Therefore we are buried with him by **baptism** into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:3-4

¹³Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye **baptized** in the name of Paul? ¹⁴I thank God that I **baptized** none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; ¹⁵Lest any should say that I had **baptized** in mine own name. ¹⁶And I **baptized** also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I **baptized** any other. ¹⁷For Christ sent me not to **baptize**, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

1 Corinthians 1:13-17

²And were all **baptized** unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

1 Corinthians 10:2

¹³For by one Spirit are we all **baptized** into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:13

²⁹Else what shall they do which are **baptized** for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then **baptized** for the dead?

1 Corinthians 15:29

²⁷For as many of you as have been **baptized** into Christ have put on Christ.

Galatians 3:27

⁵One Lord, one faith, one **baptism**,

Ephesians 4:5

¹²Buried with him in **baptism**, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

Colossians 2:12

²¹The like figure whereunto *even baptism* doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

1 Peter 3:21

What Baptism Isn't

The scriptures are clear on what baptism is, what it represents and how it is to be administered. Yet there are still many wrong ideas propagated about it. Let's take a little time to discuss each of the things that baptism isn't.

Not Optional

A frequent teaching that we run into with baptism is that it is optional. Those who teach this will usually say something to the effect that baptism is lovely and you are more than welcome to do it, but you do not have to do it. That it is completely optional and has no effect, positive or negative, on your salvation.

There is no scripture that states any such thing. There are a few instances of salvation where the description is brief and does not explicitly mention baptism. To argue that these few references outweigh the many references that do explicitly speak of baptism is to argue from silence. Not only silence, but worse, an occasional silence. If the apostles believed baptism to be optional, why do we have so many references where baptism was directly taught or commanded? Clearly baptism, in the understanding of the apostles, was not optional but was required.

A few examples to help us on our way:

¹⁶And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

Acts 22:16

Here, Ananias, directs Paul to be baptized and to not waste any time about it. Ananias does not seem to think this is an optional matter.

⁴⁷Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? ⁴⁸And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

Acts 10:47-48

Peter, realizes that Cornelius and his household have been filled with the Holy Ghost. He commands them to be baptized. Commands and optional activities do not go together. Peter is not in the “baptism is optional” school of thought.

Not A Public Confession Of Faith

Some of the same folks who teach that baptism is not essential, do teach that it is a way of making a public confession of faith. The main problem with this is that there is no scriptural basis for this claim. Not only do the scriptures not teach this, but we see no examples of anyone doing such.

A good example of the opposite of this teaching is the Philippian jailer. He was baptized by Paul and Silas after midnight, with the only witnesses present being Paul, Silas and the jailer's family. If the sole purpose of baptism was to make a public confession, would not Paul have made him wait until the daytime so that he could have a large crowd of witnesses? Baptism is not a public confession of faith.

Not For Infants

Many denominations practice what they call baptism, but amounts to infant dedication under a different name, with a little water splashed on the baby. This is found nowhere in the scriptures. The closest we find to anything involving children is the dedication of Samuel by his mother. But at no time do the scriptures describe this as baptism.

Not By Sprinkling

Some teach that baptism is administered by sprinkling. Again, this is found no where in scripture. Further, the primary word used in the Greek for baptism means “to cleanse by dipping or submerging”. Sprinkling would fail to match that definition, so there is no way that baptism could be administered correctly by sprinkling.

Not In The Name Of The Father, Son And Holy Ghost

This is a perplexing mystery. With the clarity of the scriptures about baptism and the use of Jesus' name, that this issue has any discussion shows that the Devil is hard at work spreading false doctrine and deceit. The verse that is used to show this doctrine is **Matthew 28:19**.

¹⁹Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Matthew 28:19

This verse is part of the Great Commission that Jesus gives his disciples before he ascends up into heaven and is recorded by Matthew. The Great Commission also appears in Mark and Acts.

There are two primary issues with using this verse to teach that baptism should be performed in “the name of the father, son and the holy ghost”. The first is that that’s not exactly what the scripture says. The scriptures records Jesus telling his disciples that they should baptize in the name of the father, and of the son and of the Holy Ghost. As anyone who has diagrammed a sentence can tell you, the sentence is referring to a single person and a single name. We know that the name of the son is Jesus, we know that Jesus came in his father’s name, so the father’s name is Jesus and we know that the Holy Ghost was sent in Jesus’ name, so the Holy Ghost is called Jesus. When you follow the instructions in **Matthew 28:19** in the manner they were intended to be followed, as the apostles did, you find that you are required to baptize in Jesus name.

The second issue is that in every instance of the apostles performing baptism, they administered it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Given that these were the hand-picked by Jesus, founders of the church and that he had given them all understanding of the scriptures, the chances of them making a mistake in a fundamental doctrine like baptism is negligible.

Summary

I'm not much of a one for long conclusions for my sermons, so I'll be brief here as well. It is my sincere prayer as you conclude this book that you have a clear understanding of the baptismal doctrine taught and practiced by the apostles.

You have seen the Greek words that are used for baptism and how, with precision typical of the Greek language, they bring the context of complete immersion to their definitions.

You have seen the direct recording of nine instances of baptism in the book of the Acts of the Apostles and thirteen further instances of salvation where it is reasonable to infer that baptism took place.

You have seen the explanation of the place and purpose of baptism in the New Testament Plan of Salvation. Further, you have seen the Old Testament typology that lead directly to the baptism the apostles preached.

As important as seeing what baptism is, you have also seen a number of things that baptism is not. False doctrines abound in the world and baptism seems to attract more than it's fair share of them. Understanding the primary false baptismal doctrines yourself will be useful when you share the Plan of Salvation with others.

Finally, I hope that you have seen and internalized that correctly administered baptism is always performed by both full immersion and in the name of Jesus. Every single account that we have of apostolic baptism follows this pattern. This is how we are to baptize today.

Further Reading On Baptism

The New Birth by David K. Bernard. Pentecostal Publishing House.
ISBN-13: 978-0912315775

I AM by David S. Norris, PhD. WAP Academic, Pentecostal Publishing House. ISBN-13:978-156722-730-7

About The Author

Pastor Simon Peter Chappell is the pastor of New Life United Pentecostal Church in Dodgeville, Wisconsin, in the United States of America. Pastor Chappell moved to the United States from England in 1994 and has lived in Dodgeville since 1998. He has pastored the congregation there since 2007. He describes himself as a “recycled atheist” and gives the Lord all the glory for bringing him out of the hopelessness of unbelief.

Pastor Chappell is happily married and keeps busy raising three minions. He loves God, writing, guns, cats, bacon, good tea, photography, esoteric programming languages, martial arts and lots of other guy stuff.

Pastor Chappell’s personal blog may be found at <http://simonpeter.org/>, a mix of interesting projects may be found at <http://simonpeter.com/> and he tweets at <https://twitter.com/SimonPChappell>.

The church website is at <http://newlife-upc.org/> and the church tweets at https://twitter.com/NewLife_UPC.

Colophon

The cover image is a photograph by the author, taken in the ever beautiful Door County in the North East corner of Wisconsin. I believe that it shows the dynamic physical and spiritual nature of baptism.