

# Is Baptism Necessary for Salvation?

“Upon this subject pastors can teach in the first place that water, which is always at hand and within the reach of all, was the fittest matter of a Sacrament which is necessary to all for salvation.” (*Catechism of Trent, Baptism, Fitness*)

## In Scripture

“And the king went in to see the guests: and he saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment. And he saith to him: Friend, how camest thou in hither not having on a wedding garment? But he was silent. Then the king said to the waiters: Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the exterior darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (St. Matthew 22:11-13)

“He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned.” (St. Mark 16:16)

“Nicodemus saith to him: How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb, and be born again? Jesus answered: Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” (John 2:5)

“In whom also you are circumcised with circumcision not made by hand, in despoiling of the body of the flesh, but in the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, in whom also you are risen again by the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him up from the dead.” (Colossians 2:11-12)

“Now when they had heard these things, they had compunction in their heart, and said to Peter, and to the rest of the apostles: What shall we do, men and brethren? But Peter said to them: Do penance, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins: and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (Acts 2:37-39)

## According to Church Fathers

“The baptism of public witness and of blood cannot profit a heretic unto salvation, because there is no salvation outside the Church.” (St. Cyprian of Carthage, *Letters* 72:21, 253 A.D.)

“If any man does not receive baptism, he does not have salvation. The only exception is the martyrs, who even without water will receive the kingdom.... For the Savior calls martyrdom a baptism, saying, ‘Can you drink the cup which I drink and be baptized with the baptism with which I am to be baptized?’ Indeed, the martyrs too confess, by being made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.” (St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 3:10, 350 A.D.)

## According to Saint Augustine

“There are three ways in which sins are forgiven: in baptism, in prayer, and in the greater humility of penance; yet God does not forgive sins except to the baptized.”  
(*Sermons to Catechumens on the Creed* 7:15, 395 A.D.)

“For if anyone were compelled by urgent necessity, being unable to find a Catholic from whom to receive baptism, and so, while preserving Catholic peace in his heart, should receive from one without the pale of Catholic unity the sacrament which he was intending to receive within its pale, this man, should he immediately depart this life, we deem to be none other than a Catholic. But if he should be delivered from the death of the body, on his restoring himself in bodily presence to that Catholic congregation from which in heart he had never departed, so far from blaming his conduct, we should praise it with the greatest truth and confidence; because he trusted that God was present to his heart, while he was striving to preserve unity, and was unwilling to depart this life without the sacrament of holy baptism, which he knew to be of God, and not of men; wherever he might find it.” (*On Baptism Against the Donatists*, Chapter 3, About 400 A.D.)

“The churches of Christ hold inherently that without baptism and participation at the table of the Lord it is impossible for any man to attain either to the kingdom of God or to salvation and life eternal. This is the witness of Scripture too.” (*Forgiveness and the Just Deserts of Sin, and the Baptism of Infants* 1:24:34, 412 A.D.)