

# Faith, Baptism and Abiding

by Erlo Stegen

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*True faith results in permanent change, and abiding in Christ is a life of living in His presence and His presence in us.*

**Scripture:** Mark 16:15

**Topics:** "Baptism", "Abiding in Christ", "Faith"

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## Description

Erlo Stegen emphasizes the significance of faith and baptism in the life of a believer, highlighting Jesus' command to preach the Gospel and the necessity of faith for salvation. He explains that baptism is an act of obedience and a public declaration of one's faith, rather than a means of salvation itself. Using the analogy of pickling, he illustrates that true faith leads to a permanent transformation, requiring believers to continually abide in Christ. This abiding relationship is essential for producing spiritual fruit and fulfilling the Great Commission. Ultimately, through faith in Jesus, believers experience repentance, new life, and a profound identification with Christ's death and resurrection.

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## Transcript

Mark 16: 15 & 16

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Jesus' command to his disciples, just before He was to ascend to heaven, was to go into the whole world and preach the Gospel. This commission applies to us as well, for all His disciples must actively obey this commission.

The Bible says that "faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." As we preach God's Word the Holy Spirit enables people to believe in Christ. Salvation is all about faith in Jesus Christ. Baptism has no power to save. Instead, baptism is an act of obedience as a testimony to the whole world that salvation has taken place. Water does not change a heart and produce Christians.

As an example of the meaning of baptism: A Greek poet and physician Nicander, who lived about 200 B.C, wrote a recipe for making pickles which is helpful because it uses both words used for baptism. Nicander says that in order to make a pickle, the vegetable, such as a cucumber, should first be 'dipped' (bapto) into boiling water and then 'baptized' (baptizo) in the vinegar solution. Both verbs concern the

immersing of vegetables in a solution. But the first is temporary. The second, the act of baptizing the vegetable, produces a permanent change.

True faith results in permanent change. We need to be continually soaked and immersed in Christ - continually "pickled". Abiding in Him, as we are told in John 15, means a life of living in His presence and His presence in us. Only that type of baptism produces fruit.

By being baptized a person is proclaiming to the church, and to all of creation, that he is a new creature in Christ. Faith in Christ, means a total identification with our Lord Jesus Christ. When He died on Calvary, you died. When He was buried, you were buried with Him. And when He was resurrected you were resurrected with Him.

Through believing in Jesus a person repents of his sins and experiences new life. This must be an abiding life in His presence. Only then is Mark 15:16 fulfilled.

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