

The Essence of Christianity

The Bible talks of people repenting and being baptised with the Holy Spirit, fire and water accompanied by a change of heart and a declaration of Christian faith, thus guaranteeing salvation and eternal life in paradise.

Repentance

Search for [repent](#) on biblegateway.com

John the Baptist

[Matthew 3:8-11](#)

Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

[Luke 3:3-8,9](#)

He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins . . . Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

Jesus

[Matthew 4:17](#)

From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is near."

[Mark 1:15](#)

"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

[Luke 5:31,32](#)

Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

First Preachers of the Churches

[Acts 2:38,39](#)

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

[Acts 3:19](#)

Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,

[Acts 17:30](#)

In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.

[Acts 26:20](#)

First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.

Baptism

Consider the following verses of this search result from the Bible.

Search for [baptize holy spirit](#) on [biblegateway.com](#)

[Matthew 3:11](#)

"I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

[Matthew 28:19](#)

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

[Mark 1:8](#)

I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

[Luke 3:16](#)

John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

[John 1:33](#)

And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'

[John 3:3-8](#)

Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again."

"How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!"

Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

[Acts 10:47](#)

"Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have."

Change of Heart

Old Heart

[Jeremiah 17:9-10](#)

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? “I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve.”

Wellspring of life

[Proverbs 4:23](#)

Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

Eternity

[Ecclesiastes 3:11](#)

He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

Circumcised heart

Search for [circumcised heart](#) on [biblegateway.com](#)

[Deuteronomy 10:16](#)

Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer.

[Deuteronomy 30:6](#)

The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.

[Jeremiah 4:4](#)

Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, circumcise your hearts, you people of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, or my wrath will flare up and burn like fire because of the evil you have done— burn with no one to quench it.

[Romans 2:29](#)

No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person’s praise is not from other people, but from God.

Law of God written on heart; not on tablets of stone

[Romans 2:29](#)

No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person’s praise is not from other people, but from God.

[2 Corinthians 3:3](#)

You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

**Words are overflow of heart;
“Jesus is Lord,” by the Holy Spirit;
Believe in one’s heart that God raised Jesus from the dead.**

[Matthew 12:34](#)

You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

[Luke 6:45](#)

A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

[Romans 10:9](#)

If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

[1 Corinthians 12:3](#)

Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

Opposite of circumcised heart is stiff neck and hard heart

Search for [stiff neck](#) on [biblegateway.com](#).

Search for [hard heart](#) on [biblegateway.com](#).

Circumcised ears; Quick to listen; Slow to speak; Whoever has ears

Search for [circumcised ears](#) on [biblegateway.com](#).

Search for [quick to listen](#) on [biblegateway.com](#).

Search for [slow to speak](#) on [biblegateway.com](#).

Search for [whoever has ears](#) on [biblegateway.com](#).

Declaration of Christian Faith

[Romans 10:9](#)

If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

[1 Corinthians 12:3](#)

Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

[1 John 2:23](#)

No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

[1 Corinthians 11:27-29](#)

So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves.

What makes a person a Christian?

1. Repentance: Turn from sin; turn to God.
2. If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. [Romans 10:9](#).
3. No-one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. [1 Corinthians 12:3](#).
4. No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also. [1 John 2:23](#).
5. The mouth speaks what the heart is full of. [Matthew 12:34](#); [Luke 6:45](#).
6. The heart is circumcised by the LORD your God or the Spirit; that heart then says, "Jesus is Lord," by the Holy Spirit. [Deuteronomy 30:6](#); [Romans 2:29](#); [Romans 10:9](#).
7. Spirit gives birth to spirit; you must be born again. [John 3:3-8](#).
8. How much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him? [Luke 11:13](#).
9. Baptism with water is the external *sign* of the [New Covenant](#) which has been internally written by the Spirit of the living God on the believer's heart. [Acts 10:47](#); [2 Corinthians 3:3](#).
10. Remembrance: Eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord in fellowship with one another in remembrance of Jesus.

Conclusion

A Christian's heart is full of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Such a heart believes that God raised Jesus from the dead and declares, "Jesus is Lord," by the Holy Spirit. A person with this kind of heart undergoes baptism with water and repents of their bad old ways. They produce good fruit as a corollary to inward regeneration by the Spirit. They don't produce good works for the purpose of deceiving the hearts of the simple.

Furthermore, salvation is by grace through faith as a free gift from God. It cannot be earned by works so that no-one can boast.

Some useful Bible searches:

[Repent](#) — [Baptize Holy Spirit](#) — [Circumcised heart](#) — [Stiff neck](#) — [Hard heart](#) — [Whoever has ears](#)
— [New Covenant](#) — [Deposit guaranteeing](#) — [Salvation](#) — [Eternal life](#)

From the Church in Wales (Anglican) Catechism, 1993, page 12

46. What is Baptism?

Baptism is the sacrament in which, through the action of the Holy Spirit, we are made Christ's or 'christened'.

47. What is the outward and visible sign in Baptism?

The outward and visible sign in Baptism is water in which the person is baptized 'In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit'.

48. What is the inward gift and spiritual gift in Baptism?

The inward and spiritual gift in Baptism is union with Christ in his death and resurrection, the forgiveness of sins, and a new birth into God's family, the Church.

49. What is required of us at Baptism?

It is required that we should turn from sin, believe the Christian Faith, and give ourselves to Christ to be His servants.

Comment

The Catechism makes a distinction between the inward change followed by the outward signs, i.e. outward signs are a corollary to inward change.

In other words: There is a difference between the [New Covenant](#) (inward) and the *signs* of the New Covenant (outward).

The New Covenant is:

1. Baptism with the Holy Spirit causing inner spiritual regeneration and rebirth, and believing in one's heart that God raised Jesus from the dead. [Romans 10:9](#).
2. Written on a person's heart and mind by God – inward and invisible. [Hebrews 8:8,10](#); [Jeremiah 31:31,33](#).

The *Signs* of the New Covenant are:

1. Declaring, "Jesus is Lord" (which can't be done without the Holy Spirit) and being baptised with water in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit. [1 Corinthians 12:3](#); [Acts 10:47](#).
2. Words and actions (e.g. repentance) being the overflow of a new heart and mind – outward and visible/audible. [Luke 6:45](#).

Search for [New Covenant](#) on [biblegateway.com](#).