How To Enter The Church, The Body, The Kingdom

Last week I quoted Paul's words from 1 Corinthians 12:13, "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body,...". I want to address a portion of that verse this week. That is, "baptized into one body". Paul deals with an action and a resulting placement here in this verse. The action is 'baptism'. The resulting placement is 'into one body'. (In last weeks article it was stated that the "one body" is the body of Christ, is the church, is the kingdom of Christ, spoken of as one in the same in New Testament scriptures . So, Paul tells us that baptism places one into the body, the church, and the kingdom.

Let's use a little physical logic here. If I walk into the kitchen of my house, I am in that 'one room'. The action was walking and the resulting placement was to be 'in that one room'. In the physical world, we have no problem understanding this logic. In fact, we rely on our actions as well as the actions of others to help us reach a desired result or outcome. But when it comes to the spiritual, it seems that a multitude of folks want to argue with or ignore the point. Some even teach that a person is saved first and then baptized. But, that will bring us to the question, "Can a person be saved, "in the body of Christ", without being baptized first?"

Jesus spoke these words to His apostles, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,..." (Matt 28:19-20). He also said, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned." (Mark 16:15-16). He also said, "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day. For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak." (John 12"48-49). So, we know that Jesus taught God's will, which includes baptism. Peter preached the first gospel sermon to the crowds gathered at Pentecost. The result is given in Acts 2:37... Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" Peter's response was, ""Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38). So, forgiveness of sins comes through baptism. Paul also wrote, "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?' (Rom. 6:3). Again, baptism places one into Christ.

Friends, why is it that every conversion presented to us in the book of Acts involves baptism? Why is it that no where in New Testament Scripture does it tell or show us that entry into the body of Christ, or forgiveness of sins, can be had in any other way than by being baptized into Christ?

The fact is, according to the New Testament writers, that no one can be "in the body, in the church, in the kingdom" without being baptized into it. I asked a couple of weeks ago, "Have you found the kingdom yet? Are you in it?" Have you taken the appropriate action in order to gain the desired resulting placement? Every spiritual blessing, including salvation can only be found "in Christ" (Eph. 1:3).   God Bless...