

BELIEVER'S BAPTISM

Lesson Three

Memory Verse: *Matthew 4:4*

Lesson Verse: *Acts 2:41*

*“Then they that gladly received his word were **baptized**” Acts 2:41*

I. Introduction

- A. The Christian life, entered through the new birth, is just that - *a life*. In the Bible, a new Christian is compared to a "baby" (1Peter 2:2), and is commanded to “_____ *in grace*” to maturity (2Peter 3:18). A Christian therefore, is not to stay as a “baby” all their life, but to GROW. And an important FIRST step of a Bible believing Christian’s growth is *believer’s baptism* (Acts 2:37-41; Matthew 28:18-20).
- B. This simple step of obedience is NOT part of being saved - it is God’s test of whether or not a person whole-heartily wants to follow the Lord Jesus Christ now that they ARE saved!
- C. This lesson will explain what believer’s baptism is, its importance, and when a Christian should get baptized.

II. What is Believer's Baptism?

A. Let’s First Start with What Baptism is Not

1. **Baptism is NOT a Sacrament** - The word sacrament means doing something to **earn** God’s gift of grace. The word *sacrament* is a word from Catholicism and was carried over into the Reformation, but is not a Bible word. God’s grace is a free gift from God that cannot ever be earned! God gives His grace FREELY, if only we would take it by faith.
2. **Baptism is NOT a means of Salvation** - To everyone thinking their baby baptism helped them out, God's Word says in Titus 3:5 “Not by _____ of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.” God clearly declares that we are saved **by free grace** through **simple faith** in His Son. Ephesians 2:8,9 says, “For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of _____ lest any man should boast.” No works, no matter how good can be a part of paying for your sins. Period!
 - a. Although Catechisms, Creeds, and Confessions say that baptism is necessary for your salvation, the Bible says the opposite! Anything that you are trusting in, especially your good works like baptism, is nothing compared to the perfect effort of God’s son Jesus Christ in your place on the cross!
 - b. Baptism cannot cleanse anyone’s soul! It is only water! It never has washed anything *on the inside of us* away, and it never will! Only the perfect blood of Jesus Christ can wash away all your sin!
3. **Baptism is NOT a tradition or empty religious ceremony.** It is the FIRST thing a believer does once they have become a born again Christian. It follows salvation just about every time someone got saved in the New Testament. See again Acts 2:41 “Then they that gladly received his word were _____: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”

B. What Baptism Is

1. Baptism in the Bible **is the act of obedience** to the command by Jesus Christ for every new believer to be baptized in water (Matthew 28:19,20; Acts 2:41,42).

2. Baptism is **only for followers** of Jesus Christ who have made a definite decision to turn away from sin, and believe only in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour! It is not for babies, or for people who just feel like getting baptized.
3. It means **to fully submerge a believer into water**, in order to identify the believer with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (**Romans 6:3,4**), and to testify to the world that they are a new creature because of God's grace, not because of being baptized. Baptism is a statement that you are now a believer, not a MEANS of becoming a believer!
4. Believer's Baptism, **means to go into and then come out of WATER** (**Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:9,10; Acts 8:38,39**), as in *complete immersion*, and is the only thing that can picture a burial and resurrection, whereas all other definitions (like, sprinkling, dipping, pouring, etc.) cannot illustrate this.
5. Baptism **associates the new believer with the doctrine of the church administering it**. This is important! **1 Corinthians 10:1-4** shows that the Jews coming out of Egypt were baptized unto _____ and his laws. When they went under the water, they were following Moses. Well, when a new believer gets baptized, they are deciding to agree with the doctrine of the church that is baptizing them. Be careful who is baptizing you, and make sure they are Bible-only in doctrine.
6. Baptism therefore is the method ordained by Jesus Christ to keep His church pure from false believers, and false teachers who may attempt to enter the church as ravenous wolves, not sparing the _____ (**Acts 20:28,29**).

C. There are Two '*Baptisms*' in the Bible

1. Water Baptism is actually the SECOND Baptism a person needs. It is NOT the most important baptism.
2. Notice these important Scriptures and truths:
 - a. Every person starts off "in sins" and not "in Christ". **Ephesians 2:1,5** says every one of us have lived "*IN sins*" all our lives. It was the condition we naturally lived in. We were lost, and condemned because of all our sins we constantly did against the laws of God.
 - b. Then, **1 Corinthians 12:12,13** shows the sinner being **taken from** a life that had been *in sin*, and now being placed INTO the Person of _____ Himself at the time of their new birth (see also **2 Corinthians 5:17**)! **This is a SPIRITUAL baptism**, and it is MUCH more important than any water baptism.
 - 1) Spiritual baptism is what happens when a sinner is saved from the punishment of their sins – they are PLACED INTO SALVATION HIMSELF!
 - 2) The placement of a sinner's life into Christ is what actually saves that sinner. As far as we are concerned, we are only trusting Christ to cleanse us from all sin in us. As far as God is concerned, we are actually being immersed into, and surrounded by our Saviour for the rest of eternity!
 - 3) So, at your salvation, God didn't just give you the gift of eternal life - He actually placed you INTO eternal life Himself, which is Jesus Christ!
 - 4) This is the most important baptism, because, if you didn't get placed *into Christ*, then you never got saved!
3. So, two baptisms need to occur in every person's life:
 - a. Is it a (**spiritual** or **water**) baptism which happens when we are saved (placed into Jesus Christ when we ask to be saved from our sins).

- b. And THEN, is it a (**spiritual** or **water**) baptism, which happens **after** we get saved (placed into water to show the world we are burying our old life).
- c. Which baptism must happen FIRST? _____
- d. Has THAT baptism happened in your life yet? **Yes** or **No**?

D. **The importance of ‘Water Baptism’.** We have learned now about *Spiritual Baptism*. The Bible also talks about ‘*water baptism*.’ Let’s find out more about it.

1. Baptism into water only occurs to those capable of ‘believing’ on the Lord Jesus for salvation. Therefore, only those that _____ can be baptized (**Acts 8:26-39**). This excludes all baby baptisms, because they can’t believe! **There is not one record of the baptism of a baby in the Bible.**
2. Water baptism ALWAYS follows a sinner’s salvation where they have been Spiritually baptized into Christ first.
3. Water baptism symbolizes on the outside what happened already ‘inside’ when a person was saved - “I died to sin (its guilt, power, and its penalty), my old life is therefore dead and buried, and I was raised to a new life IN Christ.”
4. **Romans 6:3-6** describes baptism as a 3-fold *memorial* of:
 - a. Christ’s _____
 - b. His _____
 - c. And His _____
 - d. *According to 1Corinthians 15:1-4, the whole Gospel is contained in these three events, and that a person is SAVED if he or she simply trusts them to be sufficient to pay for their sins!*
 - e. If you think water baptism is necessary for a person to be saved, **1Corinthians 15** never mentions water ANYWHERE!
 - f. The apostle Paul’s whole focus in life was not baptizing people, but preaching the Gospel to get people to believe (**1Cor 1:13-18**)! Not that water baptism is not important, but that it was *secondary* to salvation - not part of salvation!
 - g. So, water baptism *identifies* or *associates* the believer no longer with their old life of sin, but with Jesus Christ and His death, burial, and resurrection. In the same way that a uniform associates a worker with the company they work for!
5. Water baptism presents a public testimony to the world that one has accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and that they are willing to live a different life now for the Lord Jesus (**Acts 2:41; Romans 10:11**)!
6. So, when immersed into water in baptism, does this “wash away our sins?” (see **Ephesians 2:8,9; Galatians 3:11**) **Yes**, or **No**?
7. If not, What saves the sinner then? (see also **Ephesians 1:7; 1John 1:7; Colossians 1:20**) Only the _____ of Christ can wash away our sins!

III. How Should A Person be Water-Baptized?

- A. You must be baptized just **like Jesus was baptized**: Jesus was not sprinkled, or poured upon, but rather **immersed** into the water. **Matthew 3:16** says, “He (Jesus) ...went **UP** straightway _____ of the water...” He had been IN it.



- B. You must be baptized like ALL New Testament believers were baptized: (Acts 8:38,39) "... they went down both into the water... and when they were come UP out of the water..." Note that there is NO exception to this in all the Bible examples.
- C. A new Christian should be baptized in the only way that adequately pictures Christ's death, burial, and resurrection to save the sinner (See again 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, and Romans 6:1-6).

IV. Why Get Baptized?

- A. Because we are following someone who is our greatest example. Who is this example? (Matthew 3:13-16) _____
- B. Because it was the normal practice of the Christians in the New Testament (Acts 2:41; 8:38; 9:17,18; 10:48; 16:14,15,33; 18:8; 19:4,5).
- C. Because it is Christ's command for all nations: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, _____ them..." (Matt 28:19,20). Jesus said, "If ye _____ me, keep my _____" (John 14:15).
- D. Because it testifies to the world that you are different now (2 Corinthians 5:17), and that you are aligning your life with what the Bible says, and not with what this world and its religions say.
- E. Baptism is God's test of a person's sincerity of faith. If a person is not willing to go on record as having been saved by the grace of God through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, then they really are not coming to Christ for salvation, but for their own purpose. God doesn't just want "lip service" (Matthew 15:8). He wants to know if we are really serious! We already know that He is really serious - He already *died* in our place! Will you *live* for Him?

| Key Truths About Baptism | |
|--------------------------|--|
| ❖ | It means <i>immersion</i> . |
| ❖ | It is supposed to happen AFTER a person consciously repents, and accepts Jesus Christ as their Saviour from sin's penalty. |
| ❖ | Any baptism before salvation is worthless, and does not count. |
| ❖ | Baptism is a public show of your commitment to living your new life for Christ. |

V. Two Important Questions to Settle:

- A. Why did Jesus die? _____
- B. Why did He rise again from the dead? Think about it! Because whatever reason He did it, proves what He wants to do IN YOUR LIFE! What one word keeps popping up in all the following Scriptures? _____ (John 10:10; 5:24; 3:16; Romans 6:23).
- C. THAT answer explains the reason for getting Scripturally baptized... to **show** the world that you now have a new " _____ " that you are going to live, for Him!

VI. What If I Was Baptized Already BEFORE I Got Saved?

- A. Notice when true Christians got baptized (Acts 2:41; 16:30-33). Was it Before or After their repentance of sin, and acceptance of Christ? (circle one)
- B. If you were baptized **before** you became born again (for example, when you were an infant, or when you joined some religion or church), then *you only got wet*, and you still need to be baptized.
- C. So, if you have been saved, and have **never** been *Scripturally* baptized, and you are going to be obedient to the Saviour and His word, when should you be baptized?
_____.

Have you ever been Scripturally baptized after you got saved? If so when? _____ and where? _____
If you have never been Scripturally baptized, are you ready now? **Yes, No**

Date Lesson Completed _____ Discipler _____