

I Immersion (Baptism)

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

The subject of "baptism" is without doubt one of the most confusing and controversial of all Bible teachings. Many types of "churches" have many types of "baptism." Some *sprinkle*, some *pour*, some *immerse*. Some do it to *infants*, others to *adults* – some even "baptize" on behalf of those *deceased*. Then others tell us it is not an important thing, so they practice *no* baptism at all.

History tells us that **baptism** has been the most divisive issue throughout the present age. Our Baptist forefathers paid dearly for their stand upon the Bible truth of *baptism*. Millions were cruelly put to death just because they refused to have their children "sprinkled," or dared stand upon the teachings of God's Word. We do not have to face such persecution today – but we ought to be willing to take the same stand upon the truth of the Bible.

You **can** learn the truth by carefully studying the following Scriptures. Set aside any preconceived notions and see exactly what the Bible teaches. **DON'T COMPROMISE!!**

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

- A. How many kinds of Scriptural baptisms are there? *Ephesians 4:5* _____
- B. What is baptism called in *Colossians 2:12*? B _ _ I A L.
- C. According to *Romans 6:4*, we are B _ _ _ _ _ in the likeness of Christ's death by baptism.
- D. *Romans 6:5* tells us that baptism pictures a P _ _ _ _ I N G.
- E. In your understanding, which action best pictures a burial, or a planting: immersion or sprinkling? _____
- F. In *Matthew 3:6*, where did John the Baptist baptize? _____
What exactly is this? _____
- G. From *John 3:23*, what was John the Baptist's reason for baptizing at a place called *Ænon*? _____

H. What does your answer to "G" say about the method of baptizing?

I. In *Mark 1:10*, when Jesus was baptized, what did He come up out of?

J. Look up *Acts 8:38,39*. When Philip baptized the Ethiopian, what was the relationship of both men to the water? _____

K. From your honest study of these verses of Scripture, what do you conclude to be the mode of baptism? (Check one)

- Sprinkling
- Pouring
- Immersion

Having drawn your conclusion, the following information will help reinforce the truth:

1. The Greek word rendered "baptize" in your Bible is "*baptidzo*." The meaning of "*baptidzo*" is "*dip, plunge, immerse, submerge, overwhelm*." ALL reputable Greek scholars (Catholic, Protestant, and Baptist) agree on this point.
2. Pope Stephen II declared the practice of "pouring" for baptism was valid in the case of sick candidates in the year 754 A.D. The Roman Catholic Council of Ravenna, 1311 A.D., gave the first "official" sanction of sprinkling. Prior to these times, immersion was the mode. In some Roman Catholic circles, immersion was still practiced in the 18th Century.

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

A. According to *Matthew 3:7,8*, what did John the Baptist require from people *BEFORE* he would baptize them? _____

B. Look up: *John 4:1*. What does the relationship between the words "**made**" and "**baptized**" show concerning who should be baptized?

C. In *Acts 2:41*, what had those who were first baptized done?

D. In *Acts 8:12*, what had the men and women who were baptized first done?

E. In *Acts 8:37*, what was the requirement for the Ethiopian's baptism?

F. Look up: *Acts 10:47*. When does a person receive the Holy Spirit?
_____ (Look back over Study #8.)

G. Look up: *Acts 16:14,15*. What had the Lord done with Lydia before she was baptized?

H. Study *Acts 16:30-34*. What happened to the keeper of the prison and his household *before* they were baptized? _____

I. List the three steps of the Corinthians given in *Acts 18:8*.
H _____, B _____, and B _____

J. From your honest study of these verses of Scripture, who do you conclude to be the proper candidates for baptism? (Check one)

- Babies
- Believers
- Jews

Having drawn your conclusion, the following information will help reinforce the truth:

1. There is *NO* evidence of "infant baptism" to be found in the first couple of centuries in church history. The first recorded instance of "infant baptism" was when the Roman Emperor Valens insisted his dying son be "baptized" – in the year 370 A.D.
2. Infant baptism was made "law" by the Catholic Council of Mela in the year 416 A.D. It was from this point that the bloody butchering of Baptists began to be practiced – by other "Christians."

WHAT DOES BAPTISM DO?

Many people believe (and are taught) that baptism is a Sacrament – that is, a "means of God's grace," a channel through which our salvation comes.

- A. What is the channel of God's saving grace? *Ephesians 2:8* _____
- B. What are we NOT saved by? *Ephesians 2:9* _____
- C. Compare: *Titus 3:5*, *Ephesians 5:26*, and *John 17:17*.
How are our sins "washed away"? _____

- D. Read *Luke 23:32,33,39-43*. One thief was saved. Was he ever baptized? _____
- E. From your honest study of these verses of Scripture, what part does baptism play in your salvation? (Check one)
- No part
 Some part
 Absolutely essential

WHAT DOES BAPTISM MEAN?

- A. Look up: *I Corinthians 15:1-4*.
1. What does Paul declare here? The _____ (verse 1).
 2. Where does he ask them to keep it? In _____ (verse 2).
 3. What is the Gospel? "Christ _____ for our sins, was _____, and _____." (verses 3,4).
- B. According to *Romans 6:5*, baptism is called the L _____ of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- C. In *I Peter 3:21*, baptism is called the L _____ F _____.
- (Be careful as you read this verse. It does not teach that baptism saves anyone; it is that which baptism pictures that saves. Baptism is the answer, response, of a good conscience. We get a good conscience before God when we are saved!)*
- D. From your study and consideration of these verses of Scripture, what would you say baptism is? (Check one)
- A symbol of the Gospel
 The washing away of sins

WHAT DOES BAPTISM MAKE ME?

We have already seen that baptism plays no part in our salvation. A person is Scripturally baptized *AFTER* salvation, not before it.

There are *TWO* things your baptism will "make" you:

A. Baptism Makes You A Baptist.

Attending a Baptist church is wonderful, but that doesn't make you a "Baptist." When you are Scripturally baptized, **then** you become a *Baptist in fact*.

Salvation makes us a *CHRISTIAN*. Baptism makes us a *BAPTIST*. (Thus, every true Baptist is a Christian — though not every Christian is a Baptist!)

1. The name “Baptist” is a Biblical name.

It is found some 15 times in the New Testament, referring to John the Baptist. According to *Matthew 3:1* John was called a Baptist before he ever baptized anyone. It is a God-given name. (He wasn’t called “John the Catholic” or “John the Presbyterian,” etc.)

2. Christ honored John the Baptist. See: *Matthew 11:11*.

Thus the name “Baptist” is one we can bear unashamedly. [See also Study #11.]

3. All the apostles received Baptist baptism. This was NEVER repudiated — it was in fact a requirement for church office. See: *Acts 1:22*.

The name “Baptist” stands for:

what we BELIEVE — *I Corinthians 15:1-4*
what we ARE — *Romans 6:17,18*
what we DO — *Matthew 28:19,20*

B. Baptism Makes You A Church Member.

Look up: *Acts 2:41,42*. List the order of events.

R _ _ _ _ _ (His Word) = Salvation
B _ _ _ _ _ = Baptism
A _ _ _ _ _ unto them = Church membership
C _ _ _ _ _ stedfastly = Christian growth

According to *John 3:3,5* the “new birth” is the ‘doorway’ to eternal life. According to *Acts 2:41* and *I Corinthians 12:13*, baptism (which follows salvation) is the ‘doorway’ into the membership of a church (a body of baptized believers).

When you are baptized, you become a member of our Church. As such, you enjoy the rights and privileges of membership which include:

1. Participation at the Lord’s table for the observance of the Lord’s Supper. [See: Study #12.]
2. Receiving pastoral care and guidance for your spiritual growth and service.
3. Participation in church business meetings.
4. Opportunitites to effectively serve the Lord through His Church here.

WHO HAS THE AUTHORITY TO BAPTIZE?

A. There Are Two Facts To Keep In Mind:

1. There is a "Heinz 57" variety of 'baptisms' in the religious world today. (See the introduction to this study.)
2. According to *Ephesians 4:5*, there is only *ONE BAPTISM* — so all cannot be right.

B. The Authority To Baptize Was Given To New Testament Churches.

Just before our Lord ascended back to Heaven, He left "orders" for His work to be continued. These orders are given in *Matthew 28:19,20*, *Mark 16:15*, *Luke 24:46-48*, *John 20:21*, and *Acts 1:8*.

The Lord spoke these words to His disciples. However, if He gave this commission *only* to the disciples then present, it no longer applies — because they are long dead! The Lord Jesus Christ gave the Great Commission to His disciples *INSTITUTIONALLY* — not individually. That is, the command to go, preach, baptize, and teach all nations was given to His *CHURCH*. [Review Study #3.]

Since the command to "baptize" is contained in the Commission, then the authority to baptize has been given to New Testament churches — not to individuals or man-made religious organizations.

The Lord Jesus walked 60 miles (from Galilee, where there was plenty of water — to Judæa) to receive the right baptism from the right authority (John the Baptist). He obviously considered the authority in baptism was important. It is just as important today!

C. There Are Four Requirements For Baptism To Be Scriptural:

- **SAVED CANDIDATES**
- **SUBMERSION IN WATER**
- **SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION**
- **SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY**

All those who are baptized into this Church are baptized on the authority of this Church. Even though the pastor actually performs the act, he does so on behalf of the Church body.

This is why:

1. All those desiring baptism are presented before the Church members, and the Church votes to receive them into membership upon their baptism.
2. The Church receives members from other Baptist churches of like faith and order by way of a "*Letter of Commendation*."

3. The Church does *not* receive into membership those who have been 'baptized' into some man-made religion, 'church' or denomination. As with our ancient Baptist forebears, we require Scriptural baptism (*sometimes erroneously called "re-baptism"*) in such cases.

WHY SHOULD WE BE BAPTIZED ?

Some people do not hold great importance to baptism — seeing it as either unnecessary, or an “optional extra” to being a Christian.

On the other hand, the Word of God places great emphasis upon the ordinance. The “symbol” of Christianity is NOT a cross or a fish — but the beautiful emblem of baptism.

Here are some reasons why you should be baptized:

A. The Lord Jesus Christ Was Baptized — *Matthew 3:13-17*.

1. He came from G _ _ _ _ _ to J _ _ _ _ _ (60 miles) to receive baptism (*v.13*). It was important to Him.
2. Jesus said His baptism B _ _ _ _ _ us (*v.15*). That is, “It is fitting.”
3. Jesus used the little word U _ in *verse 15*, indicating we associate with Him when we follow Him in baptism.
4. God the Father was well P _ _ _ _ _ when God the Son was baptized (*v.17*).

B. Baptism Is A Command From The Lord — *Matthew 28:19,20*.

As noted previously, the command to baptize was given to the Lord’s churches — thus it follows that those who are won to Christ have a duty to be baptized.

Write out: *John 14:15*. _____

C. Baptism Is The Bible Way.

1. Look up *Acts 2:38*. Here the command is for E _ _ _ _ O _ _ of you to be baptized.
2. *Acts 8:12* includes both M _ _ and W _ _ _ _ in the act of baptism.

D. All Christians Are Exhorted To Be Faithful In Church Attendance.

We read of this command in *Hebrews 10:25*. Can we properly follow this command and not be a member of a Baptist church, and not be baptized? No!

IF YOU HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED:

Be sure to record the date at the very beginning of all these lessons. Write it, along with the date of your salvation, in your Bible.

IF YOU HAVE NOT BEEN BAPTIZED:

1. Write out the question the Ethiopian asked of Philip in the last part of Acts 8:36.

2. In your own words, and in your own situation, answer this question.

3. Why not decide now to obey the Lord?

“Having studied the Scriptures concerning the subject of baptism, and realizing this step is required of me by the Lord, I hereby determine by the grace of God that I will present myself for baptism by coming forward during the invitation at the next service of the Church, thus publicly associating myself with the Lord Jesus Christ, and committing myself to active membership in this Church.”

Signed: _____ Date: _____

READING ASSIGNMENT:

Read: *Matthew Chapter 3* and *Acts Chapter 8*.

MEMORIZATION:

Try to memorize: *Acts 2:41*.