

Biblical Discipleship

3



BAPTISM



LESSON 3: BAPTISM

"Now That I Am Saved, Where Do I Start?"

Virtually every religious denomination in existence teaches some form of baptism as part of their doctrine, and the diversities in their teachings are wide. This lesson is intended to give the Bible's clear and definite teaching on the subject so the individual understands perfectly what God's intention is regarding baptism.

- I. Why does God instruct us to be baptized?
 - A. Baptism is the first act of obedience in service to the Lord. Anyone can be baptized; it takes no special talents or effort.
 - B. Jesus set the example Himself by submitting to baptism before He began His public ministry.

Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22

- C. In *Matthew 3:13-15*, it is clear that Jesus was baptized in obedience to God's plan. In verse 15, He said, "...*Suffer (allow) it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.*" This point of submission and obedience is the single most important thing to realize regarding baptism.

D. Some Bible characters who submitted to baptism after salvation.

1. The Ethiopian eunuch. *Acts 8:36-39*
2. The apostle Paul. *Acts 9:18*
3. The Philippian jailer and his house. *Acts 16:25-33*

II. What is the purpose of baptism?

- A. Several types of baptism are mentioned in the Bible. In each case, physical baptism is a picture of a spiritual truth. The important point to consider is the picture portrayed by baptism.
- B. *Romans 6:1-7* (specifically verses 3-4) shows the two purposes of baptism.
 1. It pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 2. It is a public testimony of the new convert's identification with Jesus Christ through the death, burial, and resurrection, which is how he was saved. It identifies him with the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. Who should be baptized?

- A. The clearest case of an individual's baptism in the Bible is the Ethiopian eunuch in *Acts 8:26-39*. In verse 36, the eunuch asked, "...*what doth hinder me to be baptized?*" Phillip then answered with the condition of baptism in verse 37, "...*If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.*" Then the eunuch's response sealed the matter, "...*I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*"
- B. The only requirements for baptism are the requirements for salvation found in *Romans 10:9-10*.
 - 1. Heart belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
 - 2. Confession that He is Lord and Savior.
- C. There are NO cases of baptism in the Bible of anyone but believers.
- D. Some other instances of baptism immediately after salvation include:
 - 1. *Acts 8:12*
 - 2. *Acts 18:8*

IV. What is the method of baptism?

- A. Again, *Acts 8:26-39* gives the clearest example. In verses 38-39, BOTH Phillip and the Ethiopian eunuch went down into the water and came up out of the water.
- B. In *Matthew 3:16*, Jesus was baptized in the same manner.
- C. As seen previously; baptism is a picture of death, burial, and resurrection. The only way to bury someone is to put them completely underground. The biblical method of baptism is complete immersion. No one in the Bible was ever sprinkled because no one can be buried by sprinkling dirt on them.

V. How important is it to be baptized?

- A. It is NOT essential for salvation. *Ephesians 2:8-9* makes it clear a man is saved by grace through faith without works, including baptism.
- B. It IS essential for service and spiritual growth. *Matthew 28:19-20* (the "great commission") proves it is essential. Baptism is an integral part of the great commission and precedes teaching.
- * C. Before anyone can be taught to follow Jesus Christ, they must be willing to submit to the first act of

obedience. If a person refuses to obey the Lord in the first point, he will not obey in future points.

Matthew 3:13-15

VI. Basic questions.

A. Where should I be baptized?

Since baptism is a public confession of your faith in Jesus Christ, most often it will be publicly in front of the local church. Many times people will be baptized in creeks or rivers, which is fine; the Lord Jesus Christ was baptized in the river Jordan. The actual place of baptism is not important. The act of public testimony of your identification with the Lord Jesus Christ is the important point.

NOTES

5. In *Acts 8:36-37*, the Ethiopian eunuch had to fulfill two requirements before he could be baptized. What were the two requirements?
- A.
- B.
6. How do we know that the Ethiopian eunuch and Jesus were not baptized by sprinkling of water?
- A.
- B.
7. Baptism by complete immersion in water is a picture of what?
8. Baptism is essential in order for the Christian to _____ and _____. Also, one must be willing to submit to baptism so they can be _____ to follow Jesus Christ.

9. Is baptism essential for salvation? _____
Give a Scripture reference that explains this.
10. Briefly explain the primary purpose of this lesson.

Key Scripture passages you must be familiar with:
Matthew 3:13-17; Acts 8:36-39; Romans 6:1-7

NOTE: There is much false teaching among religious groups concerning baptism. The Christian should be aware of some of them.

1. Man must be baptized in order to be saved.
2. Baptism by being sprinkled is just as meaningful as immersion.
3. Babies should be baptized into God's family, or into "the church."

From the Bible principles taught in the lesson, you should understand that these teachings are false, and why.

Write any questions you may have concerning the subjects in this lesson.