

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. This is because many types of “churches” practice many ways of “baptizing.” Some *sprinkle*, some *pour*, and some *immerse*. Many “baptize” *infants*, others only *adults* (or older young people). One religion proxy “baptizes” on behalf of the *dead*. Then, others say baptism is not important thing and so they practice *no* baptism at all.

History tells us that **baptism** has been the most divisive issue for the last 2,000 years. Our Baptist forefathers paid dearly for their stand on the Bible truth concerning *baptism*. Millions were cruelly put to death because they refused to have their children “sprinkled” and dared cling to the teachings of God’s Word. We may not have to face such persecution today — but we ought to be willing to take the same stand for truth.

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. What is baptism called in *Colossians 2:12*? It is a B__ __ I A L.
- B. According to *Romans 6:4*, we are B__ __ __ __ in the likeness of Christ’s death when we are baptized.
- C. *Romans 6:5* tells us that baptism pictures a P__ __ __ __ I N G.
- D. From these scriptures [above], which action best pictures a burial or a planting: immersion or sprinkling? _____
- E. According to *Matthew 3:6*, where did John the Baptist baptize people?
 I N J__ __ __ __ .
 What exactly is this? _____
- F. From *John 3:23*, what was John the Baptist’s reason for baptizing at a place called *Ænon*? _____

- G. What does your answer to “E” and “F” say about the method of baptizing?

- H. In *Mark 1:10*, when Jesus was baptized, He came up out of what?

- I. Look up *Acts 8:38-39*. When Philip baptized the Ethiopian man, what was the relationship of both men to the water? _____
- J. According to *Ephesians 4:5*, how many baptisms are there? _____
- K. From your honest study of all these verses of scripture, what do you conclude to be the proper mode of baptism? [Check one]
- Sprinkling
 - Pouring
 - Immersion

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

1. The Greek word rendered “baptize” in your Bible is “*baptidzo*.” The meaning of “*baptidzo*” is to “*dip, plunge, immerse, submerge, or 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 in 1311 A.D. gave the first “official” sanction to sprinkling. Prior to these times, immersion was the usual mode. In some Roman Catholic circles, immersion was still practiced into 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. According to *Acts 2:41*, what had those who were baptized first done?

- D. According to *Acts 8:12*, what had the men and women who were baptized first done? _____
- E. According to *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 taken by the Corinthians as given in *Acts 18:8*.
H _____, B _____, and were 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 from the Bible, the following information will help reinforce the truth:

1. There is *NO* evidence of “infant baptism” in the first three centuries of church history. The first *recorded* instance of “infant baptism” was when the Roman emperor, Valens, insisted that his dying son be “baptized.” That was in the year 370 A.D.
2. Infant baptism was eventually 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 — perpetrated 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 salvation comes.

- A. According to *Ephesians 2:8*, what is the channel of saving grace? _____

- B. According to *Ephesians 2:9*, what does NOT save us? _____
- C. Our sins are cleansed through the _____ (*Ephesians 5:26; John 17:17*) and by the _____ (*Revelation 1:5; 7:14*).
- Look up and read: *Titus 3:5*. Baptism is certainly a “W_____ of righteousness” because it is performed by human hands and is the right step for a Christian, but it is the righteousness of God imputed by faith that saves!
- 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
 - 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. Exactly what is the Gospel (Good News) — *verses 3-4*?
It is that “Christ _____ for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was _____, and that He _____ according to the scriptures.”
- 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; rather, 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 to be 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.” It is only when you are scripturally baptized that you become a *Baptist in fact*.

Salvation makes us a *CHRISTIAN*. Baptist 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., or, as some modern perversions of the Bible would have it, “John the baptizer!”)

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

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

3. All the apostles received Baptist baptism. This was NEVER repudiated for some other baptism. 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_ _ _ _ _ (the 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 that 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 unto the Lord.
3. Participation in church business meetings.
4. Opportunities 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. 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 recorded in *Matthew 28:19-20*; *Mark 16:15*; *Luke 24:46-48*; *John 20:21* and *Acts 1:8*.

The Lord initially spoke these words to His disciples. However, if He gave this commission *only* to the disciples that were physically present, then it would not apply to us. Why? Because they are long dead! However, the Lord Jesus Christ gave the orders (known as the “Great Commission”) to His disciples *INSTITUTIONALLY*. That is, the command to go, preach, baptize, and teach all nations was given to His CHURCH (and subsequently to His churches). [Review Study #3.]

Since the command to “baptize” is contained in the Commission, then the authority to baptize belongs to New Testament churches — not to individuals or man-made religious organizations.

The Lord Jesus walked many miles (from Galilee, where there was plenty of water, to where He could receive the right baptism from the right authority (John the Baptist). Our Lord obviously considered the proper God-ordained 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 body are baptized by the authority of this Church. Even though a pastor 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 membership, whereupon 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*” (*II Corinthians 3:1*).
3. The Church does not receive into membership those who have been “baptized” under 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 place great importance on baptism — seeing it as either unnecessary, or as 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 _ _ _ _ _ to receive baptism — *verse 13*. It was important to Him.
2. Jesus said His baptism “B _ _ _ _ _ us” — *verse 15*. That is, “It is fitting;” it is proper.
3. Jesus used the little word U _ in *verse 15*, indicating that we associate or identify ourselves with Him when we follow Him in baptism.
4. God the Father was well P _ _ _ _ _ when God the Son was baptized — *verse 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. Therefore, 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. The command is for E__ __ __ __ __ 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 on page 1. Also, write it down somewhere in your Bible.

IF YOU HAVE NOT BEEN BAPTIZED:

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

2. In your own words, and for 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.