

## LESSON FIVE: WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT BAPTISM

### Obedience that Brings a Blessing

*“Baptism is the first step every believer should take in his or her walk with Christ.”*

Baptism is not \_\_\_\_\_, it is \_\_\_\_\_.

We should not \_\_\_\_\_ what God has \_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ His ministry by being baptized.

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ His ministry by commanding baptism.

#### *The Great Commission*

Matthew 28:18-20 - “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

1. Biblical \_\_\_\_\_ of baptism—immersion.

#### The example of Jesus:

Mark 1:9-10 - “It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.”

John 3:23 - “Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized.”

When speaking of baptism, the original Greek of the Bible always uses the word *baptizo*, which means “to immerse, or dip under.”

The example of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch:

Acts 8:36-39 - “Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, 'See here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?' Then Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' And he answered and said, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.”

#### **Baptism and the Ancients**

Baptism is unique to the Christian religion, but some ancient Jewish sects practiced it as a form of ceremonial washing. To immerse oneself in water was a sign of consecration or dedication, and it had been practiced at the conservative Jewish community of Qumran and other places.

The practice of baptism caused problems for Christians with pagan governments—some Romans accused Christians of drowning new converts and of trying to raise the dead through the use of magical waters!

2. Biblical \_\_\_\_\_ of baptism—Baptism pictures the saving work of Jesus Christ.

If you change the \_\_\_\_\_, you destroy the \_\_\_\_\_.

Romans 6:4 - “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

Baptism is a picture of a \_\_\_\_\_, a \_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 - "...that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and after that was buried, and that He rose again the third day."

Romans 6:5 - "For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection."

We must be \_\_\_\_\_ first, then \_\_\_\_\_. This is called \_\_\_\_\_ baptism.

The example of Pentecost:

Acts 2:41 - "Then they who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them."

The example of Cornelius' household:

Acts 10:47 - "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"

The example of the Philippian jailer:

Acts 16:31-33 - "So they said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.' Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized."

Not only is His \_\_\_\_\_ pictured, but His \_\_\_\_\_ is pictured.

Baptism pictures our \_\_\_\_\_ with Jesus.

Baptism pictures the great doctrines of our faith: \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ of baptism.

a. A \_\_\_\_\_ to confess.

**KEY THOUGHT**

*Baptism shows I am a new man, and I have a new master*

b. A \_\_\_\_\_ to convey.

Baptism is a \_\_\_\_\_. It preaches the gospel without saying a word.

c. A \_\_\_\_\_ to complete.

Jesus did not request you to be baptized, He commanded you to be baptized.

Matthew 28:19-20 - "...baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you."

Acts 10:48 - "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."

While baptism is not necessary for \_\_\_\_\_, it is necessary for \_\_\_\_\_.

Baptism cannot take away any \_\_\_\_\_.

It is not \_\_\_\_\_ that saves;

It is the \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and  
\_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus.

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**LESSON FIVE: DAY ONE**

## Start Right: Believer's Baptism

In a race, how you end up has a lot to do with how you begin. If you begin strong, you have a much better chance of winning. The same is true in education—learning advanced things as an adult is much easier if you learned the basics as a child. Many businesspeople have learned the importance of getting their business off to a strong start. And what is true in those areas is also true of your Christian life. If you get off to a strong start by obeying what the Bible tells you to do, you will find it much easier to grow strong in your walk with Christ.

Many people misunderstand baptism. Some act as though, since baptism doesn't save us, it isn't important. Other people make the mistake of saying, "If you don't get baptized, you'll never go to heaven." Baptism isn't necessary for salvation, but it is necessary for obedience. Obedience is necessary if you are going to experience joy and growth and fruitfulness in the Christian life. Believers dare not minimize what the Bible so emphasizes.

What principle of baptism do you find in the following?

**Acts 2:38-41**

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**Acts 8:12**

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**Acts 8:26-39**

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**Acts 18:8**

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Baptism symbolizes a death, burial and resurrection. Why is it important for believers to be baptized after they have been saved, and not before?

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If someone has already been baptized, under what circumstances should they consider being baptized again?

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## LESSON FIVE: DAY TWO

### The Biblical Method: Immersion

Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, 'See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?' Then Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' And he answered and said, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that he saw him no more; and the eunuch went on his way rejoicing. (Acts 8:35-39)

As we read the account in Acts 8, there are several facts about baptism that are clear. First, it takes water to baptize someone. Second, the person is to be baptized if they believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Third, baptism is the act of immersing someone in water. The word in Greek, *baptizo*, means to “immerse in water.” When the Ethiopian asks, “What hinders me from being baptized?” we could also translate that, “What hinders me from being immersed?” The Bible says they both went down into the water, so it was a big enough body of water for two men to wade into, and the one immersed the other.

The word *baptize* means immersion, so when we baptize we need to immerse the person. Immersion was practiced in the early Christian church, and if you visit the ancient cathedrals of Europe built before the thirteenth century, you'll find many have baptistries. The method of baptism is important, because the method is tied to the meaning. Therefore, if you change the method, you change the meaning.

Read Romans 6:3-11. In verse 3, what does Paul mean when he says, “As many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus?”

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What do you think it means to be baptized into His death?

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If believers are baptized into Christ's death, when does this occur?

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Why is baptism by immersion important?

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## LESSON FIVE: DAY THREE

# The Meaning of Baptism

Baptism speaks of what God did for you when He saved you. Romans 6:1-2 says, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How then shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” (KJV). This is the key to understanding baptism.

When we are saved, we die to sin. We die to the old way of life. God forbids that we who have been saved should continue to live sinful lives. “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection” (Romans 6:4-5). Christian, this is your biography. This passage describes the past, the present, and the future of every believer.

Your past is in verse 4: You have been buried with Jesus Christ by baptism. When you are baptized, you are buried under the water. This is a visual symbol of your old life dying and being buried. It also connects you with Christ's death 2000 years ago. Your old self was crucified with Christ, that your body of sin might be destroyed and you should no longer serve sin.

Your present is that you now walk in newness of life. The old has gone, the new has come. Coming up out of the baptismal water is a symbolic picture of you coming out of that grave, risen to a new life in Christ.

Your future—Since we have been planted like Christ in death, we shall be raised like Christ in the resurrection. Baptism is a beautiful illustration of the death, burial, and resurrection of the person who believes on Jesus Christ. Immersion is the way God arranged for us to symbolize it. You don't want to use just any symbol. Sprinkling doesn't depict the full meaning of baptism. Immersion does. The method and the meaning are bound up together.

Write your own testimony of how you were saved. Include the details of how you were baptized and what it meant to you:

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**LESSON FIVE: DAY FOUR**

## The Motive for Baptism

There are three reasons for getting baptized. First, it proclaims your commitment to Jesus. It is a way to say, “Lord, I am identifying myself with You, openly and publicly.” It doesn't *make* you a Christian, but it certainly does demonstrate that you're a Christian. Wearing a wedding ring doesn't make me married, but it does show that I am married and am not ashamed of letting everyone know it. I belong to a woman I love with all my heart, and my wedding ring is a way of showing it. When Jesus was baptized, He was identifying Himself with us. When you are baptized, it publicly identifies you with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Second, it portrays your conversion to Christ. Your baptism is a testimony that you are a believer in Jesus. You are saved and you want everyone to know it. Your friends see you being baptized, and they hear you proclaim what Christ has done for you. I have known many people who were saved watching a friend's baptism.

Third, you are obedient to your command from God. Baptism is not a suggestion, it is a command from the Lord. In Matthew 28:19-20, Christ said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” We are to observe that which Christ commanded, which is to baptize.

What command does Jesus leave with His disciples in Matthew 28:19-20?

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In your own words, what does baptism symbolize?

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Read 1 Peter 3:18-21. In verse 21, Peter seems to say that baptism saves us. How do we know that he does not mean that being baptized in water saves us?

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**LESSON FIVE: DAY FIVE**

## The Blessing of Obedience

It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. (Mark 1:9-11)

Jesus lived His life as an example for us as believers. He said in *John 5:30*, “I do not seek my own will, but the will of the Father who sent me.” When Jesus was baptized, He was showing his willingness to be obedient to the Father. His baptism foreshadowed His death, burial and resurrection, and was a public testimony of His identification with us—dying for our sins, and being resurrected to give us victory over death. Jesus' obedience pleased the Father: “You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

When we are obedient by identifying ourselves with Christ in baptism, it also pleases the Father. Baptism can't save us. It's an outward expression of an inward reality. But it is an act that Christians are called to obey.

**KEY THOUGHT**

*The way to understand the part of the Bible that you don't understand is to begin to obey the part you do understand.*

Read the three accounts of Jesus' baptism in Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, and Luke 3:21-22, then read John's testimony in John 1:29-34.

What was John the Baptist's attitude before Jesus' baptism?

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What was Jesus' response?

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Why did Jesus decide to be baptized?

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What was God's response to the occasion, and why is it significant?

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Why does it please God when we follow Him in believer's baptism?

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