

## Lesson Three: Baptism

**THEME:** One of the two ordinances given to the church is baptism. It is an ordinance for those who have accepted Jesus Christ as personal Savior. It is a representation of belonging to the family of God, and an emblem of the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection.

**KEY VERSES:** *Acts 8:35-37* – “Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

*Matthew 3:13-17; Acts 8:35-39; Romans 6:1-7; John 14:15*

Every religious denomination in existence teaches some form of baptism as part of their doctrine and the diversities in their teaching 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. All it takes to be baptized is found in the example of the Ethiopian eunuch as found in *Acts 8:35-37*.
- B. Jesus set the example Himself by submitting to baptism before He began His public ministry. See *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. Other Bible characters who submitted to baptism after salvation:
  - 1. The Ethiopian eunuch. *Acts 8:36-39*
  - 2. The Apostle Paul. *Acts 9:18*

*:17 – saved*

*:18 – baptized*

*:20 – service*

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 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 was 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 on being baptized 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 – People of Samaria
  - 2. Acts 18:8 – People of Corinth

#### IV. What is the method of baptism?

- A. Again, Acts 8:26-39 gives the clearest example. In verse 38-39, both Phillip and the Ethiopian eunuch went down into the water and came up out of the water. Note: This took place in a desert, using a precious commodity: water.
- B. In Matthew 3:16, Jesus was baptized in the same manner. See Mark 1:9 – the Jordan River.
- C. As seen previously, baptism is a picture of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. The only way to bury someone is to put them completely under the ground. The biblical method of baptism is complete immersion. No one on 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, but it is essential for service. 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 28:19-29 (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 this first point, he will not obey in future points. See Matthew 3:13-15, John 14:15, John 14:23.

#### VI. Basic questions:

- A. Where should I be baptized?

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

**Questions:**

1. Give the key reason why God instructs a Christian to be baptized.

---

---

---

2. In Matthew 13:15, Jesus was baptized to demonstrate His \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to God and His plan. Jesus fulfilled this before He began His \_\_\_\_\_.

3. List three other men who were baptized after salvation in the New Testament.

- A. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. \_\_\_\_\_

4. What are the purposes for baptism found in Romans 6:3-4?

- A. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_
- 

5. In Acts 8:36-37, the Ethiopian eunuch had to fulfill two requirements before he could be baptized. What were the two requirements?

---

---

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.

9. Is baptism essential for salvation? \_\_\_\_\_. Give a Scripture reference and explain this:

---



---

10. Briefly explain the primary purpose of this lesson.

---



---

**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. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
2. Baptism by being sprinkled is just as meaningful as immersion. (Matt 3:16)
3. Babies should be baptized into God's family, or into "the church."  
(Acts 8:36-37)

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