
C.O.R.E

Commit - Obey - Relationship - Encourage



Lesson Four:
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. It is critical that we understand what the Word of God says about this topic.

This lesson is intended to give the Bible's clear and definite teaching on baptism so the individual understands perfectly what God's intention is toward this subject.

Why Does God Instruct Us To Be Baptized?

1. Baptism is the first act of obedience in service to the Lord. Any believer can be baptized; it takes no special talent or effort.
2. 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).
3. It is clear that Jesus was baptized in obedience to God's plan. In Matthew 3:15, Jesus said, "...Suffer 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.
4. Other biblical examples of those who submitted to baptism after salvation:
 - A. The Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-39)
 - B. The Apostle Paul (Acts 9:18)
 - C. The Philippine jailer and his house (Acts 16:25-33)

What Is the Purpose of Baptism?

1. Several types of baptisms 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.
2. Romans 6:1-7 (specifically verses 3 and 4) shows the two purposes of baptism.
 - A. It pictures the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - B. 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.

Who Should Be Baptized?

1. 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?" Philip then answered with the condition of baptism in verse 37, "...If thou believes with all thine heart, thou mayest." Then the eunuch's response sealed the matter, "...I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."
2. The only requirements for baptism are the requirements for salvation found in Romans 10:9-10.
 - A. Heart belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
 - B. Confession that He is Lord and Savior
3. There are no cases of baptism in the Bible of anyone but believers.
4. Some other instances of baptism immediately after salvation are Acts 8:12; 18:8.

What Is the Method of Baptism?

1. Again, Acts gives the clearest example where both Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch went down into the water and came up out of the water (Acts 8:38-39).
2. Jesus was baptized in the same manner (Matthew 3:16).
3. John the Baptist needed much water to baptize (John 3:23).
4. 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.

How Important Is It to Be Baptized?

1. It is not essential for salvation. The Bible makes it clear a man is saved by grace through faith without works, including baptism (Ephesians 2:8-9).
2. The “Great Commission” proves it is essential for service and spiritual growth. Baptism is an integral part of the commission, preceding teaching (Matthew 28:19-20).
3. Before anyone can be taught to follow Jesus Christ, they must be willing to submit to this 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).

Basic Questions

1. 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 Jordan River. 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.

2. Is Baptism for us today?

There is some confusion over whether water baptism after salvation is for today’s church. There are those who teach that water baptism was used during the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Apostles in the early chapters of the book of Acts, and was for their ministries only. They also teach that there is a clear distinction between the ministry of Peter and Paul. They say that Peter, being one of the Apostles, was chosen to teach on baptism (1 Peter 3:20-21) and not Paul. These people also assent that Paul was sent to preach and not to baptize, according to 1 Corinthians 1:17. They conclude by saying that we are to follow Paul.

- A. Here are some biblical answers to use when you may hear these false teachings.

1. Paul was baptized after he was saved (Acts 9:18).
2. Paul taught people to be baptized.
 - a. Lydia (Acts 16:15)
 - b. Philippian jailer (Acts 16:33)
 - c. Crispus (Acts 18:8)
3. Paul baptized people.
 - a. Crispus (1 Corinthians 1:14)
 - b. Gaius (1 Corinthians 1:14)
 - c. Household of Stephanas (1 Corinthians 1:16)

B. Paul never stated that he, nor we, should not baptize people in 1 Corinthians 1:17. He said that he was sent by Christ to preach the gospel first and foremost, and he demonstrated by his example that after someone got saved he taught them to be baptized, and even baptized people himself.

Questions & Answers

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

2. In Matthew 3:13-15, 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?

A.

B.

6. How do we know that the Ethiopian eunuch and Jees 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 Memory Verses

“Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”
(Matthew 3:13-17).

“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. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.” (Acts 8:36-39).

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection” (Romans 6:3-5).

Additional Thoughts

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 this lesson, you should understand that these teachings are false, and why.

