

Baptism

To discuss baptism in this lesson, it should probably be clarified what that word means. In this lesson, we are only discussing water baptism as part of the process of salvation. There is no biblical example of a New Testament Christian being saved without water baptism. No biblical example of water baptism was anything other than full immersion in water. So, when I discuss baptism in this lesson, I am only referring to water baptism in which one is fully immersed in water. Why water, you might ask? Because that is what God chose and it is what God requires. There is no “magic” in the water. Being immersed is merely complying with God’s commands, and not doing anything that man came up with. God commanded water baptism as a step of salvation, so that is why it is required. Hopefully this lesson can address the importance of baptism.

Scriptures

Matthew 3:16 “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” It should be noted that verse 6 of this same chapter tells us that this takes place at the Jordon River. Unlike me and you, Jesus was sinlessly perfect so He was not baptized to be forgiven of sin, He had none. He did however, provide an example for you and me to follow. Also note, Jesus “went up straightway out of the water”, thus He must have been in the water. To be baptized we must be in the water.

Matthew 28:19 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” Jesus commanded His disciples to go, teach, and baptize. A follower of Christ cannot just keep the word of God to themselves. They must spread the word. Those that have the good news are required to go out and try to teach others, and if those people are willing, then to baptize them as well. This comes from the mouth of Jesus.

Mark 16:15-16 “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” Once again Jesus is commanding His followers to go forth and teach others. However, we also have, straight from the mouth of Jesus, that those that believe and are baptized will be saved. Friends, that means we must do both of those things if we desire to be saved. If we do not believe, we will not follow through with being baptized, and will be lost. After all, if I believe in Jesus why would I not be baptized? If your place of worship does not teach baptism being fully immersed in water for remission of sins, then that does not match the Bible. Why would they not want to match the Bible? Also, as belief is a requirement before being baptized, we cannot baptize an infant, or anyone who is unable to understand what they are doing. If someone is baptized without belief, they are just getting wet. This is not biblical baptism. Also, forcing someone to get baptized that did not want to is not acceptable because they do not believe. In history, countless times people were forced to convert, but unfortunately, they were getting wet for no reason.

John 3:5 “Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” Once again, straight out of Jesus’ mouth, we

see how important baptism is. Baptism is a required demonstration of one's faith in Christ. Jesus tells us we can not enter his kingdom unless a person is born of water, which is what baptism is. Do we really think that Jesus will tell us something is required if it is not?

Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" Peter, when asked by a multitude of people, what they needed to do to be saved said to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus. Peter answered the question of how to be saved with baptism as a part of it.

Acts 2:41 "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" Just a few verses later, we see that those that gladly received what they were taught were indeed baptized.

Acts 8:26-39 "And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? 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. 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" Philip is teaching a man from Ethiopia about Jesus. The Ethiopian clearly believed what he was taught and asked Philip, "Here is water. What doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip told the Ethiopian that if he believed, he could, and then they went down into the water. Once again, we have pointed out that baptism is necessary to be saved and that you cannot simply sprinkle someone with water. Both Jesus and the Ethiopian went into the water. If only sprinkling or pouring water were required, why bother getting into the water? We have no Biblical example of someone being baptized with sprinkling or pouring of water. Why did the Ethiopian stop his journey to get baptized if it was not required?

Acts 22:16 "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" Paul was baptized to wash away his sins after Ananias taught him about Jesus. Baptism is to wash away your sins after you believe on Christ and repent of your

sins. This also means after baptism a person's life should be changed because they desire to live as Christ would have them live. Paul's life certainly changed. He stopped the wrong of persecuting Christians and began to spread the Word.

Romans 6:3-11 "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: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" This set of verses marvelously points out why we are baptized. We are buried with Christ, so we are fully immersed in water. After all, to bury someone, don't we completely cover them? When we come out of water, we are symbolically born again as a Christian. Our sinful self is dead and now we are something better, a Christian. This does not mean one will never make a mistake or never sin again, but it does mean at that moment your sins in your life up to that point have been taken away. We are now expected to live a better life as a Christian.

Galatians 3:27 "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" When one is baptized, they put on Christ and become a Christian. If one does not become baptized, they do not put on Christ so, therefore, they cannot be a Christian. Do you want to go into eternity before God not being a Christian?

Ephesians 4:4-6 "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" Just as there is only one God, there is also only one baptism that is acceptable to God in order to please Him and be in the one body (His church) to be able to go to Heaven.

Colossians 2:12-13 "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses" Again, baptism is a burial, which means fully immersed, to die to your sins and rise again forgiven of your sins ready to begin your life as a Christian.

1 Peter 3:21 "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" To be very clear baptism does save us, but not baptism only, or faith only, or anything only. However, baptism done the way the Bible wants us to do it is an essential step in obtaining salvation.

Conclusion

Hopefully, this lesson has clarified why one must be baptized to be saved and why it is important that one is fully immersed in water in order to be baptized. One has to choose if they believe that Jesus is the Son of God and is willing to become an obedient Christian or else be lost. Which will you choose? I hope it is to obey God.