

Study Guide

The Study of

Baptism



**Taught by
Ed Wharton**

SUNSET
International Bible Institute

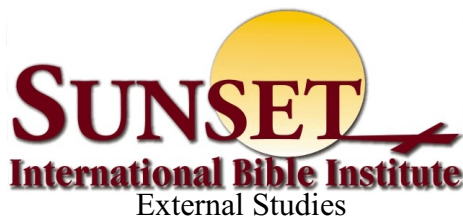


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Ed Wharton

Arranged for study by
DANNY MILLER, M.R.E.
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3710 34th Street ☎ Lubbock, Texas 79410
(800) 687-2121 or (806) 788-3280

DISCLAIMER

The textbooks used in this course were selected because we consider them some of the best and are well adapted to this course of study. The diagrams, charts and maps will enhance your study and help you to understand the over all content of this study. As with all books written by men, there may be some things you and I would not agree upon. The principle, “use what is good and discard what is not good” applies to all textbooks used with our courses. Please be wise enough to discard any and all teaching that is not biblical.

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Baptism is for . . .every unforgiven person who can believe in Christ, who can repent of sin, who can be educated to repent of a sinful life. Baptism is for people who of their own free will, can arise and obey the commandment to be immersed. Baptism is for people with guilty consciences who want to be saved and appeal to God for a clear conscience. God adds the saved to the church and that is the distinctive nature of the church. You can identify the church in the same way you identify any saved person on earth.

LESSON ONE

THE DISTINCTIVE NATURE OF BAPTISM

INTRODUCTION

Through the centuries there has been the tendency for men to drift away from the fundamental teachings of the Bible. It can be noted that there is a discernable drift away from the plain teaching of Bible baptism. This dangerous drift is in terms of the nature, purpose, and significance of New Testament baptism. There has been a slippage of doctrine in relation to what men must believe and do to be saved. Cautionary statements made by the inspired apostles warned that people would move away from the essential teachings so necessary to a person's salvation and that Satan will be manipulating these teachings.

In 2 Corinthians 11:3, the apostle Paul states, *"but I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and purity which is toward Christ."* The apostle is saying that the mind-set of Christians could be changed by Satan. There are strong warning regarding false teachings and how Satan will use these teachings to deceive Christians today.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:7, Paul spoke of the apostasy and lawlessness *already* at work during his own time. Both the apostle Peter and apostle John state emphatically that many false teachers have gone out into the world to corrupt the teaching necessary to salvation (2 Peter 2:1 & 1 John 4:1). In Hebrews 2:1, we read a strong statement that warns *"We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we heard, lest haply we drift away."* There is a definite drift away from the simple teachings regarding baptism. This timely series of lessons will examine baptism in light of the Scriptures. Baptism is a pivotal point in a person's salvation and deserves careful study because it is a command from the very lips of our Savior!

Lesson Text: Acts 8:26-40; Acts 19:1-5; Romans 6:4-5; Ephesians 4:5

Lesson Aim: To study the uniqueness of New Testament baptism.

Lesson Preview: You will . . .

1. See the need to study the subject of baptism.
 2. Explore the fundamental *action* and *purpose* of baptism.
 3. Be able to identify the "one baptism" as an action of immersion.
 4. Understand the difference between a translation and transliteration as it relates to the word "baptism."
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THE DISTINCTIVE NATURE OF THE “ONE BAPTISM” (Ephesians 4:4-5)

A. The “One Baptism” Implies a Unique Quality Over the Three Other Baptisms Mentioned in the Bible

1. The “one baptism” can be distinguished, identified and recognized from any other baptism such as a counterfeit attempt at baptism.
2. There are particular characteristicness of New Testament baptism that causes it to have a distinctive identity.
3. This is significant when there is an understanding that the New Testament speaks of four baptisms.
 - a. There is the baptism of John the Baptist (Mark 1:4).
 - b. There is the baptism of the Holy Spirit that Jesus would baptize with (Matthew 3:11).
 - c. There is the baptism of fire (Matthew 3:10).
 - d. In Matthew 28:19, there is the imperative statement of our Lord to be baptized and this is the one that Paul speaks of in Ephesians 4:5.

B. A Review of the Four Baptisms

1. The baptism of John the Baptist.
 - a. John baptized some of the Jewish people in the Palestine area.
 - b. This baptism was not for the Gentiles; it was confined to God’s covenant people.
 - c. Mark 1:4 explains that this baptism was a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.
 - d. It was significant as it related to the work that Jesus would do in saving the souls of people beginning on the day of Pentecost when people were forgiven and added to the church (Acts 2:38-47).
 - e. With the announcement of the birth of John the purpose of his ministry was to prepare people for the Lord (Luke 1:17) .
 - f. So by the preaching and baptizing that John did, he was preparing the people who would be ready to obey the gospel on the day of Pentecost.
2. The baptism with the Holy Spirit.
 - a. The baptism with the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11) was a promise, not a command, which Jesus himself performed at Pentecost (Acts 2:33).
 - b. In the Greek language, the word baptism means to “overwhelm.”
 - c. A person is not baptized into the Spirit. The Spirit does not immerse anybody into anything.
 - d. The baptism of the Holy Spirit referred to in Matthew 3:11 meant that the Holy Spirit was going to overwhelm someone, particularly the apostles on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).
 - e. As Peter preached and showed that Jesus was crucified, buried, and raised from the dead, the inspired apostle made it clear that Jesus has poured forth the Holy Spirit which they saw and heard, literally the

outpouring (overwhelming) of the Holy Spirit on the apostles.

3. The Baptism of Fire.
 - a. In Matthew 3:10-11, John states Jesus would baptize not only with the Holy Spirit, but with fire.
 - b. Jesus would administer the baptism of fire. There are two ways to view this baptism of fire.
 - 1) Jesus would administer the baptism of fire at the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - 2) The baptism of fire would refer to how this universe would be burned up.
 - c. The Jewish people had rejected Jesus as Lord.
 - d. The culmination of this and all their sins was apparent.
 - e. In A.D. 70, Christ Jesus brought Titus Vaspasian, to destroy the city of Jerusalem.
4. The Baptism Jesus commanded is for the remission of sins.
 - a. Matthew 28:19 records Jesus giving the command to be baptized into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
 - b. This is the “one baptism” of which Paul spoke of in Ephesians 4:4-5.
 - c. This New Testament baptism is distinctive in identity and nature.

C. The Action of New Testament Baptism

1. When Jesus said, “baptize them” He was giving an imperative statement, a command to be obeyed.
 - a. Defined from the Greek, *baptisma* is the **noun** that is translated baptism in the New Testament.
 - b. This is more of a transliteration (bringing the Greek sound over into English) than a translation (bringing the meaning of the term from Greek to English).
 - c. Lexicons define the word *baptisma* to mean “immersion, submersion.”
 - d. The action is defined in the word “immersion.”
 - e. When Paul said, “there is . . . one baptism,” it actually translates, “there is one immersion.”
 - f. The action of baptism is actually defined in the translation and can be understood that when a person is baptized that person is immersed!
2. The **verb** form of baptism is *baptizo*.
 - a. This is the word that is also translated “immerse” in the New Testament.
 - b. Once again the action of baptism is defined in the translation, which is “immersion.”
 - c. When Christ said to go and teach all nations baptizing them, He literally meant to immerse them.
 - d. That is what the Lord commanded the people to do.
 - e. There are some who tried to render an accurate and literal translation

- from the Greek into the English of the word baptism.
- f. An example is found in Matthew 3:1 where the Scripture is translated “In those days came John the immerser.”
 - g. The phrase “one baptism” i.e., “one immersion,” shows that the action is distinct from sprinkling or pouring.
 - 1) The Greek word for “sprinkle” is “rhantizo.”
 - 2) The Greek word for pouring is “cheo.”
 - 3) Neither of these words sound like “baptizo”
 - 4) If people say “we baptize by sprinkling or pouring” it would be like saying we “immerse by sprinkling or pouring” and that would be a contradiction of the very terms that come from the original Greek language!
3. After the New Testament was written, men began to move away from the fundamental teachings of baptism.
 - a. They would substitute, for one reason or another, pouring and sprinkling for immersion.
 - b. It is a matter of recorded history that the practice of pouring and sprinkling were substituted for the command of immersion much later. These actions (pouring and sprinkling) do not express the true meaning of the Lord’s command to *baptizo, to immerse*! (For more study of this important topic, please refer to “Supplement & Study Notes” at the back of this study guide).
 - c. Sprinkling and pouring are human traditions that Christ says makes void the commands of God (Matthew 15:6).
 - d. Clearly sprinkling or pouring for baptism is **applying** water **to** a person rather than **immersing** one **in** water.
 4. The Lord commanded people to be **immersed in** water (to plunge beneath, to dip under).
 - a. This is clearly stated in Matthew 3:11 and Acts 8:35-39 where the distinctive *action* of baptism is **immersing in** water.
 - b. This corresponds to the definition of the term immersion, and to the fact that the New Testament refers to baptism as a “burial” (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12).
 - c. Until a person is immersed, that individual really has not obeyed the command of the Lord.
 - d. Baptism is a very significant topic to study and should be done with the utmost care using an open Bible with an open heart.
 5. The *action* of immersion is made very clear in the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:26-40.
 - a. Phillip preached a grand sermon from Isaiah 53 “preaching unto him Jesus.”
 - b. When they come to a certain body of water, the eunuch, convinced and convicted, says, “see here is water, what hinders me to be baptized? (Lit. to be “immersed”).
 - c. Phillip responded, “nothing, if you believe.”

- d. The preacher did not separate faith from baptism, or baptism from faith in Jesus.
- e. The eunuch believed in Jesus and expressed his faith by being baptized (immersed) in water.
- f. The divine record says, “*they both went down into the water, both Phillip and the eunuch and he baptized (immersed) him.*”
- g. Notice the action that took place in the water.
 - 1) There was a going down **into** the water.
 - 2) There was an immersion **in** the water
 - 3) There was a coming **up out** of the water.

D. This Action Corresponds to the Description of Baptism as a Burial

- 1. In Romans 6:4 Paul uses descriptive language to describe the *action* of baptism.
 - a. “We are therefore buried with Him by baptism.”
 - b. That makes sense to say, “we were buried therefore with Him by immersion.”
 - c. The command of the Lord to be baptized is a command to be baptized (immersed) in water.
- 2. In Colossians 2:12, Paul again uses very precise language about the *action* that is occurring when an individual is baptized.
 - a. “Having been buried with Him in baptism.”
 - b. Literally this states, “having been buried with Him in immersion.”
- 3. The visual impression of baptism is vivid!
 - a. Baptism is an immersion in water, *and*
 - b. Baptism is a burial in water, *and*
 - c. Baptism is a coming up out of the water.
 - d. This is what the Lord commanded!

THE UNIQUENESS OF BAPTISM IS SEEN BEST AS THE “ONE BAPTISM”

A. Paul Emphasizes the Purpose of Baptism

- 1. The purpose of baptism is made clear in Acts 18:24 - 19:5.
 - a. A highly educated man named Apollos, was enlighten in the Old Testament Scriptures.
 - b. Apollos learned of Jesus and believed in Jesus as the Messiah.
 - c. However, he was only aquatinted with the baptism of John.
- 2. A soul-winning couple, Aquila and Priscilla, did some further personal work with Apollos.
 - a. They explained the way of God in a more accurate manner.
 - b. From the context it can be noted that they had a discussion about the subject of baptism.
 - c. This discussion did not focus on the *action* of baptism, but rather the *purpose* of baptism.
- 3. This is made even clearer in the 19th chapter of Acts.

- a. Paul visited Ephesus where the people there were acquainted with the baptism of John.
 - b. In Paul's conversation with the 12 people he asked, *"did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"*
 - c. They replied, *"we have not so much as heard whether the Holy Spirit was given."*
 - d. Paul asked, *"into what were you baptized"* and they gave the response that they had been baptized into John's baptism.
 - e. Paul could not disconnect the reception of the Spirit from baptism into Christ, because he necessarily implied that they could have been baptized into something other than what God intended.
 - f. So when *"they said into John's baptism, Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him . . . that is Jesus . . . when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus."* (Acts 19:5).
4. The *action* of baptism is immersion whether John's baptism or Christ's baptism.
- a. In this situation, the *action* of baptism is not under consideration, but the *purpose* is!
 - b. When Paul used the phrase "into the name of" he was defining the *purpose* of baptism – "into the possession of" Jesus Christ.
 - c. These people were going to be baptized into the possession of the Lord in order to become His possession and receive the indwelling gift of the Holy Spirit which Paul, in Romans 8:9, says is essential if a person belongs to the Lord.
 - d. In other words "if you have not the Spirit you are none of His."
5. Paul explained the difference between John's baptism and baptism into Christ.
- a. This is the "one baptism" that Paul had in mind when he wrote to the Ephesians.
 - b. The nature of New Testament baptism has both a distinctive identity in *action* and *purpose*.
 - c. The *purpose* shows that baptism is a salvation issue.

How important is teaching "sound doctrine" to others? Consider this; in Acts 18:24-26, Luke gives details about a man named Apollos. The Bible says he was an eloquent speaker and had an understanding of the Scriptures up to a certain point. His doctrinal beliefs went only as far as John the Baptist. Apollos is probably best known for being taught the "way of God more accurately" by Priscilla and Aquila (v.26). Imagine the impact he had on the church when he received the "whole

He travels at his own risk who believes he can know the word of God without knowing the Words of God.

Dr. Davis

B. Understanding the Difference Between a Translation and Transliteration

1. The meaning of a translation: To go from one language to another. Choose a word in the vernacular which best expresses the language translated.
2. The meaning of a transliteration: To bring the sound of another alphabet over in the English alphabet.
 - a. The word baptism in the original language is BAPTIZO.
 - b. “Baptism” is a transliteration of the sound from the original alphabet.
 - c. **Beta, Alpha, Pi, Tau, Iota, Zeta, Omega.**
3. This does not tell what baptism is.
 - a. Is baptism sprinkling babies or pouring water on people?
 - b. Is it about the baptism of the Spirit?
 - c. Does it mean baptism is an immersion?

C. The Original Language Must Be Used to Determine the Meaning

1. Using a Greek Lexicon will define the meaning.
 - a. The New Testament was written in the KOINE Greek language.
 - b. The Greek dictionary tells the meaning of the original words in the New Testament.
2. In the Greek dictionary the word BAPTIZO is translated “immerse.”
 - a. It means “to dip, to plunge, to dunk, to submerge, or to immerse.”
 - b. It also means “to overwhelm,” as were the apostles on the day of Pentecost.
3. By translation and definition baptism is an immersion.
 - a. “Dipping people, plunging people, dunking people, or submerging people” in water is the expressed definition of the word “immersion.”
 - b. The word should have been translated *immersed* in Acts 8:36. “What hinders me being immersed?” They both went down into the water and he *baptizo-ed* him, literally immersed him.

D. Different Words Have Different Meanings

1. There are two other words in the original language that must be understood.
 - a. “RHANTIZO” is the word that is translated “SPRINKLE.”
 - b. “CHEO” is the word that is translated “POUR.”
2. Jesus commanded “BAPTIZO.” That is a commandment not a suggestion.
 - a. To be baptized in the name of Jesus means to be baptized by His authority. Heaven commands baptism. (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:37-38).
 - b. Jesus did not command people to be sprinkled.
 - c. He did not command people to have water poured on them.
 - d. The Lord did command immersion!
 - e. This is not an interpretation – it is a definition – Baptism is an immersion in water and that is what the Lord commanded!

Counterfeit Christianity

As sincere seekers of the truth strive to follow the pure and simple teachings of Christ, there are those who would “counterfeit” it. Paul warns the young preacher Timothy of this exact situation in 2 Timothy 3:8-9. Paul mentioned two individuals by name, Jannes and Jambres. The name Jannes means, “one who seduces” and Jambres is “one who is rebellious.” Both of them opposed Moses and the truth. Paul had a similar situation at Ephesus and that is why he is warning Timothy about these “counterfeit” teachers of the gospel. No wonder Paul gave his strongest encouragement to the young preacher when he told him to *“continue in the things you have learned . . . which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation . . .”*

(2 Timothy 3:14-15)

LESSON TWO

JUSTIFICATION AND BAPTISM - THE VITAL CONNECTION

INTRODUCTION

This lesson will focus on the relationship of New Testament baptism to the great gospel doctrine of justification by faith in Christ. There is no subject of greater importance in the Bible than the “Good News” that, “*God so loved the world that He gave His only Son!*” Jesus went to the cross and satisfied God’s justice to make it possible for sinners to come to Him in faith and express that faith in the waters of baptism.

In Mark 16:15-16 Jesus connects baptism to faith in the gospel. The plain command was given from the lips of our Lord when He said, “*Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.*” The rest of the New Testament teaches that baptism is that point in time when faith leads to salvation. Baptism must not be separated from faith in Christ. It is to be understood that baptism is to be the expression of one’s faith in Christ to provide salvation! Indeed, baptism without faith is not valid, nor is faith valid unless it is expressed according to the will of God. The obedience which God accepts is prompted by faith.

Lesson Text: Mark 16:15-16; Romans 4:1-8; Galatians 3:26-27; James 2:14-24; 1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12.

Lesson Aim: To understand the essentials of baptism and justification.

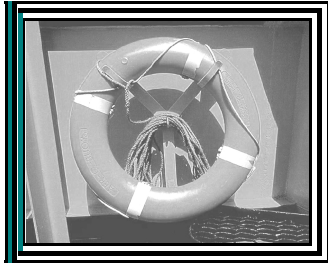
Lesson Preview: You will . . .

1. Learn about the kind of faith by which believers are justified.
 2. Comprehend the meaning of the word “justification” and how it relates to salvation.
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DEFINING JUSTIFICATION

A. It is Important to Know the Kind of Faith That Justifies a Person

1. The definition of the term “justification” is essential to understanding the meaning of the phrase, “justification by faith.”
 - a. Many people think that justification is the same thing as salvation, but

- it really isn't.
- b. Salvation is a rescue.
 - c. Example: when a man is drowning in water and going down for the third time he does not say, "Justify me, Justify me!"
 - d. When a man is in that dire situation, he is saying, "Save me, Save me!"
- 
2. Other people will think that justification and reconciliation are the same thing.
 - a. Reconciliation means to bring two people together.
 - b. This is not the meaning of justification.
 - c. Although, when a person is justified, there is reconciliation going on.
 - d. Reconciliation and justification happen at the same time.
 3. Still others believe that to be justified means to be redeemed.
 - a. This is not the true meaning of justification.
 - b. Justification is a LEGAL term.
 - c. This word "justification" is a word that belongs to the courts, the courts of antiquity and the courts of modern day.
 - d. The word means that a man who is accused of criminal activity has been found to be innocent and is not guilty, so he is exonerated and vindicated.
 4. The meaning of justification is a man who is found to be innocent of the crimes with which he is charged and he is not guilty. Paul does not use the term in this manner.
 - a. Paul teaches that when a man is justified, HE IS ACCOUNTED (credited) RIGHTEOUS (Romans 4:3).
 - b. This means "to put to one's account."
 - c. In being justified by faith a person is treated as righteous.
 - d. A person's obedient faith, expressed in the waters of baptism, is pleasing to God (Hebrews 11:6).

SCRIPTURES REGARDING JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

A. There Are Several Scriptures That Shed Light on the Great Doctrine of Justification by Faith

1. Paul, in Galatians 3:6-10, uses the example of Abraham.
 - a. Abraham is a historical precedent (vs. 6-7).
 - b. The apostle reasons from Old Testament history that individuals are justified by faith as was Abraham.
 - c. If God can save one man by faith, He can save all men by faith.
 - d. Faith is God's principle by which He has always extended salvation (Romans 10:17).
 - e. Even as Abraham believed (trusted) God, it was reckoned to him as

righteousness.

2. God's promise to justify Gentiles by faith (Galatians 3:8).
 - a. God promised to justify Gentiles through Abraham's seed (Genesis 12:3).
 - b. The "seed" is Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:16) and the "blessing" is justification by faith.
 - c. Paul's conclusion is found in Galatians 3:9.
 - d. The "of faith" will be "blessed" together with Abraham.
 - e. The "of faith" stands in contrast to the "works of the law" (Galatians 3:10).

B. In Romans 4:1ff, Paul Again Uses Abraham as One of His Favorite Examples for Justification

1. Abraham was a man who lied several times. Lying is a terrible sin (Revelation 21:8).
2. He not only lied, he brought his wife into a conspiracy to lie.
3. Abraham committed other sins and was guilty as charged.
4. However, in Genesis 15:5, God told Abraham that his offspring would be as the stars in heaven.
 - a. This was remarkable, because Abraham was an older man and his wife was barren!
 - b. The idea of having children was out of the question and so God had to do something miraculous in order for them to have children.
 - c. God said Abraham's seed shall be like the stars of heaven and the Bible says that *"he [Abraham] believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness."* (Genesis 15:6).
5. Paul takes this into account in Romans 4:1-3 when he refers to Genesis 15:6.
6. It is made clear by Paul that Abraham's faith was accounted for righteousness in spite of the fact that the man was guilty of sin.

C. It is a Beautiful and Remarkable Thing God Has Done for Us Through Christ

1. Paul makes this wonderful application to all believers in Romans 4:23-24.
2. It was not only reckoned unto Abraham, *"but for our sake also, to whom it will be reckoned, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead"* (Romans 4:24).
3. Paul makes it clear to whom this applies.
4. What is the definition of justification?
 - a. It is the guilty man who is looked upon as innocent.
 - b. A man who is a sinner is looked upon as though he is righteous.
 - c. A person's faith is reckoned for righteousness.

D. We Are Justified By Faith

1. In Romans 5:1 it says, *“Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
2. Ephesians 2:8, *“ . . . for by grace have you been saved through faith.”*
3. The biblical doctrine of justification by faith must be the greatest doctrine to be preached.
4. The phrase, “by faith” summarizes a person’s total response to God and contains all the specific commands that God coupled with His promise to save us.

E. Jesus Made Baptism a Prerequisite to Salvation

1. According to Hebrews 5:8-9, Jesus is the source of salvation to all that obey Him.
 - a. When Jesus said, *“Go into all the world and preach the gospel,”* He was saying preach the good news message.
 - b. It is a matter of trusting Jesus, who went to the cross and became the sin offering for each and every individual who obeys Him (read Hebrews 10:14).
 - c. When a man is justified, every sin he commits, the guilt and the penalty, thereof, is completely wiped away.
 - d. The sacrifice of Christ is enough to make it so that if a person is faithful to the Lord every sin committed will be taken care of.
2. The object of a person’s faith is Jesus.
 - a. Paul made this very clear in Acts 13:38-39 that Jesus is the focus of a person’s faith and trust.
 - b. Paul continues to develop the object of faith as Jesus when he told Peter in Galatians 2:16, *“knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ . . .”*
3. The plain teaching of Galatians 3:26-27 states that a person enters *“into Christ”* at the point of baptism.
 - a. In Galatians 3:26 Paul reveals, *“We are all sons of God, by faith, in Christ Jesus.”*
 - b. The object of a person’s faith and trust is Jesus Christ.
 - c. Verse 27 describes how that faith is expressed in the Lord – in the beautiful waters of baptism.
 - d. When a person is baptized *“into Christ,”* it actually means that a person is “clothed with Christ.”
 - e. Baptism puts a sinner in contact with the life-giving sacrifice of Jesus.
 - f. Without baptism there is no being-in-Christ.
 - g. Baptism is faith in ACTION!

AN OBEDIENCE OF FAITH – THE KIND OF FAITH THAT JUSTIFIES

A. The Gospel is Made Know to All Nations, Leading to Obedience of Faith

1. Obedience of faith means that a person renders obedience unto God to do what He asks us to do because our faith is in Him (Romans 16:25-26).
 - a. All of mankind will have the opportunity to become obedient believers. (Romans 10:17).
 - b. It was God's eternal purpose that "obedience of faith" is the condition on which He reckons justification.
 - c. If God has asked a person to be baptized as a condition of being saved, and that person will trust the Lord and be baptized, then that person is exercising faith in Christ.
 - d. By being baptized there is the obedience of a person's faith in Jesus and that faith is reckoned (credited) for righteousness.
 - e. This is a faith that is perfected by a man's obedience (See Romans 1:5 and Romans 16:26 – both use the expression "*obedience of faith*.").
2. God is able to "establish" men by the preaching of the gospel.
 - a. The revelation of the mystery is in harmony with God's plan, that of Jesus being the Savior of man.
 - b. This mystery has been manifested in Jesus' incarnation, life, death, burial, and resurrection.
 - c. The purpose is the obedience of faith in Jesus Christ.
 - d. An obedient faith is an obedient response!

JAMES DEFINES TWO KINDS OF FAITH

A. Dead Faith

1. James asked a rhetorical question in James 2:14, "*what does it profit, my brother, if a man say he hath faith, and have not works, can that faith save him?*"
 - a. James has already pointed out that a believer must be a doer of the word (James 1:20-27).
 - b. The apostle illustrates the answer, "*if a brother or sister is naked and in lack of daily food, and one of you say unto him, be warmed and filled and yet you give him not the things needful to the body, what does it profit?*" (James 2:16)
 - c. A person does not fill empty bellies with words and so James says, what do words profit if there is no action taken.
 - d. People with dead faith substitute words instead of obedience.
2. In verse 17, James makes it abundantly clear that the kind of faith that cannot save is a faith that does not obey.
 - a. James is talking about works of faith, not about the works of the Law of Moses. James is talking about trusting God!

- b. God asks a person to do something for a reason and that person does it, trusting God.
- c. A person does not earn anything by that; that person is simply expressing trust by doing what God asked each obedient believer to do.
- d. Profession is meaningless without obedience (Matthew 7:21).
- 3. James says in verse 20, *“But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?”*
- 4. The apostle then concludes that faith apart from works is barren.

B. A Dynamic, Saving Faith

- 1. James now begins to show the kind of faith that does save and uses his favorite example as Paul did, Abraham.
- 2. James states a rhetorical question in James 3:21, “was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar?”
 - a. The answer James expected to receive was, “Yes, he was.”
 - b. Abraham did what God said, and by his works his faith was made perfect.
 - c. Abraham lived an imperfect life, but he had a perfect faith, perfected by what he did (James 2:23).
 - d. James preached Genesis 15:6 just as Paul did.
 - e. This conclusion is powerful because in verse 24, James states, *“You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone.”*
- 3. James reminds his readers that Abraham was not justified before God UNTIL he had obeyed the requirements to give Isaac as a sacrifice.
 - a. The statement “Abraham believed God” was not fulfilled until after he had obeyed the Lord (cf. Genesis 22:1-19; Hebrew 11:17-19).
 - b. It was obedient faith that justified Abraham.
- 4. This does not contradict Romans 4 that says Abraham was justified, but it was not by works, for Paul was talking about the works of the Law of Moses.
 - a. It can be noted in the case of Abraham that a person needs more than mental assent (faith only) to be pleasing unto God.
 - b. James is speaking about works of faith, and not the legal works of the Old Law.
 - c. A person cannot earn justification by their own merits.
 - d. Salvation is a gift of God which must be accepted by obedient faith.
 - e. James is saying that Abraham’s deeds have legally shown his faith to be genuine and therefore he was judged justified in God’s sight.
- 5. A person’s faith in Jesus must be an obedient faith, expressing itself in action. There is a distinction between our obedience of faith in Jesus and faith in our obedience to Jesus.
- 6. A person’s *faith* must be in Jesus to *trust* Him to do what He said He would do when a person obeys Him.

The Two Together Form a Single Fusion Galatians 3:26-27	
Faith	Baptism
<i>"You are all sons of God through faith..."</i>	<i>"...for all of you who were baptized in Christ have clothed yourselves with</i>

7. Baptism is a part of a saving faith!

BAPTISM IS THE EXPRESSION OF FAITH IN JESUS

A. In Mark 16:15-16, Jesus Gives the Simple and Understandable Command, *"He That Believes and Is Baptized Shall Be Save"*

1. It is important to notice just what Jesus said and did not say regarding baptism.
 - a. Jesus did not say, "he that believeth shall be saved and can be baptized."
 - b. He plainly said, "he that believeth and is baptized, he is the one that shall be saved."
 - c. The identity of the saved in Mark 16:15-16 is revealed. It is that simple and powerful!
 - d. The New American version has a very strong translation, *"He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved."*
 - e. This leaves no doubt in a person's mind that baptism precedes salvation.
2. Baptism *is* for the forgiveness of sin.
 - a. Peter preached this on the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2.
 - b. Peter and the rest of the apostles preached Jesus crucified, buried, and resurrected to sit at the right hand of God.
 - c. Jesus now has all authority and on the day of Pentecost, the apostles carried out the command of Jesus as recorded in Mark 16:15-16.
 - d. When this was preached to the Jews who had crucified Jesus, they were cut to the heart (Acts 2:36-37).
 - e. Peter, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit said, *"repent and be baptized"* and the result would be the forgiveness of their sins.
3. What did these Jews do?
 - a. Obviously they believed! There is no doubt about that or they wouldn't have asked what to do!
 - b. These Jews had crucified Jesus and were cut to the heart.
 - c. They felt the guilt of what they did and said, *"what shall we do?"*
 - d. Peter's response was, here is what you must do – you already believe

- but you are not saved.
- e. Peter says, “repent and be immersed, everyone of you” – there are no exceptions.
- f. They are commanded to be baptized in the name of Jesus (by His authority).
- g. What for? For the forgiveness of their sins, because that is the expressed purpose of baptism.
- 4. Peter is teaching that baptism is essential to a person’s salvation.
 - a. The same apostle who taught in Acts 2 that baptism is for forgiveness of sins also wrote in 1 Peter 3:21, “*Where unto it is baptism that now saves us.*”
 - b. In 1 Peter 3:21, Peter is speaking to Christians. (Please refer to the chart on the next page).
 - c. Peter was not saying that baptism saves apart from faith or apart from repentance.
 - d. Peter was not teaching you can take a person, throw him in the water and that he is going to be saved.
 - e. Peter was clearly talking to Christians who had already been educated to the purpose of baptism.
 - f. Baptism is an expression of faith in Christ and when a person is baptized into Christ, that person must trust Christ to do what He said He would do – that is, provide salvation to those who trust and obey Him!
- 5. A person is saved when sins are forgiven.
 - a. In Matthew 1:21, the angel announced that it was Jesus who would save His people from their sins.
 - b. Paul states in 1 Timothy 1:15, “*Faithful is the saying, worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*”
 - c. Take these two passage together and it can be understood that when a person’s sins are forgiven that person is saved from sin.
 - d. The apostle Peter who defined baptism as forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38) also says it is baptism that saves (1 Peter 3:21).
 - e. Therefore we are saved when sins are forgiven and baptism is part of that process (Mark 16:15-16).

B. Baptism is an Appeal to God for a Clear Conscience – 1 Peter 3:21

1. The New American Standard Version translates the Greek quite accurately – baptism is an appeal to God for a clear conscience. (See other translations in the insert on the next page.)
2. Peter says that baptism is not a putting off of the filth of the flesh like taking a bath – Peter instructs his reader what baptism is for.
 - a. Baptism is a salvation issue!
 - b. A person hears the gospel and understands the guilt of their sin.

- c. Because of this guilt of sin, their conscience is killing them.
- d. This person understands that in order to have this guilt removed and sins forgiven, baptism into Christ must occur.
- e. The apostle Paul teaches that baptism is faith in God to remove sin.
- f. This clearing happens at the point of baptism.

Various Translations of 1 Peter 3:21

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us . . ."	KJV
"There is also an antitype which now saves us, namely baptism . . ."	NKJV
"Which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism . . ."	ASV
"Baptism which corresponds to this, now saves you . . ."	RSV
"And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you . . ."	NASV
"And this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also . . ."	NIV
"Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you . . ."	ESV
"This water prefigured the water of baptism through which you are brought to safety . . ."	NEB
"And that water is like baptism that now saves you . . ."	NCV
"Those flood waters were like baptism that now saves you . . ."	CEV
"And this is a picture of baptism, which now saves you . . ."	NLT

- g. The Bible teaches that we don't baptized saved people, but people to be saved!
- h. Both Peter and Paul teach that baptism is faith in God to remove sin.

C. The Analogy of Circumcision (Colossians 2:12-13)

1. Circumcision simply means a "cutting away."
 - a. Paul is speaking in terms of a spiritual circumcision.
 - b. He defines this spiritual circumcision in terms of an analogy.
 - c. When a person's sins are forgiven, God is cutting away sin. This is the analogy Paul is using to impress on the readers the significant of baptism.
 - d. In verse 12 Paul says, "*Having been buried with Him in baptism, wherein you were raised with Him through faith in the working of God.*" This is baptism.
 - e. **Who** is working to circumcise? God.
 - f. **When** does God cut away sin? When a person is baptized!
 - g. So the apostle Paul is saying that baptism is faith in the working of God.
 - h. Baptism must be the expression of a person's faith in Jesus, that what Jesus did at the cross is enough to satisfy the justice of God for every sin committed or will be committed.

- i. Baptism is to have a clear conscience and to have the remission of sins.
2. What Jesus did at the cross must be conveyed to those who desire to be baptized.
 - a. At the cross, Jesus became our sin offering and He satisfied the justice of God.
 - b. People need to be taught to put their faith in Jesus to do what He said He would do, when they do what He asks them to do.
 - c. People are saved by faith.
 - d. Baptism is the expression of that faith.
3. Concerning those who have been baptized but want to be baptized again?
 - a. Teach them and educate them to the purpose of baptism.
 - b. In the process of teaching it must be conveyed to them what Jesus did at the cross.
 - c. Jesus became sin our offering and by His sacrifice, He satisfied the justice of God (Isaiah 53:11).
 - d. These people must be taught to put their obedient faith in Jesus to do what He said He would, when they do what He asked.
4. Baptism is a work of faith in Jesus to save.
 - a. Baptism is the response of faith in Christ's work at the cross.
 - b. It is not a work of merit; it earns us nothing.
 - c. It is obedience of *faith in Christ* to save us at the point of baptism.
 - d. It is the moment at which our faith in Jesus is perfected and the New Testament teaches *that* faith is reckoned for righteousness.

Did You Know?

Baptism is a major topic in the New Testament. It is repeatedly taught by Jesus and His apostles along with other commands.

"Believe - Faith"	483 times
"Repent - Repentance"	56 times
"Confess, Confession"	32 times
"Baptize, Baptism"	77 times

LESSON THREE

THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM

INTRODUCTION

In our last lesson we observed the relationship of baptism to justification by faith. Jesus said, “Go. . .preach the gospel. . .he that believes and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:15-16). When an alien sinner is baptized that individual is expressing faith in the Lord to forgive sins. The Bible teaches that baptism is that point in time when a person’s faith leads to salvation even as Christ promised.

Among evangelical churches today, baptism is regarded as having no significance to salvation. One of the chief claims of some early reformation Protestants and their present day heirs, is that baptism is only a symbol. Their theology is that people are saved before baptism, receive the Holy Spirit before baptism, and are children of God and members of His church without baptism. In essence, they are teaching that a person is saved by “faith only” and therefore baptism is not necessary in order to be saved. The lines of distinction between the different denominations are of no significant because they all teach that people are saved by faith alone. Therefore it doesn’t make any difference at all what a person believes about baptism since it is not essential to salvation.

This theology is barely 500 years old. This false teaching of justification by faith alone, apart from baptism, is recent to Christianity. This erroneous teaching has no root in Scripture. It was never a major teaching in the body of Christ until app. 500 years ago when denominationalism had its beginning. This is not what the New Testament teaches nor what the early church and church fathers believed and practiced regarding baptism.

Lesson Text: Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; John 3:3-5; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:16; Acts 19:1-5; 1 Corinthians 1:13; 1 Corinthians 10:1-5; Ephesians 4:4-5

Lesson Aim: To understand that the purpose of baptism is to become the possession of the Lord.

Lesson Preview: You will. . .

1. Examine the views of some early church fathers regarding baptism.
 2. Understand the meaning of the Greek terms, “eis to onoma” meaning “into the name of” (Matthew 28:18) and “epi to onomati” meaning “by the authority of” (Acts 2:38).
-

The early church fathers believed baptism was necessary for salvation. Although they are not our authority for salvation, they do reflect what the New Testament teaches about baptism. The position of the early church fathers from the end of the 1st century to the middle of the 5th century are generously supplied in their writings. J.M.D. Kelly, an early protestant church historian, made this statement,

From the beginning baptism was the universally accepted rite of admission into the church as regards its significance; it was always held to convey the remission of sins. . .we descend into the water ‘dead’ and come again ‘alive.’ (Early Christian Doctrines, 193).

The following chart gives an overview of the early church fathers affirming that baptism is the point in time when one is forgiven of sins:

Church Father	Belief Regarding Baptism
The Epistle of Barnabas (79 A.D.)	That remission of sins is conferred on a person at baptism (Letter of Barnabas, 11:1).
Justin Martyr (110-165 A.D.)	People are regenerated in water (First Apology chant.61).
Irenaeus (120-205 A.D.)	People are made clean from old transgressions by the means of water and invoking the Lord (Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol.1, 574).
Tertullian (140-230 A.D.)	The effect of being plunged into the waters of baptism was that “we are freed from our sins” (Baptism 1, 7).
Council of Constantinople I (381 A.D.)	“We believe in one baptism for the remission of sins.” (Nicene Creed).
Justin Martyr (110-165 A.D.)	“The one who refuses to be baptized is to be condemned as an unbeliever, partially on the basis of what Jesus told Nicodemus. . . for as the Lord says, ‘ <i>Except a man be baptized of water and the spirit, he shall by no means enter into the kingdom of heaven</i> ’” (Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 7, 456-457). (See John 3:5).

DEFINING THE PURPOSES OF BIBLICAL BAPTISM

A. Knowing What the Phrase “Into the Name Of,” Will Shed Light on the Purpose of Baptism

1. Jesus used this phrase in Matthew 28:19: “*Go teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*”
 - a. The phrase, “into the name of” means, “into the possession of.”
 - b. Jesus commanded that those who have been taught and who believe in the gospel were to be baptized into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
2. This phrase, “into the name of,” has been mistakenly interpreted.
 - a. Some feel that this phrase is a formula of words that have to be said when baptizing someone.
 - b. Other people have interpreted this phrase to mean “by the authority of Christ.”
 - c. This latter statement is so misinterpreted strictly because of the connotation of the English translation.
 - d. It sounds so much like what Peter said in Acts 2:38: “*Repent ye and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ.*”
 - 1) This phrase means, “by the authority of.” The Greek term is *epi to onomati*.
 - 2) That does not sound like the phrase that Jesus used in Matthew 28:19. Jesus says baptize them “into the name of” and the Greek term is *eis to onoma*.
 - 3) These two Scriptures don’t sound alike at all.
 - 4) The phrase that Jesus used in Matthew 28:19, (“into the name of” - *eis to onoma*) has a distinctive meaning.

Matthew 28:19	Acts 2:38
. . . into the name of <i>eis to onoma</i> “Into the possession of”	. . . in the name of <i>epi to onomati</i> “By the authority of”

B. A Distinction Between a Translation and a Definition Must Be Made Regarding Matthew 28:19 and Acts 2:38

1. The translation of Peter’s statement in Acts 2:38 (by the authority of - *epi to onomati*) comes out to “in the name of” and manifestly means “by the authority of.” That is the definition of the translation.
 - a. Example— In order to authorize a check for cashing, a person must sign their name to that check.

- b. The check is cashed in the name of (by the authority of) the person signing the check.
- c. *Epi to onomati*, (by the authority of) establishes the authority by which people are baptized because Jesus is both Lord and Christ.
- 2. Jesus did not use the phrase Peter used.
 - a. Jesus said to baptize them (Matthew 28:19) “into the name of” (*eis to onoma*) the Holy three (into the possession of).
 - b. This is not a formula of words to use when baptizing someone. This is what happens to a person *when* he is baptized.
 - c. The baptized person becomes the possession of the Lord.

C. Jesus Died to “...Purify unto Himself a People for His Own Possession...” (Titus 2:14)

- 1. At what point do sinners become the Lord’s possession?
 - a. Individuals become the possession of the Lord when they are baptized to *become* the possession of the Lord.
 - b. This is the lexical meaning of the term, “into the name of.” Not *in*, but properly, *into*.
- 2. In the Greek papyri, “into the name of” is a common phrase for transference of ownership. Here are some observation of scholars.
 - a. William Hendrickson says, it was understood to mean, “into the possession of.” Being baptized “into the name of” therefore means being baptized into a virtual relationship with that one.
 - b. W.E. Vine says, “the phrase in Matthew 28:19, ‘...baptizing them into the name of...’ would indicate that the baptized person was closely bound to or became the property of the one into whose name he was baptized.”
 - c. Myron S. Augsburger makes this statement, “Matthew says we are ‘baptized into the name of...’ This brings a person into direct relation with God as we know Him: Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.”
 - d. Baptism is that point in time when a person starts a relationship with God.

J.D. Bales, an esteemed Greek scholar, says, “the word ‘in’ in the King James Version is the same word that is translated ‘into’ in the American Standard Version. The Greek word is “eis” and means “into, in, toward, to, in order to.” To be baptized into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit indicated that one was baptized into their possession. Thus the one who was baptized belongs to them.”

- 3. These Bible scholars are in agreement that the term Jesus used in Matthew 28:19, is “into the possession of.”
 - a. It **does not** mean, “by the authority of.”
 - b. It certainly is not talking about a formula of words to be performed in

order for a person to be baptized scripturally.

- c. If it was a formula of words that had to be spoken before a person could be baptized acceptably, then why did Peter change it on Pentecost when he said, “be baptized in the name of Jesus.”
- d. Paul said in Acts 19:5, that they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. “*And when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.*”
- e. Matthew 28:19 is not a formula of words that is spoken when a person is baptized.
- f. “Into the name of” is a statement of what happens when a person is baptized.
- g. When Jesus said, “*Go teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of (eis to onoma),*” Jesus is simply saying what happens to a person when he obeys that command.
- h. Thus, that person is becoming the possession of the Lord.

D. The Apostle Peter Declares Baptized Believers Are a People for God’s Own Possession

1. In 1 Peter 2:9 Peter says Christians “ . . . *are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession.* . . .”
 - a. Compare 1 Peter 2:9 with Titus 2:14.
 - b. In Titus 2:14 Paul says that Jesus died to provide for Himself a people for His own possession.
 - c. In an unsaved condition, a person is not part of God’s possession.
2. Jesus died so that people who come to Him, become His possession and that is done by obeying Him as Lord!
 - a. By faith in the Lord, people were baptized to *become* His possession.
 - b. They were baptized into the name of the Father, the Son and the Spirit.
 - c. God makes a people for His possession at the moment of baptism!

E. Note Peter’s Terminology in Acts 2:38

1. “*Repent ye, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.*” (Emphasis added.)
 - a. Peter’s words, “**in** the name of” (epi to onomati) is distinct from the meaning of Jesus’ words in Matthew 28:19, “**into** the name of” (eis to onoma).
 - b. The lexical definition of “in the name of” (Acts 2:38), (epi to onomati) means “on the basis of, or by the authority of” (Thayer’s Lexicon, p. 232).
 - c. In Acts 2:21, Peter wants to show who the Lord is and upon whose name sinners are to call for salvation because he quotes Joel 2 when he said that God would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh.
 - d. As recorded in Acts 2:21, Peter quotes Joel as saying “*whosoever shall*

call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

- e. Now, who is the Lord upon whose name sinners are to call on? Peter shows that is Christ.
 - f. Peter goes on to show that Christ was crucified, buried, resurrected, and ascended to the right hand of God.
 - g. By the time Peter is finished he makes it clear that this Jesus who was crucified was made Lord and Christ.
2. How do people call upon the name of the Lord? By being baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins.
- a. Peter has shown that Jesus is the Lord of Joel's prophecy and that is the name they must call on.
 - b. When Peter had presented Jesus as "the Lord," upon whose name sinners are to call for salvation (Acts 2:21,36), the inspired apostle then commanded them to repent and be baptized "*in the name of*" Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).
 - c. "In the name of" means "*by the authority of*" Jesus Christ, who is the Lord and as Lord, He has all authority!
 - d. What Jesus said in Matthew 28:19 is *what happens* when a person is baptized – you become the possession of the Lord at baptism.
 - e. When Peter commanded baptism it was for the forgivingness of sins and was the commanded statement of the Lord (Acts 2:38) because He has ALL authority!
 - f. When looking at Matthew 28:19 and Acts 2:38 it is to be noted that one tells what happens (Matthew 28:19), and the other tells why a person is baptized, "*for the forgivingness of sins*" (Acts 2:38).

F. Baptism into the Possession of the Lord Clarifies the Meaning of the Following Scriptures

1. In 1 Corinthians 1:12-13 – The church at Corinth was divided into groups of loyalty to Paul, to Apollos, and to Peter (v.12).
2. To focus the church's attention on this division, Paul asks three questions.
 - a. First he asks, "*Is Christ divided?*" The answer - "Of course not!"
 - b. Then, he asks, "*Was Paul crucified for you?*" The answer - "No! Christ was crucified for you."
 - c. Now comes this statement, "*If Christ is crucified for you and He wants you to be His possession, why are you going around saying I am of Paul, or I am of Cephas or I am of Apollos.*"
 - d. Paul's rhetorical question, "Were you baptized 'into the name of' *eis to onoma* Paul?" implied that the Corinthians knew they had not been baptized into the possession of Paul, but *into the possession* of Christ.
 - e. Therefore they belonged to Christ, not Paul.
 - f. Paul established the church at Corinth by preaching Christ crucified and baptism *into the possession of Christ* (Acts 18:8).

- g. The passage in 1 Corinthians 1:13 makes this very clear.
 - 3. In 1 Corinthians 10:1-5 – When Israel crossed the Red Sea they were “baptized into Moses.” (Exodus 4).
 - a. Just as baptism brings believers into possession of Christ and under His authority, so Israel came under the leadership and authority of Moses when they crossed the Red Sea – a type of our baptism into the possession of the Lord. Christian immersion is parallel to immersion into Moses.
 - b. It is implied that the Corinthians knew they became the Lord’s possession at baptism and that is why Paul asks this series of questions.
 - c. Paul is calling their attention to the fact of whose possession they really are!
-

Did You Know?

Some of the strongest scholarship in the present religious and Christian world is back of the definition “eis to onoma” (meaning “into the possession of”). To be baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit indicates that one was baptized into their possession. In the Greek papyri, which is that from which we get the New Testament, “into the name of” was a common phrase for the transference of ownership. That is documented by Stephen L. Caiger in his “Archaeology and the New Testament.” It is also documented by George Milligan in his book, “The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament.” William Barclay writes that the phrase “into the name of” implies “absolute and utter possession.” J.D. Bales also makes the observation that baptism “into the name of” indicates that “one belongs to the one into whose name he is baptized. In baptism we are baptized into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We enter into their possession. (Quoted in James D. Bales, The Case of Cornelius, Gospel Light Publishing Company). David Prior and F. W. Groschedide agree on 1 Corinthians 1:13. “To be baptized in (*eis*, literally “into”) the name of someone was to have one’s life signed over to that person, to come under his authority and to be at his beck and call. Paul makes the self-evident point that the Corinthians had, in baptism, become the possession of Jesus Christ – and of nobody else.”

- 4. Acts 19:1-5 – Here is the account of how Apollos had taught John’s baptism to some Ephesians.
 - a. In Acts 19:2ff, Paul corrects this matter, by informing these Ephesians that they had been taught John’s baptism.
 - b. He asked them if they received the Holy Spirit when they believed? Their reply was that they had not even heard of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. At this point, Paul immediately asked, “*into what were you baptized?*” They answered “*into John’s baptism.*”

- d. There is a world of difference in what John's baptism was for and what Christian baptism is for.
- e. The record says, that when they understood the teaching of the Lord's baptism, they believed on Jesus and were baptized into the name of Jesus Christ. They were baptized into His possession.
- 5. Ephesians 4:4-5 – Paul is very clear on the ONE baptism.
 - a. The inspired apostle is speaking of the one baptism for the remission of sins *and*,
 - b. The ONE baptism (immersion) is the result of baptizing a penitent believer “into the possession of” the Lord.

SUMMARY OF THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM

A. One of the Purposes of Baptism, as Christ Commanded, Is to Become His Possession

- 1. The phrases, “*into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit*” (Matthew 28:19) and “*in the name of Jesus Christ*” (Acts 2:38), are different from each other in wording and meaning in the original language.
 - a. Neither of these Scriptures is a formula of words to be spoken at baptism.
 - b. Acts 2:38 to be “*baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins*” explains **WHY** people are baptized for the forgiveness of sins – because Christ authorized it.
 - c. Matthew 28:19 is the Lord's command to be baptized “*into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*” and explains **WHAT HAPPENS** when a person is baptized – they become the possession of the Lord.
- 2. The phrase *eis to onoma* (into the name of), necessarily implies that one is to be baptized in order to become the Lord's possession.
 - a. This phrase is used by Jesus (Matthew 28:19), Luke (Acts 8:16, 19:5) and Paul (1 Corinthians 1:13).
 - b. These Scriptures show that there is purpose to baptism and that baptism is essential to salvation!

LESSON FOUR

THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM - PART TWO

INTRODUCTION

Just *what* is accomplished at baptism? Does God do anything when a person is baptized? And if so, what does God do? And where does the Bible say so? Some modern theologies teach that people are saved, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and then become members of the body of Christ before baptism. With this false logic and false teaching, the question arises, “what would be the divine purpose of baptism?” If it were not necessary for baptism in order to receive the Spirit, to become a member of the church, it would seem that nothing at all would take place in heaven or on earth when a sinner is baptized.

What then, does the New Testament say is the purpose for baptism? Some have proposed that baptism is the announcement to the world that they have been saved, that they have received Christ as Lord. These people believe that baptism has nothing to do with salvation but is just an outward act proving one has already been saved. They believe that baptism is nothing more than the outward sign of inward grace. But where does the Bible make such a statement? The plain statements of the New Testament are clear that baptism is a part of God’s plan for the salvation of mankind. Baptism is necessary in order to be a member of the church, to have forgiveness of sins, to be justified, and to become a child of God, **all** which take place simultaneously in the beautiful waters of baptism.

Lesson Text: Matthew 28:19; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9; 3:21; Mark 16:15-16; Romans 6:2-4; John 3:5.

Lesson Aim: To understand that baptism is a salvation issue of eternal importance.

Lesson Preview: You will . . .

1. Learn that baptism is the moment of a sinner’s death to sin and that the resurrection is to the “new of life” in Christ (Romans 6:2-4).
 2. Understand that baptism is an appeal to God for a good conscience toward Him (1 Peter 3:21).
 3. Know that believers are sanctified and cleaned at baptism (Ephesians 5:25-26).
-

THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM

A. Baptism Is Required to Become the Possession of the Lord

1. In Matthew 28:19, the phrase “into the name of” (eis to onoma) means “into the possession of.”
 - a. Titus 2:14 says that Jesus died to purify unto Himself a people for His own possession.
 - b. Jesus died to make people who are not His possession *become* His possession.
 - c. 1 Peter 2:9 declares that baptized believers are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a people for God’s own possession.
 - d. Paul said, in Titus 2:14, that Christ died to make people His possession and in 1 Peter 2:9, Peter talked about people who would become His possession between these two events.
 - e. At the point of baptism when preceded by faith and repentance, believers become the possession of the Lord.
2. Mark 16:15-16 is the Good News of justification by grace through faith in Jesus.
 - a. Jesus, who went to the cross, became sin offering and satisfied the justice of God (Hebrews 2:9).
 - b. The Good News is about Jesus as Lord and Savior who commands belief and baptism in order to receive salvation.
 - c. Jesus makes it clear that when a person believes, and that person is baptized, then that person is saved.
 - d. In Mark 16:15-16, Christ connected baptism to salvation.
 - e. Who is the “he” that will be saved? He who believes *and* is baptized! Note the following New Testament examples:
 - 1) The conversion of the Samaritans (Acts 8:12).
 - 2) Simon the sorcerer (Acts 8:13).
 - 3) The Philippian jailer (Acts 16:30-34).
 - 4) The Corinthians (Acts 18:8).
 - 5) The Galatians (Galatians 3:26-27).

B. The Apostle Peter Teaches That Baptism Accomplishes at Least Four Different Things That Happen Simultaneously at the Point of Baptism

1. The **first** purpose of baptism is for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:37-38).
 - a. Peter preached that Christ has been crucified, buried and resurrected and with that resurrection comes the confirmation that He is the Messiah of Old Testament prophecy (Psalms 110).
 - b. Peter declares that Christ was raised and therefore exalted to the right hand of God. This is powerfully demonstrated in Acts 2!
2. Jesus has **all** authority and **all** power because He is Lord.
 - a. Jesus is the Lord of Acts 2:21 when Joel prophesied that God would

- pour out His Spirit upon all flesh.
 - b. Peter then quotes that prophecy and said in Acts 2:21, “whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved.”
 - c. Peter shows that Jesus is the Lord and He is the one that people must call on for salvation.
 - d. He concludes his soul-stirring sermon by saying, “let all the house of Israel know for sure this Jesus whom you crucified is made **both Lord and Christ.**”
3. Peter has shown that Christ is Lord.
 - a. Peter is crystal clear – lost people are to call on the Lord for salvation and tells these lost sinners how to express that call.
 - b. These people were cut to the heart and wanted to know what to do to be saved!
 - c. Peter instructs them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, (by the authority of Jesus), because He is Lord.
 - d. Peter gives the reason for being baptized – to receive forgiveness of sins!
 - e. Salvation takes place when sins are remitted, removed and forgiven (Psalms 103:12 and Isaiah 38:17).
 4. Calling on the name of Jesus Christ is important!
 - a. Question – How does an individual call on the name of the Lord?
 - b. Many believe that what is involved is getting down on their knees and taking Jesus into their hearts and saying, “Jesus, I have committed sin and come to you. I accept you as my Lord and receive you into my heart as my personal Savior.”
 - c. What is being taught with this false teaching is that a person is saved at the moment of this confession and time of prayer.
 - d. Then for a reason **NOT** stated in the New Testament these people are baptized. This is what false teachers are promoting and teaching.
 5. What does the inspired apostle Peter say about a person’s salvation?
 - a. Peter is very clear that a person must repent and be baptized, **then** the remission of sins will occur.
 - b. When Peter states that Jesus is Lord, he shows that Jesus is the one on whose name, by whose authority, sinners are to appeal to for salvation.
 - c. Peter gives the right order in the process of salvation when he states that a person is to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus, (by His Lordship authority) for the forgiveness of sins.
 - d. Peter explains that people who are sinners **do not** say “Lord Jesus come into my heart,” but rather sinners call on the name of the Lord with an appeal to His authority by their faith that leads them to obey the command of baptism.
 - e. Peter makes it abundantly clear that salvation is for the souls of men.
 6. On the day of Pentecost people were added to the Lord’s church.

- a. On the day the church of Christ began, three thousands souls who “gladly received Peter’s word” in baptism, were added to the church.
- b. Luke further explains that all who were saved thereafter were added to the church that Jesus built (Acts 2:47).
- c. Faith is clearly connected to repentance and baptism for forgiveness of sins and to receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit.

C. The Second Thing that Baptism Accomplishes for an Obedient Believer is to Receive the Gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38)

- 1. **Who** receives the gift of the Holy Spirit?
 - a. Those who are baptized because Jesus commanded it for the forgiveness of sins.
 - b. When a person is baptized for the forgiveness of sin that person will also receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- 2. In Romans 8:9-10, Paul gives an overview of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in conjunction with those who have obeyed the gospel.
 - a. Paul speaks of the indwelling Spirit to the Romans who have already obeyed the gospel (Romans 1:16).
 - b. He is not talking about the Spirit giving a person anything.
 - c. The inspired apostle Paul is talking about God’s gift of the Holy Spirit to Christians, to the person who has just been saved at the point of baptism.
 - d. This is essential to salvation because in Romans 8:9, Paul says, “*if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.*” (KJV)
 - e. Paul is clear on this point – there is not a person living that is going to be the Lord’s possession, unless he has the Holy Spirit.
 - f. That comes simultaneously with becoming a child of God.
- 3. Paul makes it clear in Galatians 3:26-27 that we are sons of God by faith in Christ.
 - a. Faith leads a person to baptism into Christ, then later in Galatians 4:6, Paul says, “*and because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”*”
 - b. Question – Who is it that has the Holy Spirit?
 - c. Only the children of God – but a person is **not** a child of God **until** faith leads to baptism into Christ (see Acts 2:38).
 - d. People **do not** receive the Spirit first and then are baptized later, but folks are baptized to be saved to become children of God and they are gifted with the Holy Spirit.

D. The Third Purpose for Baptism – it is Necessary for Salvation (1 Peter 3:21)

- 1. Peter, writing to Christians experiencing persecution, said they have a clear conscience from the Lord.

- a. In the context of this passage (1 Peter 3:21), Peter declares in an abbreviated statement, “it is baptism that now saves.”
- b. Peter, stated in Acts 2:38 that a person must repent and be baptized for baptism to be worth anything.
- c. When he said, “*where unto baptism now saves us*,” Peter was not saying that people had their sins washed away in water like taking a bath to wash dirt off the body (like a ceremonial cleansing). There are real results from baptism!
- 2. When Peter said, “*whereunto now baptism saves us*,” he was talking to Christians who fully understood and appreciated that Jesus was in control.
 - a. These Christians had forgiveness of sins to receive the gift of the Spirit. Peter was not writing to educate them to the fact that baptism saves, but to remind them of what they already knew.
 - b. Peter is reminding these Christians that if they keep a clear conscience in time of persecution they will be secure eternally.
 - c. His encouragement: stay faithful, keep a clear conscience and everything will be fine because Jesus Christ is in control.
 - d. Peter acknowledges that baptism now saves you. Baptism is not only for forgiveness to receive the Spirit, but as he stated in 1 Peter 3:21, it is to be saved, which is identical to having sins forgiven.

E. The Fourth Purpose for Baptism is an Appeal to God for a Good Conscience Toward God (1 Peter 3:21 – NASV)

- 1. “*And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you – not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience – through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*”
 - a. Baptism is an appeal to God for a clear conscience by the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:4).
 - b. In 1 Peter 3:22, Peter declares that Jesus went into heaven after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.
 - c. Peter is making the point that these Christians have a clear conscience and because of that they are secure.
- 2. Christians can be encouraged because they can have a clear conscience.
 - a. From this verse (1 Peter 3:21-22) it is implied that people are to be baptized who have a guilty conscience.
 - b. People are baptized to gain a clear conscience and have their sins forgiven.
 - c. By the process of baptism a person is going to get rid of their guilty conscience – this is the faith that expresses itself in the waters of baptism.
 - d. It is in baptism that a believer has their sins forgiven and are raised to a life of victory in Jesus Christ!
 - e. If a believer is to have a good conscience, then the believer must obey God.

F. Paul's Teachings Regarding Baptism

1. In Romans, Paul teaches that baptism is the very moment a sinner dies to sin.
 - a. In Romans 6, Paul is writing to Christians who have already been taught the purpose of baptism.
 - b. Paul's point in this chapter is that if a Christian died to sin, they don't live in sin.
 - c. His focus was that these believers need to walk with Jesus after baptism in the "newness of life."
 - d. These obedient believers have died to sin.
 - e. Paul was addressing the false teaching that some had regarding sinning so that grace may increase. Paul's response to this was "God forbid!"
2. Paul was reminding these Christians that they were dead to sin.
 - a. At what point in time did these sinners at Rome die to sin? **When** they were baptized!
 - b. Paul makes another statement of a rhetorical nature. He says, "*know ye not, (I know you know), that all of you who were baptized into Christ, were baptized into His death.*" That is the point they died to sin! Paul is reminding them regarding their death to sin in the waters of baptism.
 - c. The Romans already know this, because Paul said that they died to sin when they were baptized into Christ's death.
3. These Romans obeyed "*that form of teaching,*" (Romans 6:17-18).
 - a. It was not until they OBEYED THE FORM OF TEACHING that they were MADE FREE from sin.
 - b. The result of Paul's approach in Romans 6 is that baptism becomes the benchmark from which he can ask the reader to act out the result of their immersion in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 6:17-18).
 - c. When an individual is united with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection then the baptized believer cannot reasonably continue in sin. This is what Paul is reminding them of.
 - d. Their walk is to be in the newness of life. Paul is saying, you died to sin, you were baptized, you were raised to a new life, now live like it!
4. Paul teaches that baptism **unites** a person to Christ.
 - a. It is at baptism (Matthew 28:19) that an individual becomes the Lord's possession because that person is united with Him.
 - b. In Galatians 2:20, Paul says, "*I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me.*"
 - c. When was Paul crucified? When he was baptized into the death of Christ! At baptism a person is freed from the bond of slavery to sin.
 - d. What Paul assert in Galatians 2:20 provides a strong commentary on what he is teaching in Romans 6:3-10. WHEN you do, THEN you become.

G. More of Paul's Teaching on Baptism

1. The baptism of some of the disciples of John (Acts 19:1-7).
 - a. Paul finds some believers in Ephesus who have been baptized with John's baptism.
 - b. Paul ask them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you were immersed?" Their answer was in the negative.
 - c. To correct the need Paul baptized them "into the name of the Lord Jesus."
 - d. Paul teaches that baptism is into the possession of Jesus Christ.
2. Paul teaches that a person is sanctified and cleansed at baptism.
 - a. Paul uses the teaching of the ONE baptism in Ephesians to show this.
 - b. In Ephesians 5:25, Paul explains how Christ *"gave Himself up for the church that He might sanctify it, having cleaned it by the washing of the water by, with or through the word."*
 - c. There is a twofold emphasis in Ephesians 5:25-27 as it relates to baptism.
 1. Cleansing is brought about by baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).
 2. Baptism is part of the preaching of the Gospel – the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:22-36).
 - d. The phrase, "the washing of the water" (*to loutro tou hudatos*), uses the Greek *luo*, which literally means a bath. From the Greek it means that a "whole body is being bathed."
 - e. There is only one thing in the entire Christian religion and revelation of it that matches up to what washing is and that is baptism.
 - f. This clearly refers to being immersed in water at the command of Christ's word to be sanctified and cleansed.
 - g. In Acts 22:16 there is a command to be washed and baptized.
 - h. Paul was baptized in order to have his sins, washed (luo) away (Acts 22:16).
3. Baptism and the priesthood of believers (Hebrews 10:22).
 - a. In Hebrews 10:22, there is an observation about baptism.
 - b. A baptized believer can draw near to God by means of prayer, and with hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and bodies washed (luo) with pure water.
 - c. The analogy is from the Old Testament rite of sprinkling the blood on the mercy seat and now that rite becomes a reality when a person is washed in water (the waters of baptism) that results in a clear conscience.
4. Baptism and the new life in Christ (Colossians 2:6-15).
 - a. Baptism is faith in God to cut away sin, to circumcise a person from sin.

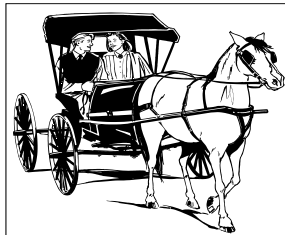
- b. Having been immersed into Christ, a believer has been delivered from sin and also from an uncircumcised state.
- c. Circumcision was the mark of the covenant that separated God's people from the rest of the world.

H. Are There Any Exceptions to Baptism as a Salvation Matter

1. Jesus says there are no exceptions (John 3:3-5).
 - a. Jesus addresses Nicodemus' misunderstanding regarding the Kingdom.
 - b. Jesus says in John 3:5, *"except a man is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."*
 - c. To Jesus, salvation is by the "new birth" which is baptism into the Kingdom of God.
2. Summary – Baptism is a Salvation Issue
The New Testament clearly teaches that baptism is the point in time when the alien sinner:
 - a. Becomes the Lord's possession.
 - b. Receives the forgiveness of sins.
 - c. Receives the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - d. Dies to sin and is raised to newness of life.
 - e. Is united with Christ.
 - f. Has the body of sin done away.
 - g. Is sanctified and cleaned from sin, saved from sin, which results in a clear conscience.
3. Baptism is for:
 - a. Every unforgiven person who can believe in Jesus, who can repent of sin, who can be educated to repent of a sinful life.
 - b. It is for those people who, of their own free will, can arise and obey the commandment of baptism.
 - c. People with guilty consciences who want to be saved and appeal to God for a clear conscience.

To Be Effective They Must Be Joined Together

Baptism in the right order – *"he who believes and is baptized will be saved"* (Mark 16:16). It is that simple!



Believes

AND

is Baptized = Salvation

Horse AND buggy = Forward movement

Summary of Conversions in Acts					
	Heard	Believed	Repented	Confess	Baptized
Pentecost Acts 2	✓		✓		✓
Samaritans Acts 8	✓	✓			✓
Simon Acts 8	✓	✓			✓
Eunuch Acts 8	✓	✓		✓	✓
Saul Acts 9, 22	✓				✓
Cornelius Acts 10	✓	✓			✓
Lydia Acts 16	✓				✓
Jailer Acts 16	✓	✓			✓
Ephesus Acts 19	✓	✓			✓

LESSON FIVE

THE RELATIONSHIP OF BAPTISM TO THE NEW COVENANT

INTRODUCTION

This lesson is going to look at the relation of baptism and the covenant relationship with God. The biblical idea of a covenant relationship with God is essential in order to understand just how it is that sinful man can have a right relationship with God. This lesson will look at ancient covenants and how a covenant is defined. In short, a covenant can be defined as a relationship that is based on promises. Some covenants included conditions for people to keep in order to receive blessings. Some covenants did not have any conditions to be kept at all. There were different kinds of covenants in the ancient world in which Israel existed.

Lesson Text: Genesis 12:3; Genesis 15:7-21; Genesis 22:18; I Samuel 18:3; 2 Samuel 7:11-16; Jeremiah 11:10-11; Jeremiah 32:31-33; Acts 2:29-31; Hebrews 8:8-12; Hebrews 10:14-17

Lesson Aim: Examine the biblical idea of a covenant relationship with God.

Lesson Preview: You will . . .

1. Understand how sinful man can have a right relationship with God.
 2. Be able to identify God's covenant.
 3. Be able to recognize the difference between the old and new covenant.
 4. Know what constitutes a covenant.
 5. Understand that this new covenant has been ratified by Christ's blood.
-

A. Ancient Covenants of Israel

1. Royal Grant.
 - a. The king would give some grant to a loyal servant for service that was rendered.
 - b. The grant would be in the form of a land grant. When the servant died, the land grant would be passed to an heir.
 - c. There were no conditions that were necessary to be kept because it was simply a grant given by the king to a royal servant.
 - d. This is the kind of covenant that is recorded in Genesis 15:7-21, where God said to Abraham that his seed was going to inherit a certain

amount of land, that being the “promised land.”

- e. This covenant had no conditions that Abraham had to keep in order for his offspring to receive the land.
2. Parity Covenant.
 - a. This covenant was made between equals who bound themselves together on mutual terms of agreement, usually based on friendship.
 - b. This was the covenant that was made between David and Jonathan in 1 Samuel 18:3.
 - c. This type of covenant can never be entered into with the Lord, because we are not equal with God, and we do not determine the conditions of covenant relationship with Him, nor the blessings to be received.
3. Suzerain-Vassal Covenant.
 - a. This kind of covenant regulated the relationship between the great king Suzerain and his servants.
 - b. The Suzerain claimed absolute sovereignty and the right to set forth the conditions that servants had to faithfully keep in order to receive the blessings of the king.
 - c. These covenants were supposed to be confirmed in the presence of the gods, and specific curses and blessings were pronounced if the servant was disobedient to the terms of the covenant or obeyed the covenant.
 - d. This was the kind of covenant that God made with Israel as recorded in Exodus 20-24.

B. The Old Covenant (the Law of Moses) and the Old Testament

1. Exodus 24:1-8 records the dedication of the Old Covenant which contained “all the words which Jehovah spoke” (Exodus 20:1-23:33). The Old Testament tells about the Old Covenant (the Law of Moses).
 - a. God is a covenant God and God’s dealing with man has always been set in the framework of some type of covenant.
 - b. A covenant can be defined as a relationship based on promises and conditions to be met.
 - c. This included the ten commandments (Exodus 20:1-17).
 - d. In Hebrews we can read of this event referring to the Old Covenant as the “Law” (Hebrews 9:18-20).
 - e. There are many parallels between the covenant God made with Israel, the Law of Moses and Suzerain-Vassal covenant.
2. God’s people are a covenant people.
 - a. This is seen in both the Old Testament as well as the New Testament.
 - b. God was in covenant relationship with the children of Israel.
 - c. Today, God’s provisions for man’s redemption is found in the New Covenant.
 - d.

C. The Bible Teaches That God’s Dealings With Men in the Past Was Set Within the Framework of Covenant Relationships

1. The covenant with Noah, never to destroy the earth again with water, is an example to consider (Genesis 6:18; 9:8-17).
 - a. When God selected the rainbow He was pledging never to destroy the earth again with water.
 - b. This would be called a royal grant, because there were no conditions to be kept in order to see the rainbow in the sky and remember that God will never destroy the earth with water.
2. Another example is the covenant with Abraham to bless all nations through his seed (Genesis 12:1-3).
 - a. This is a royal grant (see Genesis 15:7-21) because there were no conditions.
 - b. Abraham's seed (his offspring) would receive the land.
 - c. This promise was again renewed in Genesis 22:18.
 - d. Paul quotes this in Galatians 3:16 stating that Christ was that seed through which all nations would be blessed.
 - e. Galatians 3:8 is quoted again and defines what the blessing is – justification by faith. That is when a person is accounted righteous in Christ.
 - f. In Christ men can be justified by God.
3. The great covenant with the nation of Israel, the Law of Moses, is another covenant.
 - a. Exodus 20-24 records where God laid down the covenant that He wanted Israel to enter into to become His people (Exodus 19:4-6).
 - b. This covenant was confirmed in the presence of God, and ratified with the blood of covenant sacrifices.
 - c. This was a conditional covenant.
 - d. Deuteronomy 27-30 records the blessings for obedience and the curses pronounced for disobedience.
 - e. This is reminiscent of the Suzerain-Vassal covenant.
4. God's covenant with David.
 - a. In 2 Samuel 7:11-16, God pronounced to King David that He would set David's seed upon His throne and that the kingdom would last forever.
 - b. Peter refers to this event in Acts 2:29-31 and claims its fulfillment in the resurrection and ascension of Christ to the right hand of God.
 - c. Jesus is already sitting on the throne of David and is exercising supreme sovereign authority over all the world.
 - d. Jesus has the authority to forgive all men who obey the terms of His covenant.

D. The Integrity of God is Revealed in the Bible as it Relates to His Covenant

1. Psalms 103:17-18 gives an explanation of the everlasting loving kindness of God upon those that fear Him. *“But the lovingkindness of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, And His*

righteousness to children's children, To those who keep His covenant, and who remember His precepts to do them."

2. Psalms 105:8-10 says God has remembered His covenant forever. *"He has remembered His covenant forever, The word which He commanded to a thousand generations, the covenant which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac. Then He confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, To Israel as an everlasting covenant."* This shows that God's covenant will stand until that covenant is over.
3. Jeremiah 11:10-11 says that in the days of Jeremiah, God's people had broken the covenant of God. These verses show the integrity of God to be faithful to everything He would give and to every curse God said He would pronounce upon those who were in covenant relationship with Him. *"They have turned back to the iniquities of their ancestors who refused to hear My words . . ."*
4. Jeremiah 31:31 (7th century B.C.), God said he will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. This covenant is different from the one made at Mt. Sinai. *"Behold, days are coming, declared the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel . . ."*
5. Verse 33 is very clear in how and where the Law will be placed. *"I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."*

E. Jeremiah 31:31-34 Points Out the Distinctive Nature of the New Covenant

1. The new covenant is different from the old covenant.
 - a. In Genesis 17 God made a covenant with Abraham and his seed.
 - b. Under this covenant a Jew was born into a covenant relationship with God.
 - c. Because the Hebrew children were born into this covenant relationship they were children of God, yet they did not know it because they were babes – they were covenant children of God and did not even know it!
 - d. God made provisions for them to be educated – this was done by the family unit and priests.
2. Under the new covenant, the Bible says all will be taught of God (Jeremiah 31:33-34 and Hebrews 8:8-12).

Salvation by
Education

 - a. All shall know the Lord – by the inward parts, the mind and the heart.
 - b. This New Covenant will be put into the hearts and minds by the process of teaching and preaching, by educating the people (Romans 10:17)!
 - c. Under the New Covenant all of God's people, from the least to the greatest, will know Him.
 - d. God says people are going to be taught – the Laws have been put on their minds and hearts by teaching the terms of the New Covenant.

- e. When this occurs, people obey from the heart.
 - f. Under the Old Covenant not one of God's covenant children knew Him at the time they entered into covenant relationship with Him.
 - g. When Hebrew children were born they were born into covenant relationship with the Lord due to the covenant made with them (Genesis 17:1-14).
 - h. What did these children know when they were born? Not a thing, they were covenant children of God and did not know it.
 - i. As they grew they were taught to "know Jehovah," that is, to know of their special covenant relationship with God.
3. Jeremiah prophesied salvation by education under the New Covenant.
 - a. Laws are placed on men's hearts by education, by teaching them!
 - b. People are taught the gospel, educated to the New Covenant of Jesus.
 - c. Then they believed and obeyed the Lord to become Christians, saved in a covenant relation as children of God.
 4. This leads to the identify of a child of God because the terms of the New Covenant are revealed.
 - a. With this in mind, God says, "I will forgive THEIR sins" (Galatians 5:1).
 - b. **Whose** sins shall be forgiven? Those who know the Lord, who by education had the Laws of the gospel covenant put into their minds and hearts (John 6:44-45).
 - c. As people enter into this covenant relationship every sin committed is forgiven and the sacrifice that Jesus offered at the cross is enough to give us freedom from every sin committed in the future as faithful believers walk in the light (1 John 1:7-9).
 - d. Those who *hear* are the ones who *learn* how to come to Christ. This is what Jesus taught in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16).
 - e. Paul taught this when he said that we are saved by faith which comes from hearing the word of God (Romans 5:1; 10:17).
 5. The New Covenant was dedicated by Christ's blood at His death
 - a. Jesus ratified that New Covenant when He died (Hebrews 9:11-28).
 - b. The necessity of the death of the testator, or covenant maker, is important.
 - c. Jesus' blood obtained eternal redemption for the lost (Matthew 26:28; Hebrew 9:11-14, 24-26).
 - d. Jesus ratified the New Covenant by the shedding of His blood.
 - e. A person cannot separate forgiveness of sins from the terms of the New Covenant.
 6. Jesus ratified the New Covenant with His blood
 - a. Hebrews 9:15 declares that Jesus is the mediator of a New Covenant.
 - b. Verse 16 states, "for where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the

Forgiveness of sins is given only to those who are in God's new covenant.

death of the one who made it.”

- c. Christ’s shed blood was . . . the blood of the new covenant.
 - d. The new covenant and Christ’s blood are inter-related.
 - e. Both are necessary for man’s salvation through forgiveness of sin.
7. Baptism and the blood of Christ
- a. Baptism is a Law of the New Covenant.
 - b. Sinners are loosed, or released from sins by His blood (Revelation 1:5), and sinners are commanded to “arise and be baptized and wash away their sins” (Acts 22:16).
 - c. Faith is a law of the New Covenant and sinners are justified by faith in Christ’s propitiatory blood (Romans 3:24-25).
 - d. Both faith in Christ and baptism are seen to be conditions for receiving the blood of Jesus, to be the conditions for receiving the blood of Christ under the New Covenant (see Mark 16:16).
- | The Old | The New |
|---|---|
| Obsolete
– Hebrews 8:13 | Better one
– Hebrews 7:19;
8:6-7 |
| Brought condemnation
– 2 Corinthians 3:7-9 | Brings life
– Ephesians 2:1-13 |
| Required annual atonement
– Hebrews 9:7-8;
10:1-4 | Removes sin once for all
– Hebrews 9:12;
10:2, 22 |
- e. The New Covenant is the new and living way (Hebrews 10:19-20).
9. The identity of those in the New Covenant
- a. Jesus died for the sins of mankind and to establish a New Covenant.
 - b. That covenant has terms and conditions that must be met.
 - c. Jesus provided the New Covenant by which baptized believers enter into heaven.

Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection (Romans 6:4-5).

Immersion is . . .
Burial with Christ

Emergence is . . .
Resurrection to a New life!

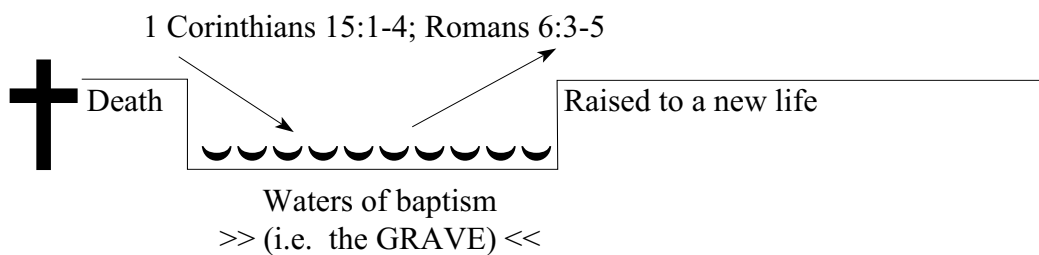
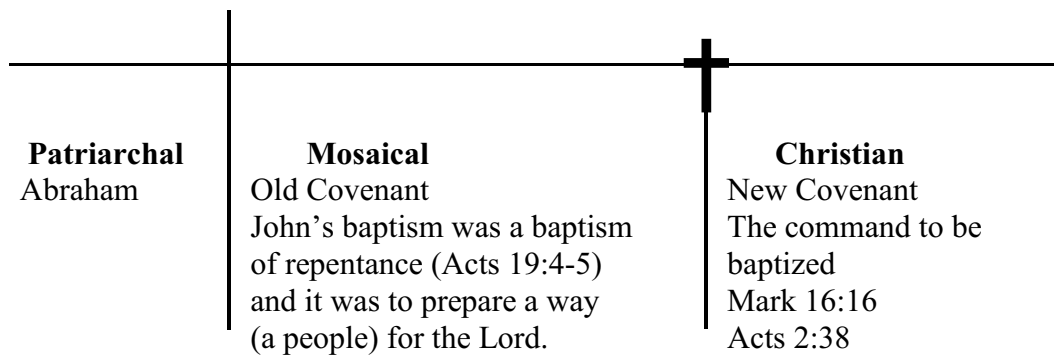
F. What About the Thief on the Cross

1. When Jesus said to the thief on the cross, “*verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise*” (Luke 23:43), it is accepted that the eternal salvation of that malefactor was settled then and there.
 - a. Jesus saved others without requiring conditions of salvation.
 - b. One of many examples is when Jesus forgave the sins of the paralytic (Matthew 9:2; Mark 2:1-5).
 - c. The only faith expressed was on the part of those who brought the paralytic to Jesus.
 - d. Yet, Jesus forgave the paralytic without requiring belief.
 - e. To argue that the salvation of the thief apart from baptism proves that one can be saved apart from baptism also necessarily proves to much.
 - f. It would, by the same kind of reasoning, prove that one could be saved without expressing faith, as in the case of the paralytic.
2. The thief lived under the Old Covenant prior to New Covenant baptism.
 - a. The difference between the salvation of the thief on the cross and the salvation of people today is the difference between living under the Old Covenant and living under the New Covenant.
 - b. The thief was amenable to the Laws of the Old Covenant while today people are responsible to the New Covenant.
 - c. As already noted, the New Covenant was not in force until after the death of Jesus (Hebrews 9:15-17).
 - d. And it was not until after Jesus’ resurrection that baptism for salvation was commanded in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38).
 - e. The thief never came under Christ’s New Covenant command to be baptized *in His name* for the remission of sins.
3. The terms of the New Covenant are found in the New Testament.
 - a. Hear and believe the gospel story.
 - b. Repent of sin. Express sorrow for and determination to never walk in

- rebellion to God.
- c. Confess Christ Jesus as Lord (Romans 10:9-10).
 - d. Be immersed, trusting Christ to wash away every sin.

The Thief on the Cross

The thief was still under the old covenant. Jesus had not yet died when He spoke to the thief. As Jesus hung on the cross, speaking to the thief, He had the authority to forgive sins.



LESSON SIX

BAPTISM AND THE CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

This lesson is going to consider the relation of baptism to the identity of the church. The lesson will build on previous knowledge learned and show that baptism is essential for salvation. Christians should have enough Bible background to know that the church is the body of the saved. When an individual is saved, that person is added to the church (Acts 2:47). Therefore, the sincere seeker of truth can identify the church in the same way the saved are identified. If every saved person is added to the church, then it behooves each one of us to find out how to identify a saved person because that will also reveal the identity of the church.

Many people apparently are having difficulty identifying the church as revealed in the New Testament. This is due in great part to modern denominationalism, which is barely 500 years old. About the beginning of the 16th century the Protestant Reformation movement began in protest against the teaching of the Roman Catholic church that salvation is by works of merit. Many religious spin-offs came from this protestant movement, and thus Christendom was divided. These divisions, reacting in protest, went to the opposite extreme doctrinally and taught salvation by “faith alone.” These divisions became the different denominations of today.

Lesson Text: John 3:5; Acts 2:47; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 6:11; Romans 6:2-4; Ephesians 5:25-26; 1 Peter 3:21; Titus 3:4-5

Lesson Aim: Realize that the church is identified by those who are baptized into the death of Christ to be raised to a new life and added to the body of Christ which is His church.

Lesson Preview: You will . . .

1. Learn what the church is.
 2. Understand the relation of baptism to salvation.
 3. Know what it means to be sanctified.
 4. See that sinners are cleansed at the point of baptism
-

Modern denominationalism has given rise to the idea that one church is as good as another. Their present position is that the doctrines that differentiate the denominations are of no consequence to salvation since people are saved by “faith

alone.” Therefore, it is concluded, whatever one believes about baptism is of no consequence to one’s salvation. False teachers say baptism is really not essential to salvation. The New Testament teaches that baptism is essential for the alien sinner to obey in order to be saved. The church is identified precisely by those who have been baptized to be saved. Baptism has a distinct relationship to the identity of the body of Christ.

A. Defining What the Church Is

1. The word church is from the Greek word *ekklesia*.
 - a. This is a compound word from *ek*, meaning “out of” and *klesis*, meaning a “calling.”
 - b. The church, then, is the called out – a called out body of people.
 - c. The New Testament teaches that the body of Christ is made up of the saved.
2. EKKLESIA is translated by the word *church* where it refers to the body of the saved.

We can identify the church by identifying the saved.

- a. This redemptive meaning is found in the Lord’s statement, “*Upon this rock I will build My church*” (Matthew 16:18).
- b. Jesus builds his church by saving people.
- c. These people are called out of the world by gospel preaching (2 Thessalonians 2:14).
- d. Acts 2:47 explains very clearly that those who obeyed the gospel were added to the church!

B. Identifying The Church

1. The church is not only the saved, but it is the sanctified (1 Corinthians 1:1-2).
2. The church is those purchased with the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28).
3. The church is the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23; Col. 1:18, 24).
4. The church is the body of the reconciled (Ephesians 2:16).
5. The church is Christ’s spiritual wife (Ephesians 5:22-32).
6. The church is the institution in which God will be eternally glorified (Ephesians 3:21).

The church is the body of the saved, the sanctified and the washed.

C. The Church is the Body of the Saved, the Sanctified, the Cleansed

1. In Ephesians 5:25-26, Paul says the church is the cleansed.
 - a. He states that Christ gave Himself up for the church that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it.
 - b. In Ephesians 5:26, washing here translates the Greek, *loutron*, a bath, or container of water.
 - c. The washing of water here by the word is baptism in obedience to the

- commandment of Christ's word for salvation.
- d. A person is sanctified at the point of baptism when washed to be sanctified (Romans 16:25-26).
 - e. Jesus cleansed the church by the washing of water with the Word.
 2. Paul, in Titus 3:3-5 speaks of being saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Paul is not saying that baptism, the waters of baptism, regenerates anybody.
 - b. Paul is teaching that in baptism, in response to the command of God, God does the regenerating.
 - c. The Holy Spirit makes a person brand new.
 - d. It is the Holy Spirit that regenerates the person, who by faith, is baptized! The person is washed and that is called by Scripture, the washing of regeneration.
 - e. Again, referring back to Ephesians 5:25-26, it is noted that the church is sanctified and cleansed by the washing of water with the word.
 - f. The term, *to loutro tou hudatos*, the washing of the water, uses the Greek *loutron*, from *louo*, literally a bath (see Titus 3:5).
 - g. The "washing of the water" is a "bath" of water.
 - h. This corresponds to the Lord's command to Saul of Tarsus to "*arise and be baptized and wash away your sins*" (Acts 22:16).
 3. Jesus speaks of the new birth in John 3:5.
 - a. He told Nicodemus, "*except you are born of water and the Spirit, you cannot enter the Kingdom.*"
 - b. The apostles teaching of baptism for forgiveness of sins is in perfect agreement with Jesus' claim that apart from being born of water, (which can be nothing but baptism), and the Spirit, that is what a person receives at baptism.
 - c. A sinner is renewed by the Spirit at baptism.
 - d. All this runs parallel with the teachings of Jesus!
 4. The setting apart (sanctification) happens when a sinner is saved.
 - a. Cleansing is not the same thing as setting apart or being sanctified.
 - b. Saved is not the same thing as being cleaned, but they happen at the same time!
 5. A sinner is saved, sanctified, and cleansed at the point of baptism.
 - a. One is saved at the point of baptism (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21).
 - b. A person is sanctified at the point of baptism (1 Corinthians 6:11).
 - c. In 1 Corinthians 1:1-2, Paul says the members of the church at Corinth are saints.
 - d. From the Greek word *hagios*, comes the word *holy* which means sanctified.
 - e. When a person becomes a child of God, God sets that individual apart from their sin.

- f. The short form of sanctify is the word saint, so every person who has been sanctified is called to be holy.
- g. The church can be identified because of the way that people are added.
- 6. The church is the sanctified.
 - a. It is those people Paul referred to in 1 Corinthians 6:11.
 - b. They came out of sin and were now living godly lives.
 - c. Paul says, such were some of you, *“but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.”*
 - d. The apostle said the church at Corinth had been washed.
- 7. The relation of baptism to salvation.
 - a. Jesus said, *“go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, he who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved.”*
 - b. Jesus did not say, “he that believes shall be saved and can be baptized some time later.”
 - c. Jesus is clear, the person who is saved is the person who believes and is baptized!
 - d. The “he” that shall be saved is the “he” that believes and is baptized.
 - e. Jesus makes it clear that belief and baptism come before receiving salvation!
- 8. Peter preached this very same thing in Acts 2.
 - a. He preached Christ crucified, buried, and raised.
 - b. He showed that Jesus had the power to forgive sins and told them what to do in Acts 2:38.
 - c. These people repented and were baptized, then were saved from their sins.
 - d. If a person is forgiven of sin, then that person is saved from sin.
- 9. Peter made it clear that baptism saves us (1 Peter 3:21).
 - a. This is an abbreviated statement to Christians.
 - b. Peter was saying that people who have faith in Christ, repented and took the final step of faith to become a child of God will be saved from sin.
 - c. This occurred at the point of baptism!
 - d. Peter is saying that all you have done has culminated in the great work of baptism.
- 10. Baptism is a work – it is a work of faith.
 - a. John 6:29 says this is the work of God that you believe.
 - b. Faith is a work, believing is a work.
 - c. A person can’t do it unless God gives that person faith through the Word of God.
 - d. Now believing is a work of God, but it is what a person must do.
 - e. Believing is a work and if one is saved without works then a person is saved without faith and that won’t be right.
 - f. Faith is a work, but it does not earn anything.
 - g. Baptism is a work, but it does not earn anything.

- h. It is the work of faith in the Lord.

D. The Church Is Identified with Those Who Died to Sin When They Were Baptized

1. In Romans 6:2 Paul says we have died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?
 - a. At one point, those Christians were dead in sin, but the apostle said they died to sin.
 - b. The point they died is when they were baptized into the death of Christ (Romans 6:3).
 - c. Now that is where a person dies to sin, when they are baptized into Christ's death.
2. As noted from Paul's teaching, the church is identified with those who died to sin when they were baptized.
 - a. What is the church? It is everyone who has ever died to sin at the point of baptism.
 - b. When a penitent believer is baptized into the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, something occurs to that individual.

E. What Can Be Concluded from this Teaching

1. The New Testament identifies the church as the body of the saved from sin.
 - a. Acts 2:47 makes this very clear.
 - b. A person cannot be a member of the church until he is saved because the church is everyone who has ever been saved (Ephesians 5:23).
 - c. As soon as a person is saved at baptism, then that individual is simultaneously added to the church.
 - d. This demonstrates the relationship of baptism to the identity of the saved and therefore to the identify of the church.
2. The second conclusion is an essential heart rending deduction.
 - a. Since the church is the body of the saved and since sinners are saved at baptism, then it must be concluded that the unbaptized, even though they believe Christ is Lord, cannot be members of the body of Christ.
 - b. The unbaptized do not identify as saved people, for they never obeyed the Lord's command to be baptized for salvation.
 - c. These folks have never expresses their faith in Jesus to save them the way He commanded that faith be expressed.
 - d. Jesus makes it clear that only the saved are added to the church.
 - e. The Lord tells the conditions for salvation and it is on His terms.

LESSON SEVEN

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST AND THE LAW OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

INTRODUCTION

Many have a misconception about the baptism of our Lord and the Law of Righteousness. Using such belief fails to understand the nature of legal righteousness required by the Law of Moses for Christ to become our sin-offering. Some will say that they were baptized to fulfill all righteousness. Is that what is meant or is there a lack of understanding on the part of misinformed people?

Lesson Text: Psalms 19:7; 119:172; Galatians 2:16; 3:10-12; 4:4;
Deuteronomy 27:26; Habakkuk 2:4; Leviticus 18:5; Romans
3:10; 23-27; 15:25-26; Ephesians 2:8-9; Acts 13:38-39; 1 John
4:10; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Matthew 3:15; Hebrews 4:15;
Colossians 2:11-12

Lesson Aim: To study how baptism is part of the atoning process.

Lesson Preview: You will . . .

1. See that the Law of Moses was a system of legal righteousness.
 2. Be able to explain how an individual is justified by obedience of faith in the waters of baptism.
 3. Understand that Jesus kept the Law perfectly and became our sin offering.
 4. See why Jesus had to be baptized by John to keep the Law, in order that all righteousness be fulfilled.
-

THE LAW OF MOSES AS A SYSTEM OF LEGAL RIGHTEOUSNESS

A. The Law of Moses Demanded Legal Obedience

1. Any legal system demands obedience.
 - a. Since the Law of Moses demanded obedience, it is looked upon as a legal system.
 - b. Psalms 19:7 says the Law of the Lord is perfect.

- c. There was nothing wrong with that Law.
- d. Something was wrong with people.
- 2. The Bible is very clear that we “all have sinned.”
 - a. Hebrews 8 reveals that the people are at fault, not the Law.
 - b. People are faulty because of sin, but the Law was not faulty, because it is perfect.
 - c. The Law was a perfect system and it required perfection of people.
- 3. Psalms 119:172 says “*all thy commandments are righteousness.*”
 - a. The Law of Moses embodied the very righteousness of God Himself.
 - b. The Law of Moses was a legal system that was righteous through and through.
 - c. It was a legal system which required perfection and it condemned the violator.

B. Paul Explains the Law of Moses

- 1. When Paul wrote the letter to the Galatians he was defending justification by faith in Christ apart from the works of the Law of Moses because the Law of Moses was being bound upon men who had already been saved by faith in Christ.
- 2. The three-fold nature of law (Galatians 3:10-12).
 - a. The Law requires sinless observance (Leviticus 18:5; Galatians 3:12).
 - b. The Law condemns the violator (Deuteronomy 27:26; Galatians 3:10).
 - c. The Law cannot justify the sinner (Habakkuk 2:4; Galatians 3:11).
- 3. The Law is not the ground of our justification.
 - a. Paul said in Galatians 3:10 that “*cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them.*”
 - b. False teachers were saying that a person must keep the Law in order to be saved – that was their teaching, their persuasion.
 - c. Paul said if you are of that persuasion, you are of the works of the Law.
 - d. That is what Paul meant when he said that as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse.
 - e. Paul quotes Deuteronomy 27:26, that says a person must keep the Law and it must be kept continually or that person will be cursed.
- 4. In Galatians 3:11 Paul says, “*that no one is justified by the law before God is evident.*”
 - a. Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4, which is a part of the Law of Moses and said that the just shall live by faith.
 - b. Paul expands on this by saying that the Law is not of faith, and quotes Leviticus 18:5, that he “*that doeth them he shall live by them.*”
 - c. The inspired apostle is saying very carefully and very clearly that the Law of Moses demanded sinless observance, sinless perfection.
 - d. It is clear that the Law condemned the violator at the first infraction and that it was not in the nature of that Law to justify anyone.
- 5. Paul is plainly teaching that we are justified by faith.

- a. Paul made it clear that the Law is **not of faith** and therefore the Law could not justify.
- b. The Law would condemn the sinner at the first violation.
- c. The Law did not have in its nature the ability to justify.
- 6. Paul further instructs on the purpose of the Law.
 - a. The very purpose of the Law was to educate men to their sinfulness and to their condemnation (Galatians 3:24).
 - b. In Romans 3:10 Paul quotes Psalms, saying, “there is none righteous” and then in verse 23 states, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”
- 7. In Romans 3:19-20 Paul states another purpose of the Law.
 - a. Its purpose was to prepare people for Jesus.
 - b. It was to prepare people for the fact that they needed a savior to save them.
 - c. The Law did that by educating all men to the fact that they are sinners and therefore under the just condemnation from the Lord.

C. The Law Brings People to the Realization of Their Total Inability to Atone for Their Own Sins

- 1. In Ephesians 2:8-9 Paul said, *“for by grace have you been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.”*
 - a. Under the system of Moses, people would commit sin and immediately that Law would condemn them.
 - b. The Law could not justify them.
 - c. The Law would educate people to the fact that they needed someone to be for them what they could not do for themselves.
- 2. In Acts 13:38-39 Paul is preaching the Gospel to some Jews and Gentiles.
 - a. Paul preached that Jesus was the fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophecies.
 - b. Paul states in verse 39 that the Law of Moses could not justify anyone, because that was not the purpose of for which it was given.
 - c. It was given for the purpose to make men realize that they were sinners and that they needed a savior – Jesus Christ!
- 3. Jesus had to keep the Law and had to keep it perfectly in order to become our sin offering.
 - a. The great prophecy in Isaiah 53:5-6 talks about the crucifixion of Jesus and what He did – He paid it all!
 - b. This is the Good News that Jesus provided the way for salvation and hope by His ultimate sacrifice on the cross!
 - c. The price for our sins is SEPARATION from God, which is DEATH.
 - d. The love of God is seen in Jesus (1 John 4:10) as our sin offering.
 - e. In Galatians 4:4 Paul states, *“But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under Law, to redeem those under Law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.”*

- f. The word “redeem” in this passage means that our price for sin was paid – our redemption – the payment of freeing us from the bond of slavery was the life of Christ and His atoning blood!
- g. Jesus, who knew no sin, was made our sacrifice so we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21).

D. Christ Had to Keep the Law Perfectly in Order to Become Our Sinless Sin Offering

1. John’s baptism was incorporated into the Law of Moses. It was a God given addendum to the Law.
 - a. Luke 7:29-30 says, *“all the people. . .acknowledged that God’s way was right, because they had been baptized by John.”*
 - b. The ministry of John the Baptist included baptism (Mark 1:4).
 - c. Baptism was incorporated into the Law and since it was during Jesus’ day, He had to obey John’s baptism in order to keep the Law perfectly.
 - d. If Jesus had not been baptized, He would have disobeyed the counsel of God and He would not have been our sinless sin offering.
2. Jesus had to be baptized by John to keep the Law (Matthew 3:15).
 - a. Jesus let it be known the reason for his baptism – it was to fulfill all righteousness because Jesus had to keep the entire Law.
 - b. The baptism of Jesus was another commandment to keep.
 - c. At the cross, because of His sinlessness, Jesus was legally righteous.
 - d. Jesus is our perfect sin offering (Hebrews 4:15).
 - e. Jesus had no sin, but was baptized to fulfill the Law’s legal demand for perfect righteousness.
 - f. Had Jesus not been baptized, then He would not have been righteous under the Law.
 - g. Jesus was baptized to fulfill all of the righteous commandments of God of which John’s baptism was one of those commandments.
 - h. Because Jesus committed Himself to fulfilling “all righteousness,” He went to the cross making our death to sin and resurrection to a new kind of life possible (Romans 1:16-17). His sacrifice was the means to accomplishing the eternal purpose of God – the way a sinner can be added to God’s new covenant people, the church.

E. Righteousness under the New Covenant is Imputed Righteousness

1. The righteousness that a person receives at baptism is the righteousness of Christ Himself – it is an imputed righteousness.
 - a. The righteousness is imputed unto us because of our faith in Jesus.
 - b. The New Law of Christ is not a legal system and does not demand sinless perfection (see 1 John 1:7-9).

- c. The apostle John says if a child of God walks in the light and struggles to be what God commands, then the blood of Christ cleanses those Christians from all sin.
 - d. This walk must be a walk in the light.
 - e. A child of God walking in the light has the comfort of knowing that the blood of Jesus is working on a daily basis to cleanse their sins.
 - f. The sacrifice that Jesus offered is enough to perfect Christians for the mistakes made.
 - g. This is made possible by the one sin offering of Jesus (Hebrews 10:14).
- Editor's note:**
Hugo McCord once said, "Brethren, we are bathed in the waters of baptism, but we continually walk under the shower of the forgiveness of His blood."
- 2. The Christian system is not a legal system that demands perfection.
 - a. Thank God it does not condemn for the next infraction.
 - b. Baptized believers will sin, but under the New Law, Christians can be accounted righteous even when in reality they are not (Romans 3:26-28).
 - c. It is to have Christ's righteousness imputed to a Christian's faith.
 - d. Paul made it clear in Galatians 2:16, that a man is not justified by the works of the Law of Moses.
 - 3. To be justified means to be accounted righteous.
 - a. This is accomplished by faith in Jesus that leads an individual to repentance and baptism.
 - b. This is a life of obedience to the Lord that is reckoned for righteousness.
 - c. This is the faith that God desires believers to exercise when they are baptized into Christ.
 - d. In Romans 8:1 Paul said, "*there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.*"
 - e. The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ makes one free from the Law of sin and death.
 - 4. The ordinance of the Law will be fulfilled by those who walk in the Spirit.
 - a. When a believer goes to the baptism and places trust in the Lord because of what He did at the cross, then that believer is looked upon as though they had never sinned, as though the law had been kept perfectly.
 - b. That is what Paul meant, that for those who become Christians, these have fulfilled the requirements of the Law.
 - c. God looks upon Christians because of the righteousness of His son, that is, Christ's righteousness is imputed to baptized believers.
 - 5. Saving faith is an obedient faith.
 - a. In Romans 16:25-26 Paul says the gospel is made known unto all nations unto obedience of faith.

- b. Believers must distinguish between obedience of faith in Christ and putting faith in one's obedience to Christ.
 - c. Christians cannot trust themselves to keep the commandments righteously.
 - d. Obedient believers must trust Christ to keep them justified before God as they have faith in Him.
- 6. Baptism is obedience of faith in Christ.
 - a. Belief in Christ leads a person to baptism for salvation as Jesus said in Mark 16:16.
 - b. To paraphrase, Jesus said, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel. He that believes the entire gospel (not just Jesus is Lord), but the whole gospel message and is baptized shall be saved."
 - c. Baptism is an expression of a person's faith in Jesus' promise that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.
 - d. Why would a person be baptized? Because Jesus commanded it!
 - e. Why did Jesus command baptism? For the forgiveness of sins.
 - f. If a person does not believe this, then will that person's baptism be worth anything?
 - g. Baptism must be an expression of one's trust in the Lord to do what Jesus said He would do when believers do what He asks a believer to do.
- 7. Colossians 2:11-12 speaks of a spiritual circumcision.
 - a. Christians are circumcised with the circumcision not made with hands.
 - b. This is a spiritual circumcision.
 - c. Spiritual circumcision is the removal of the sins of the flesh at the point of baptism.
 - d. Paul says that a believer is buried with Jesus in baptism and raised with Jesus through faith in the working of God.
 - e. God is doing the working by cutting away sin and that occurs when a person is baptized, as Jesus commanded, for the forgiveness of sins.
- 8. *What* is spiritual circumcision?
 - a. It doesn't say baptism, but in Colossians 2:11 it is the removal of the sins of the flesh.
 - b. Paul does tell *when* this circumcision takes place – it is in *baptism*!
 - c. Paul is clear that when a sinner is buried with Christ in baptism, that person is raised with Jesus through faith in the working of God.
 - d. *Who* is working? God. *What* is He doing? Cutting away sin. *When*? In baptism, as Jesus commanded for the forgivingness of sins!
 - e. When a sinner is willing to obey the Lord's commands, to repent and be baptized for salvation, then that kind of faith is the kind of faith that is reckoned for righteousness. It is an obedient faith!
- 9. Some may say they are baptized to fulfill all righteousness.
 - a. This is a failure to understand the nature of the Law of Moses and consequently the purpose for Christ's baptism under that system.

- b. Equally, it is a failure to understand the nature of baptism under the new system of justification by faith in Christ.

Did You Know?

The word "Lord" means "ruler." To confess that Christ "is Lord" is to confess that one is accepting Jesus to be the Lord and Ruler of their life – *"why call me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"* Luke 6:46

LESSON EIGHT

IDENTIFYING THE CHILD OF GOD

INTRODUCTION

In 2 Timothy 2:16-19, Paul seems to be encouraging the young preacher to take heart when Christians he thought were faithful, surprisingly turn out to be unfaithful. Paul named two men who were false teachers and even states the error they were teaching. Both Hymenaeus and Philetus were men who “wandered from the truth” and will show their true colors and will lead others down the path of error. In spite of this, the firm foundation of God will stand. The foundation of the church is safe and secure because God’s seal is on it. Paul quoted Moses in Numbers 16:5, “*The Lord knows them that are His.*” This a double seal because Paul states that “*everyone who confess the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.*”

The inspired apostle Paul is making it very plain that the church of Christ is going to experience victory over all these difficulties of false teachers (1 Timothy 3:15). The firm foundation of God certainly is the body of Christ, the church, and God knows who the true children are.

The ability of mere men is limited when it comes to saying who is saved or who is going to be lost. Only God knows who and how many are His. The question under consideration is this – can a child of God be identified? On what Scriptural ground can the identify of a true child of God be identified? This is the focus of this lesson.

Lesson Text: 2 Timothy 2:16-19; John 13:34-35; Luke 14:26; Acts 19:1-5; Romans 8:9; Galatians 4:6; 5:22-23; Matthew 13:47-50; Revelation 17:14; Romans 10:9-10; Romans 6:17-18

Lesson Aim: On what Scriptural basis can a child of God be identified?

Lesson Preview: You will. . .

1. Look at several ways men see a person who has been “saved.”
 2. Examine the scenarios of false teachers in light of God’s word.
 3. Understand that there is a pattern that must be obeyed in order to have the forgiveness of sins.
-

SOME FALSE WAYS MEN DETERMINE WHO IS A CHILD OF GOD

A. Many Appeal to Wrong Ways That a Sinner is Saved

1. Some appeal to the love trait in John 13:34-35.
 - a. Jesus said, *"a new commandment I give you, that you may love one another . . . by this shall all men know that you are My disciples."*
 - b. This certainly is a beautiful statement that has been called the mark of a Christian, that Christians have love for one another.
 - c. Is that the only characteristic a child of God must have?
 - d. If someone is expressing true love to others, does that mean that person is a child of God?
 - e. Or, does it simply mean that an individual is following Jesus as His disciple in this area?
2. Is bearing one's cross a characteristic of being a child of God?
 - a. In Luke 14:26 Jesus declares that if a person does not love Him more than his family or his own life, that person cannot be a disciple of Jesus.
 - b. Being a disciple is not to be equated with being a Christian.
 - c. Matthew 28:19 Jesus said, "Go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them."
 - 1) Who is to be baptized? Those who are taught and become disciples.
 - 2) How are they made disciples? By teaching.
 - d. These people who are taught, are learners, are disciples, but it does not mean they have become Christians. Note the following example.
 - 1) In Acts 19:1-5, Paul finds "certain disciples."
 - 2) They have not yet become Christians or have been baptized into the possession of the Lord.
 - 3) These people heard about the gospel of faith in Christ.
 - 4) They were disciples first, *then* they were baptized and became children of God.
3. Others have appealed to the fruit of the Spirit as a proof that a person has the Holy Spirit.
 - a. In Romans 8:9 Paul said, *"if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."*
 - b. The Bible declares plainly in Galatians 4:6 that a person must first become a child of God, then that person will receive the Holy Spirit.
 - c. The Holy Spirit is not given to someone simply because they begin to live a Christian life or because they begin to read the Bible and start displaying the traits of love, joy, peace, and long suffering.
 - d. Galatians 5:22-23 says that the fruit of the Spirit are love, joy, peace and other qualities.
 - e. There are a number of works of the Spirit that are exhibited in a Christian's life.
 - f. Is it possible that someone else could be doing the same things listed in Galatians 5 and NOT be a child of God?
 - g. Some may assume that these people must have the Spirit whether they have been baptized or not.

B. Two Scenarios of Mistaken Identity

1. Examine a person who is a false teacher.
 - a. This is a person who is a sincere person, deeply religious and has been taught by someone else who is teaching error.
 - b. This individual believes what he has been taught is the truth and is sincere about what he believes.
 - c. Now, is it possible that a sincere person can read the Bible and be taught by someone else, who he believes is teaching the truth? Yes!
 - d. Is it possible for a false teacher to go to people who are deeply sincere and to teach them that which he believes is right (and it's not), it's wrong for them to think it is right. Is that possible? Yes!
 - e. Is it possible for this false teacher to tell people what he thinks they need to do to become Christians? Yes!
2. A false teacher can lead sincere people away from the truth in a way that is deceptive.
 - a. Can these people who have been misled have joy thinking they are saved? Can they have peace of mind thinking they have peace with God? Can these people then begin to live the Christian life, bearing fruit?
 - b. These folks can't have faithfulness. They are not faithful, but they believe they are and these people look like they are manifesting that which is to be equated with a child of God, but it is a case of mistaken identity.
 - c. Others are confident they are Christians simply because they look like it, but it is a case of mistaken identity.
 - d. These people have not done what the Lord said to become a child of God. Is that possible? Yes!
3. Another case scenario of a person who has become a child of God.
 - a. This person has done what God requires to become a child of God.
 - b. He is now a child of God and has the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. At some point this child of God becomes unfaithful.
 - d. Worldly living creeps into his life and even begins to manifest the works of the flesh. Paul list these in Galatians 5:19-21.
 - e. This child of God is grieving the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30).
 - 1) Here is a person who is definitely a child of God, but is unfaithful to the Lord.
 - 2) Everyone who sees this person reports he/she cannot possibly be a Christian.
 - 3) The works of the flesh are seen, and so others think that because he does not look like a Christian, he is not a child of God, but that is a case of mistaken identity.
 - 4) This person is a child and has grieved the Holy Spirit and is going to remain a child of God until Jesus comes again.

C. The Parable of the Net

1. In Matthew 13:47-50, Jesus told of the parable of the dragnet and how it was let down and all kinds of fish were gathered.
 - a. The Bible says that when it was filled, the disciples drew it up on the beach and they separated the good from the bad.
 - b. Jesus interpreted the parable saying, at the end of the world the angels will come and they will separate the good from the bad.
 - c. Once a person becomes a child of God they remain a child of God until Jesus separates each one.
 - d. Jesus said in Matthew 22:14, "*many are called, but few are chosen.*"
 - e. Revelation 17:14 speaks of those who are called, chosen and faithful.
2. How can it be known when a person is truly faithful?
 - a. First, none of us have the divine attribute of being able to determine those who are absolutely faithful to God.
 - b. What can be determined is that people need to hear the Gospel in order to know what to do to be saved.
3. How can a child of God be identified?
 - a. First, obedience to God's will is required. See Matthew 7:21
 - b. Romans 10:9-10 says if a person believes in their heart that God raised Jesus from the dead and confess that Jesus is Lord, what will that person do?
 - c. If that person truly believes Jesus is Lord, then that person will confess and OBEY Jesus.
 - d. The first requirement of a person who believes Jesus is Lord is to obey Him.
 - e. That is the reason that the Gospel is preached all over the world as Paul said in Romans 16:25-26.
 - f. The gospel was made known unto all nations unto obedience of faith.
4. Faith is in the Lord and trusting in Him to do what He said He would do for sinners.
 - a. In Romans 6:15-18, Paul exhorts Christians to remain faithful.
 - b. Paul wants them to remain faithful since they have become the Lord's bond slaves.
 - c. In the text, Paul shows that a person is not justified by the works of the Law.
 - d. He asked the question of these Roman Christians – "*shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid!*"
 - e. Paul is talking to children of God and letting them know that they have exercised that faith and it is obedience unto righteousness.
5. In verses 17 and 18 of chapter six, Paul reminds these Christians of what they have done to become a child of God.
 - a. They were at one time slaves to sin, but he lets them know that they obeyed from the heart that pattern of teaching that made them free.
 - b. Paul has just told these Christians there is a way of identifying a true

child of God.

- c. These Christians at one time were bond servants to sin.
- d. Bond servant cannot set themselves free. See John 8:34-35.
- e. Jesus Christ went to the cross, paid the price, satisfied the justice of God and now God can account a Christian's faith for righteousness.
- f. Paul is saying when a person obeys from the heart, that pattern of teaching, they will be a child of God.

D. The Bible is Very Clear About How to Identify God's Freed People, His Saved People

1. Those who have been justified are now His children.
 - a. These Romans obeyed a distinctive pattern of teaching.
 - b. These people were freed from sin and became bond slaves to the Lord.
 - c. The pattern of teaching that they obeyed is found in Romans 6.
2. Paul asked that rhetorical question, "*Do you not know that all who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death*" (Romans 6:3).
 - a. That is when a person dies to sin.
 - b. A person does not die to sin when they repent, they simply stop sinning.
 - c. When a person believes on Christ and understands that He is Lord, that does not make that person a Christian right there. They are moving towards becoming a child of God with obedience.
 - d. A personal relationship with God is not change because only God can do that.
 - e. A personal faith, and their repentance does not change their relationship with God, because they are still a bond servant/slave to sin.
 - f. A person is still a bond slave until they are baptized into Christ at which point they are baptized into Christ's death.
 - g. As this individual dies to sin, and as Christ was raised from the dead, so shall that person be raised from the liquid grave of baptism to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4).
3. A new life occurs after baptism.
 - a. Paul says in Romans 6:5, that when a person is united with Christ in the likeness of His death, the old person went down into the grave of baptism where it is deposited.
 - b. At this point the old self was crucified with Christ and united with Him.
 - c. Paul then says, knowing this, the old person was crucified with Christ and united to Christ.
 - d. When is a person crucified? When is the old man crucified and killed? When does a person die to sin?
 1. Answer: When they are buried with Christ in baptism and united with Christ in baptism.
 2. At baptism the old man is crucified, the body of sin is done away,

and that man is no longer be in bondage to sin.

3. That person has been freed from sin and is justified.

E. A Child of God Can Be Identified

1. There is a Biblical means of identifying the child of God.
 - a. By knowing if a person believed on Christ and put their trust in Him by obeying the pattern of teaching to repent of sin.
 - b. It is observed that this person has made up their mind to live for Jesus and they express that trust by being baptized into the death, burial and resurrection as described in Romans 6.
 - c. When a person does this and obeys that form of teaching they are made free from sin and become children of God.
 - d. Those who have obeyed that pattern of teaching, by faith in Christ, have perfected that faith and at that point their faith is reckoned for righteousness.
2. The pattern of teaching is essential.
 - a. Obedience of faith in Christ leads a person to repentance and baptism for the forgiveness of sin.
 - b. This is the pattern of teaching that was taught by the apostle and is essential to be taught today in order for sinners to become children of God.

Did You Know?

F.F. Bruce, the noted New Testament scholar has observed that the idea of an unbaptized Christian is simply not entertained by the New Testament.

Review of “Receive Jesus Into Your Heart Through Prayer”

Many are mis-led to the point that modern false teachers tell people that all you have to do is invite Jesus into your heart and pray for salvation. Nowhere in the New Testament is this taught.

Scripture IS. . .		
	“Invite Jesus into Your Heart” taught?	<u>or</u> “Baptism taught?”
Acts 2:38-41	✘	☺
Acts 8:5-12	✘	☺
Acts 8:26-40	✘	☺
Acts 9:18	✘	☺
Acts 10:47-48	✘	☺
Acts 16:15	✘	☺
Acts 16:16-33	✘	☺
Acts 18:8	✘	☺
Acts 19:3-5	✘	☺
Acts 22:16	✘	☺

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY NOTES

Did you ever wonder why so many people teach something different than what Jesus and the apostles taught? Not only did the apostles (who were guided into all truth by the Holy Spirit, John 16:13), explain why, but they also predicted there would be those who would teach false doctrines disguised as the gospel (II Timothy 4:3-4).

In the beginning of the New Testament Church there were no denominations. There were no different teachings. There was no division in Christianity. The first time division occurred it was severely condemned (I Corinthians 1:10-15).

BIBLICAL PROPHECY ABOUT APOSTASY

The departure from the original New Testament doctrine did not begin until after the deaths of all the apostles and first century Christians. And the departure began exactly where the apostle Paul predicted---with the bishops, the church leaders (Acts 20:28-30).

Not only does Paul foretell the apostasy, but he describes some of the false doctrines that will identify the apostate group (I Timothy 4:1-3). This pinpoints the first departure from true New Testament Christianity into a man-made religion as being the Catholic church. The Catholic hierarchy came into being when bishops of the church, in an unchristian power struggle with civil governments, began to elevate one another to special offices and places of power. This finally resulted in the creation of an ultimate position of power called the Papal office.

And as Paul predicted, in I Timothy 4:1-3, that apostate body still forbids priests to be married. Also, they used to forbid the eating of meat on Fridays and still require fasting on certain days they say are more holy than other days. It is a practice in contradiction to Colossians 2:16-23.

But, one man papal rule, celibacy of the priesthood and required fasting on certain days are not the only departures from THE FAITH by the Catholic church. The Catholic church is responsible for changing the mode of baptism, from immersion in water, to sprinkling with water.

CATHOLIC ADMISSION OF APOSTASY

Cardinal James Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore and Chancellor of the Catholic University of America, on page 266 of his book entitled “**FAITH OF OUR FATHERS.**” (82nd edition, John Murphy Company Publishers, Baltimore, 1904), makes the following statement:

*“For several centuries after the establishment of Christianity, baptism was conferred by **IMMERSION**; but since the twelfth century the practice of baptizing by infusion (sprinkling) has prevailed in the Catholic church, as this manner is attended with **less inconvenience** than baptism by immersion.”*

The New American Catholic Edition Bible (New Confraternity Version) on page 163, in a footnote under Romans 6:3, states:

*“St. Paul alludes to the manner in which baptism was ordinarily conferred in the primitive church, **BY IMMERSION**. The descent into the water is suggestive of the descent of the body into the grave.”*

Both Cardinal Gibbons and the Catholic Bible reveal the fact that the Catholic church departed from the original command and practice of Jesus and His apostles. The Catholic church is the apostate group who departed from **THE FAITH**.

From the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-2:38, until A.D. 1311, all who became a Christian were baptized by **IMMERSION** in water. To baptize someone by sprinkling with water instead of **IMMERSING** in water is a man-made tradition begun by the apostate Catholic church.

TESTIMONY OF DENOMINATIONAL FOUNDERS

Martin Luther, Founder of the Lutheran Church

Baptism is BAPTISMOS in Greek and MERSIO in Latin, and means to plunge something completely into the water, so that the water covers it. It would be proper, according to the meaning of the word that whoever is to be baptized, should be put in and sunk completely into the water and then drawn out again. (Luther's Works, Volume 35, “Word and Sacrament,” page 29).

The term baptism is a Greek word. . .when we immerse anything into water, that it may be entirely covered with water. That custom has been abolished among the generality, (for neither do they entirely dip, but only sprinkle with a little water). Nevertheless they ought to be wholly IMMERSED, for the etymology of the word requires it. And truly, if you consider what baptism signifies, you shall see the same thing required. (Opera Omnia, Tom 1, page 72).

John Wesley, founder of the Methodist church

We are buried with Him---Alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by IMMERSION. (The New Testament, With Explanatory Notes, Romans 6:4).

Methodist scholars John McClintock and James Strong

*Sprinkling as a form of baptism took the place of IMMERSION after a few centuries in the early church. **Not from any established rule**, but by common consent. (McClintock and Strong's Cyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Vol. IX, page 968, 12 volumes).*

John Calvin, founder of the Presbyterian church:

It is evident that the term baptize means to IMMERSE, and that this was the form used by the primitive church. (Institutes of the Christian Religion, Vol. III, page 344).

*Wherefore the church (Catholic church) **did grant liberty to herself** since the beginning **to change the rite** somewhat. (Institutes of the Christian Religion, Vol. IV, page 15).*

THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament was written in the Koine Greek language. In that original language there are three verbs that are used to convey three totally different actions. They are as follows:

EPICHEO

“To pour upon.” It is used in Luke 10:34, to describe what the “Good Samaritan” did when he “POURED” oil upon the wounds of the man who fell among robbers.

RHANTIZO

“To sprinkle,” In Hebrews 9:13, this word describes the Old Testament practice of SPRINKLING blood and ashes of a temple sacrifice.

BAPTISMA

“To immerse, submersion, to dip.” In Matthew 21:25; John 1:26; Acts 2:38; 8:36; 22:16, this word is used of John’s BAPTISM and of Christian BAPTISM, both of which were in water.

Now which of these three verbs did Jesus and His apostles use when they commanded taught believers to be baptized? Did they say, “*Repent and be EPICHEO (poured upon)?*” did they say, “*Repent and be RHANTIZO (sprinkled)?*” The answer to both questions is **NO!** You cannot obey Christ’s command to be RHANTIZO (sprinkled) because He never commanded sprinkling. What He did command was, “*Repent and be BAPTISMA (immersed).*” If you were sprinkled you received man-made baptism. If you have not been IMMERSED you have not received Christ’s baptism taught in the Bible.

PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS AND CATHOLIC ERROR

Why do Protestant denominations practice Catholic error instead of Biblical truth? The answer is found in the origin and history of those denominations.

MARTIN LUTHER was a Catholic priest who studied the Bible and realized the apostasy of Catholicism. He left the Catholic church and started the “reformation.” His intent was to reform the apostate body and return to the ORIGINAL DOCTRINES of New Testament Christianity. Likewise, **JOHN CALVIN** came from a Catholic background. He rejected the apostate teachings of the Catholic church and started the Presbyterian church.

KING HENRY VIII was a Catholic when he asked Pope Clement VII for a divorce from Kathryn so he could marry Ann Bolin. The pope refused and Henry left the Catholic church to start his own church. He created the Church of England (Anglican church) and appointed the office of Archbishop of Canterbury as its head. The Archbishop of Canterbury immediately granted Henry a divorce from Kathryn so he could marry Ann.

The **LUTHERAN, PRESBYTERIAN and ANGLICAN churches** are all hybrid off-shoots of the Catholic church. When they left Catholicism they carried with them the Catholic’s apostate practice of baptism by sprinkling.

JOHN WESLEY was an Anglican preacher who came to America to establish the Church of England in the colonies. Wesley, also, ended up with a hybrid off-shoot, called Methodism. This new denomination called the Methodist church retained the Church of England’s practice of baptism by sprinkling which had been inherited from the Catholic apostasy.

The practice of **SPRINKLING** as **BAPTISM** is not a New Testament doctrine. It was never taught or practiced by Jesus or His apostles. It is a man-made tradition started by the Catholic church and perpetuated by the Protestant denominations who broke off from the Catholic church.

The following diagram illustrates this historical digression from the original Biblical command of baptizing by immersion.

TRANSLATION OR TRANSLITERATION

If sprinkling as baptism is not a New Testament doctrine and was neither taught nor practiced by Christ, the apostles or the New Testament Church, where did we get the word **BAPTISM**?

We know the original Greek word **BAPTISMA** means to **IMMERSE**. But, what does the English word **BAPTISM** mean? **Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary** defines **BAPTISM** thusly:

*A sacrament of the Christian church, signalized by **SPRINKLING** with or **IMMERSION** in water.*

This is the evolved modern-day meaning of the English word **BAPTIZE**. But it

is not the meaning of the original Koine Greek word. Neither is it the meaning of the modern classical Greek word. In the Greek language, today or in any age, the word BAPTISMA still means IMMERSE. The English word and the original Greek word sound alike but have different meaning. How can that be?

That is not hard to explain when you understand that our English word BAPTISM is not a “TRANSLATION” of the Greek word “BAPTISMA.” Instead of being a translation it is a “TRANSLITERATION” of the Greek word “BAPTISMA.” There is a great difference between a translation and a transliteration.

TRANSLATION: To explain the meaning of a word in one language into the same meaning of the word in another language. It is to explain the word so it means **exactly** the same thing in **both** languages.

TRANSLITERATION: To write the English equivalent of another language’s alphabet on the page instead of translating the word.

Suppose I was translating a Greek text into the English language. And suppose I come to the word “**zoe.**” “**Zoe,**” in Greek, means “**life.**” I would not write in the English text, “. . . this is the only zoe I have.” The correct translation would be, “. . . this is the only life I have.” “**Zoe**” is a **TRANSLITERATION** of the Greek word. “**Life**” is the **TRANSLATION**, of the word, into the English language. The meaning of the Greek word “**zoe**” cannot be translated as anything except “**life.**”

The word “**BAPTISM**” is not a translation. It is a **TRANSLITERATION** of the word “**baptisma.**” It is a word made by writing the English equivalent of the Greek alphabet. The word is “baptisma.” But with a transliteration we still do not know the TRUE meaning of the word. All we have done is create a new word in the English language with no meaning.

Greek Word

Greek Alphabet	<u>B</u> eta	<u>A</u> lpha	<u>P</u> i	<u>T</u> au	<u>I</u> ota	<u>S</u> igma	<u>M</u> u	<u>A</u> lpha
Transliteration	B	A	P	T	I	S	M	A
Greek Word	BAPTISMA							
English Word	BAPTISM							
Greek Meaning	IMMERSION							
English Translation	IMMERSION							

But with a transliteration we still do not know the meaning of the word. All we have done is create a new English word pronounced **BAPTISM**. What is baptism? How do we define baptism? It **must** be defined exactly like the word from which it was transliterated.

You do not transliterate the Greek word “**HIPPOS**” into the English language

as “**COW.**” The Greek word “**HIPPOS**” means “**HORSE.**” If you transliterate the Greek word “**HIPPOS**” into the English language you must understand it as “**HORSE**” and not a cow or some other animal. It **MUST** have the same meaning as the original language! And in the same way, if you transliterate the Greek word “**BAPTISMA**” into the English language it **MUST** have the same meaning in the English language as it had in the Greek language. Therefore, “**BAPTISM**” must be understood as “**IMMERSION.**” It cannot be understood as sprinkling.

AN IMPORTANT HISTORY LESSON

How did we end up with a transliteration instead of a translation? It happened in England during the reign of King James, the son of Mary, Queen of Scots. In A.D. 1604, during a conference of the clergy and bishops of the Church of England, King James ordered the Scriptures to be translated into the English language. 47 men of special learning were chosen from church-men, Puritans and scholars having no theological bias. In A.D. 1611, these men produced what is called the “King James Version” of the Bible. In that version there appeared, for the first time, a new English word---“**BAPTISM.**”

This new word came into being because these 47 scholars faced a problem. In the Koine Greek manuscripts was this word **BAPTISMA** which meant “**TO IMMERSE.**”

But King James was a member of the Church of England and this Anglican church did not immerse. Because of the Catholic apostasy, inherited by the Church of England when they broke with Catholicism in 1534, King James had never been **IMMERSED** in baptism---he had only been **SPRINKLED.**

These scholars would not sacrifice their scholastic integrity by saying the word “**BAPTISMA**” meant “**SPRINKLE.**” That would make them the laughing stock of the world. So they compromised. Instead of **TRANSLATING** the word, they **TRANSLITERATED** the word by putting, in the text of the King James Bible, the English equivalent of the Greek alphabet.

Instead of the text reading, “. . . *arise and be IMMERSED.* . .” they wrote, “. . . *arise and be BAPTIZED.* . .” And they did that in every place where the word or a form of the word, **BAPTIZE**, appeared in the original manuscripts. That is how we got our English word **BAPTIZE** and **BAPTISM.**

LET THE SCRIPTURES SPEAK

You do not have to know the original Greek language to understand the Bible. The Bible is self explanatory. Anyone can understand that baptism is an immersion in water just by reading the Bible. We must remember Jesus and His apostles never commanded anyone to be **SPRINKLED** or **POURED** for the forgiveness of sins. You cannot sprinkle or pour a person without first reducing them to a liquid or granule form and that would kill them. But you can **IMMERSE** a person and that is exactly

what Jesus commanded.

Matthew 28:19, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, *BAPTIZING* (immersing) them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 2:38, “Repent and be *BAPTIZED* (immersed) everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. . .”

Acts 8:36, 38-39, “. . . see, here is water; what hinders me being *BAPTIZED* (immersed)? . . . and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he *BAPTIZED* (immersed) him. And when they came up out of the water”

John 3:23, “And John was *BAPTIZING* (immersing) in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and they came and were *BAPTIZED* (immersed).”

Romans 6:3-4, “. . .do you not know that as many of us as were *BAPTIZED* (immersed) into Christ Jesus were *BAPTIZED* (immersed) into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through *BAPTISM* (immersion) 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.

The metaphorical description of baptism shows it to be an immersion. **Romans 6:4**, “Therefore, we are **BURIED** with Him by **BAPTISM** into death. . . .” Baptism is in water. Baptism is a BURIAL in water. Burials are associated with death. Burial is a covering (immersion) in dirt, not sprinkling with dirt. To change the mode is to destroy the figure. Baptism is immersion in water. *There is ONE body and ONE Spirit, just as you were called in ONE hope of your calling; ONE Lord, ONE faith, ONE BAPTISM; ONE God and Father of all . . .* (Ephesians 4:4-6).

NOTE: Since the baptism commanded and practiced by Jesus and His apostles was always by **IMMERSION**, we must follow the same practice today. This practice allows baptism to be exactly as Christ commanded it, and thus truly symbolizes the death, burial and resurrection of Christ as expressed in Romans 6:3-6. By doing exactly what Christ commanded we can **KNOW**, without doubt, that we have fulfilled His commandment. (John 12:48; 14:15)

From a tract, “**THE HISTORY OF CATHOLIC, PROTESTANT AND CHRISTIAN BAPTISM**” by Bob Martin.

Study Guide

Edward C. Wharton



Ed Wharton has preached the Gospel for more than 50 years and helped establish Sunset International Bible Institute in Lubbock, Texas, where he continues to serve on the faculty. He also serves as both teacher and evangelist in Asia, Australia, Europe, and South America.

Ed is married to Martha Lee Van Landingham. Four children were born and raised by Ed and Martha.

In this study, Ed establishes the definition and purpose of baptism. Baptism is for . . . Every unforgiven person who can believe in Christ, who can repent of sin, who can be educated to repent of a sinful life. Baptism is for people, who of their own free will, can arise and obey the commandment to be immersed. Baptism is for people with guilty consciences who want to be saved and appeal to God for a clear conscience. God adds the saved to the church and that is the distinctive nature of the church. You can identify the church in the same way you identify any saved person on earth.

Other books by Ed Wharton include: *Christ and the Church*, *The Church of Christ*, *Freed for Freedom*, *God Among the Nations*, and *Redemption Is*. Working with SIBI External Studies Ed has produced video courses on *Distinctive Nature of the Church*, *Historical Christian Evidences*, *Galatians*, *Scheme of Redemption*, *Homiletics I*, and *Baptism*.

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(800) 687-2121 • www.extensionschool.com

