

A person is shown from behind, standing in a body of water with their arms outstretched. Above their head is a bright, glowing light that resembles a dove with spread wings. The scene is set against a clear blue sky. The person's hair is dark and wet, and their clothing is a light-colored, possibly white, robe that is wet and clinging to their body. The water around them is splashing, and the overall atmosphere is one of spiritual cleansing and renewal.

BAPTISM AND REPENTANCE

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STUDY GUIDE

LESSON 9

BUILT UPON THE ROCK
BIBLE STUDY SET

ESTABLISHING YOUR FAITH ON A FIRM
FOUNDATION. (MATTHEW 7:24

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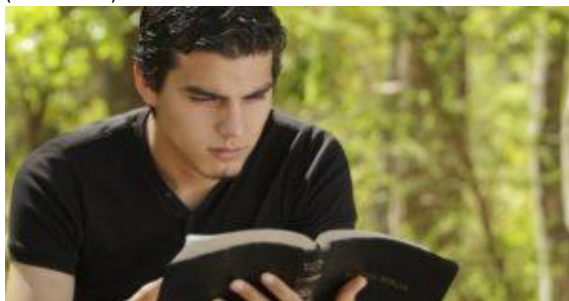


9. Baptism and Repentance

What is the significance, meaning and purpose of baptism? Do you live in constant regret of your mistakes? Do you still have guilt? Have you ever wished you could be washed clean inside and out? Then we have great news—you can be! God has a plan that can completely wash all your sins away and supercharge your character. Preposterous? Not at all! The Bible says, “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death.” (Romans 6:4). When you accept Christ, the old life dies and the Lord promises to forget all your sins! Not only that, He can help you overcome every sinful habit. Did you know that while the cross is mentioned 28 times in the Bible, baptism is mentioned 97 times? It must be pretty important—Let’s take a look.

1. Is it necessary to seek baptism?

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:16)



Answer: Yes! It is listed with another essential, which is faith as a necessity for salvation?

2. But the thief on the cross was not baptized, so why should we be?

"For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we [are] dust." (Psalms 103:14)

Answer: Neither did the thief on the cross restore what he had stolen, as the Lord directs His people in Ezekiel 33:15. God holds us accountable **for what we can do**, but He also recognizes the limitations of “dust.” He will not require a physical impossibility. Could the thief have come down from the cross, and had opportunity been there, he would have been baptized. Every person who is able should be baptized.

3. There are many ordinances called “baptism.” Isn’t any one of these acceptable, provided a person is sincere about it?

“One Lord, one faith, **one baptism**.” (Ephesians 4:5).

Answer: No. There is only one true baptism. All other so-called baptisms are counterfeits. The word “baptism” comes from the Greek word “baptisma.” It means “to dip under or submerge or immerse.” There are eight Greek words in the New Testament used to describe the application of liquids. But among these various words—meaning to sprinkle, to pour, or to immerse—only the one meaning “to immerse” (baptizo) is used to describe baptism.



Note: The devil’s “buffet” plan for baptism says, “Take your pick. The method of baptism doesn’t matter.” But the Bible says, “One Lord, one faith, one baptism.” It also says, “Obey the voice of the Lord which I speak to you” (Jeremiah 38:20). Baptism implies a death to sin.

4. How was Jesus baptized?

"Jesus ... was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water ..." (Mark 1:9, 10).

Answer: Jesus was baptized by immersion. Notice that after the ordinance, He came "up from the water." Jesus was baptized "in the Jordan," not on the bank, as many believe. John the Baptist always found a place to baptize where "there was much water" (John 3:23), so it would be deep enough.

The Bible says we are called to follow Jesus' example (1 Peter 2:21).

5. But didn't the early church leaders change the method of baptism?

"Both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away" (Acts 8:38, 39).

Answer: No. Please notice that Philip, a leader in the early Christian church, baptized the treasurer of Ethiopia by immersion precisely as John the Baptist baptized Jesus. No person, no matter his or her position in the church, is authorized to change God's direct commands.

6. Since Jesus and the disciples baptized by immersion, who introduced the other so-called baptisms that exist today?

"But in vain they do worship me, teaching [for] doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:9)"

Answer: Misguided people have introduced other forms of baptism in direct contradiction to God's Word. Jesus said, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? ... Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition" (Matthew 15:3, 6). Worship that follows human teaching is vain. Just think of it! People have tampered with the sacred ordinance of baptism in an attempt to make it of little consequence. No wonder the Bible exhorts us to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints" (Jude 1:3).

7. What must a person do to prepare for baptism?

Answer:

A. Learn God's requirements.

"Go ye therefore, and **teach all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: **Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:** and, lo, I am with you always, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matthew 28:19, 20).

B. Believe the truth of God's Word.

"He who believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:16).

C. Repent and turn away from your sins and experience conversion.

"Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

"Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19).

8. What is the meaning of baptism?



"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *[in the likeness]* of *[his]* resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *[him]*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." (Romans 6:4-6)



Answer: Baptism represents the believer uniting with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. This symbolism is filled with deep meaning. In baptism the eyes are closed and the breath is suspended as in death. Then comes burial in the water and resurrection from the watery grave to a new life in Christ. When raised from the water, the eyes open and the believer begins breathing again—a likeness of resurrection. The great difference between Christianity and every other religion is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. In these three acts is made possible all that God desires to do for us. To keep these three vital acts alive in the minds of Christians until the end of time, the Lord instituted baptism by immersion as a memorial. There is no symbolism of death, burial, and resurrection in the other forms of baptism. Only immersion fulfills the meaning of Romans 6:4–6.

9. But a person shouldn't be baptized until he is certain he will never slip and sin again, should he?

"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." (Philippians 3:12-15)

Answer: This is like saying a baby should never try to walk until certain she will never slip and fall. A Christian is a newborn "baby" in Christ. This is why the experience of conversion is called "being born again." A person's sinful past is forgiven and forgotten by God at conversion. And baptism symbolizes the burial of the desires of that old life. We begin the Christian life as babies, rather than adults, and God judges us on our attitude and the trend of our lives, rather than on a few slips and falls that we may experience as immature Christians.



God has called us to walk in the light we have. And as we grow we will learn of some habits that are sinful. At that point we should immediately forsake those old things, and look unto the things that are to come. After the new birth, we will no longer want to commit willful sin and our conscience will be subject to the word of God. (Heb 10:26)

10. Why is baptism an urgent matter for a converted sinner?

"And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16)

Answer: Baptism is a public testimony that a repentant sinner has been forgiven and cleansed by Jesus (1 John 1:9) and that their sinful past is behind them. No incriminating evidence against a person exists after conversion. Men and women today struggle under heavy loads of sin and guilt, and this contamination and burden is so devastating to the human personality that people will go to almost any length to achieve a sense of forgiveness and cleansing. But real help is found only in coming to Christ, who says to all who approach Him, "I will; be clean" (Matthew 8:3). Not only does He cleanse, but He also begins crucifying the old nature of sin within you. Baptism is of utmost importance because it is our public acceptance of Jesus' astonishing provision for us!

At conversion, God:

1. Forgives and forgets our past.
2. Miraculously begins to transform us into new spiritual beings.
3. Adopts us as His own sons and daughters.

Certainly no converted person would want to delay baptism, which publicly honors Jesus for working all these miracles.



11. How long does it take to prepare for baptism?

Answer: That depends on the person. Some grasp things more quickly than others. But in most cases, preparation can be made in short order. Here are some Bible examples:

- A. Ethiopian treasurer (Acts 8:26–39) baptized on the same day he heard truth.
- B. Philippian jailer and his family (Acts 16:23–34) baptized the same night they heard truth.
- C. Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:1–18) baptized three days after Jesus spoke to him on the road to Damascus.



- D. Cornelius (Acts 10:1–48) baptized on the same day he heard truth.

It is however important to critically examine self before baptism, to see if we recognize what sin is, and how it affects others, and how it crucified Christ. There is also a danger of crucifying Christ afresh or burying men alive.

12. How does God feel about the baptism of a converted person?

Answer: He said at His Son's baptism, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). Those who love the Lord will always strive to please Him (1 John 3:22; 1 Thessalonians 4:1). There is joy in heaven over a truly converted soul!

13. Can a person experience true baptism without becoming a member of God's church?

Answer: No. God clearly outlines this:

A. We enter that body by baptism.

"For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body" (1 Corinthians 12:13).

B. God's converted people are added to the church by God at conversion

"Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2:47)

"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and

to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect," (Hebrews 12:22, 23)



There is one body. And we are added to that body or church by God who judges and writes our name in the books of heaven. It is not the man that baptizes you or adds you to the body. Nor is it a piece of paper given by an organization of men that makes you a member of God's church. This is not to say that it is bad to

have order or organization. But that order should be the order of God similar to the organization in Acts chapter 2, and we only recognize what God is doing in adding to His church. And we do this by the ordinance of baptism.

Every truly converted person is a member of the one body of Christ (Eph 1:22, 23) and this can cross denominational lines. God is the only one who judges, and sometimes he is calling his people out of those denominational churches. (Rev 18:4, 2 Cor 6:17)

14. Notice four things that baptism does not do:

Answer:

First

Baptism itself does not change the heart; it is a symbol of a change that has taken place. A person might be baptized without faith, without repentance, and without a new heart. He might even be immersed after the example of Jesus, but he would simply come up a wet sinner instead of a dry one—still without faith, without repentance, without a new heart. Baptism cannot make a new person. Neither can it change or regenerate anyone. It is the transforming power of the Holy Spirit that changes the heart. One must be born of the Spirit, as well as of water (John 3:5).

Second

Baptism does not necessarily make a person feel better. It doesn't necessarily change our feelings. Some people are disappointed because they do not feel different after baptism. Salvation is not a matter not of emotion, but of faith and obedience.

Third

Baptism does not remove temptations. The devil is not through with a person when he is baptized. In fact the temptations are often much more intense after Baptism. (Matt 4:1-10) Then again, neither is Jesus, who promised, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5). No temptation will come without a way of escape. This is the promise of Scripture. (1 Corinthians 10:13).



Fourth

Baptism is not some magical rite that guarantees salvation. Salvation comes only as a free gift from Jesus Christ when one experiences the new birth. Baptism is a symbol of true conversion, and unless conversion precedes baptism, the ceremony is meaningless.

15. Jesus asks you to be baptized as a symbol that your sins have been washed away. Would you like to plan for this sacred ordinance soon?

Answer:

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

1. Is it ever proper to be baptized more than once?

Yes. Acts 19:1–5 shows that the Bible endorses rebaptism in certain cases.

2. Should infants be baptized?

No one should be baptized unless he or she (1) knows the truth of God, (2) believes it, (3) has repented, and (4) has experienced conversion. No baby could possibly qualify here. No one has a right to baptize a baby. To do so disregards God's direct commands regarding baptism.



3. Isn't baptism a matter of personal opinion?

Yes—but not your opinion or mine. It's Christ's opinion that matters. Christ says baptism is important to Him. "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). To refuse baptism is to refuse the direct

counsel of God (Luke 7:29, 30).

4. How old should one be to qualify for baptism?

Old enough to understand the difference between right and wrong and to make an intelligent decision to surrender to Christ and follow Him. Many children are ready for baptism at 10 or 11 years of age, some at 8 or 9. And some are not ready at 12 or 13. No age level is specified in the Bible. Children have different levels of experience and understanding. Some are ready for baptism earlier than others. The Bible does not speak of an age of accountability.

5. Can baptism in and of itself save you?

No. But refusing baptism can cause one to be lost, because it means disobedience. Salvation is for "all who obey Him" (Hebrews 5:9).

6. Isn't baptism of the Holy Spirit all that is necessary?

The Bible shows in Acts 10:44–48 that water baptism should be done, even when the baptism of the Holy Spirit has preceded it.

7. Shouldn't we be baptized in Jesus' name only?

In Matthew 28:19, we are told to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In the book of Acts however, we find the new believers were baptized in the name of Jesus.

In the book of Acts chapter 2 we read:

Act 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized ***every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ*** for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive ***the gift of the Holy Ghost***.

They were baptized "***In the name of Jesus***". But they received the gift of "***the Holy Ghost***" and this gift was given from ***the Father***. So we do have God Christ and the Holy Spirit as part of this baptism.

In Acts Chapter 1, which is the same event as Matthew 28:19 repeated we have it said in different words.



“And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for **the promise of the Father**, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall **be baptized with the Holy Ghost** not many days hence.” (Acts 1:4, 5)

There is another parallel verse to Matthew 28:19 which documents the same event. It is also written by Luke. This reinforces the point of being baptized in the name of Jesus and receiving the gift of the father. The gift of the Father is the Holy Spirit.

“And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached **in his [Jesus] name** among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send **the promise of my Father** upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with **power from on high [the holy ghost]**.” [brackets added] (Luke 24:47-49)

So again we see the power or promise of **“the Holy Spirit”** from **the Father** who gives this promise when they are baptized **in the name of Jesus**. This is the exact same great commission given in Matt 28:19 worded differently.

Also in the book of Acts we are told that they always baptized in the name of Jesus.

“But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and **the name of Jesus Christ**, they were baptized, both men and women.” (Acts 8:12)

“When they heard this, they were baptized **in the name of the Lord Jesus**.” (Acts 19:5)

“And he commanded them to be baptized **in the name of the Lord**. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.” (Acts 10:48)

To baptize in “the name of” does not mean we just say a little saying at the end of the baptism, or at the end of a prayer. But rather, that we are doing something in his name, such as prayer or baptism. In his name really symbolizes receiving the character. (See Exodus 33:19) If a person is convicted however in their conscience, it is never safe to walk contrary to ones conscience.

8. There is one sin that I struggle to surrender. Should I be baptized?

Sometimes we struggle with a particular sin and feel that we cannot overcome it. Don’t despair! God wants you to “lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1). God can give you victory over any and all sin! But you are not ready and should not be buried in baptismal waters unless you can make that surrender, because the old life of sin is not dead. Only as we die to ourselves can we live for Christ. (Rom 6:6)

9. Can you explain Galatians 3:27?

Here God essentially compares baptism to marriage. The person who is baptized publicly acknowledges that he or she has taken—put on—Christ’s name (Christian), just as many brides publicly announce the taking of their husband’s name at the time of the wedding. In baptism, as with marriage, several principles apply:

- A. It should never be entered into unless true love rules supreme.
- B. It should never be entered into unless the candidate desires to be faithful through thick and thin.
- C. It should be approached with full understanding.
- D. It should not be premature or unduly delayed.

Marriage is a union that is never to be marred by unfaithfulness. In the same sense our marriage to Christ should be the same. He loves us and gave himself for us, so to do we submit ourselves to him faithfully knowing that he knows what is best for his bride.

QUIZ QUESTIONS

1. The Bible tells us there is one Lord, one faith, and (1)
_____ 15 baptisms.

- ☐ 5 baptisms.
☐ 12 baptisms.
☐ 1 baptism.
2. **Did Jesus teach the necessity of baptism? (1)**
☐ Yes.
☐ No.
3. **Jesus was baptized by (1)**
☐ Pouring.
☐ Sprinkling.
☐ Immersion.
4. **The word "baptize" means to (1)**
☐ Be happy.
☐ Sprinkle.
☐ Pour.
☐ Dip under, or immerse.
5. **The many counterfeit baptisms of today were given to us by (1)**
☐ Christ.
☐ The apostles.
☐ Misguided men.
6. **Mark the things a person should do to prepare for baptism: (4)**
☐ Read the Bible through five times.
☐ Believe the truth.
☐ Experience conversion.
☐ Pray for 10 days straight.
☐ Spend 40 days fasting.
☐ Learn God's requirements.
☐ Repent of and forsake sin.
7. **Baptism is a symbol of (1)**
☐ The creation of the world.
☐ The Bible.
☐ Heaven.
☐ Christ's death, burial, & resurrection.
☐ The angels.
8. **A newly baptized Christian is a (1)**
☐ Spiritual baby.
☐ Spiritual adult.
9. **Baptism, when entered into with prayer, sincerity, and understanding (1)**
☐ Publicly acknowledges conversion.
☐ Means no more than going swimming.
☐ Assures a person he will never be tempted again.
10. **Is infant baptism scriptural? (1)**
☐ Yes.
☐ No.
11. **Some children are ready for baptism earlier than others. (1)**
☐ True.
☐ False.



12. **Which of the following statements are true about Bible baptism? (6)**
____ The Bible compares baptism to marriage.
____ Holy Spirit baptism is all there is.
____ God's teachings are superior to man's teachings.
____ Jesus was baptized as an example for us.
____ There is an example of rebaptism in Scripture.
____ Baptism is a sign of a new birth.
____ The old life is buried in baptism.
____ You should be baptized seven times.
13. **Is it always necessary for a person to take many weeks or months to prepare for baptism? (1)**
____ Yes.
____ No.
14. **Can a person experience true baptism without becoming a part of the body of Christ, the Church? (1)**
____ Yes.
____ No.
15. **I want to be baptized by immersion as soon as possible.**
____ Yes.
____ No.
____ I have been baptized by immersion

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