

1. God Accepts You

At the moment you placed your faith in the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, you experienced the “new birth” and became a child of God! “But as many as received Him, to them have power (the right) to become the sons (children) of God, even to them that believe on His name.” (John 1:12)

Acceptance with God

When Jesus died on the cross, all your sins were still in the future, weren't they?

His death paid the penalty for all our sins –

- All of our past sins;
- All of our sins today;
- All of our future sins.

What are you as a Christian to do when you sin?

1 John 1:9 _____

Our confession is still accepted only on the basis of the sacrificial blood of Jesus. He declared, “It is finished.”

What is it that washed away our sin and released us from its penalty?

Romans 3:25 _____

Revelation 1:5 _____

Upon whose righteousness and life is our salvation based?

Romans 5:10 _____

Romans 5:17 _____

2 Corinthians 5:20-21 _____

1 Peter 2:21-24 _____

It is extremely important for us as growing Christians to know that our acceptance with God is based completely upon the blood of our Savior Jesus Christ, which He shed on the cross. Our acceptance is based on what He alone has done.

2. Pleasing to God

Do you know the difference between being accepted by God and your obedience to God, which is pleasing to Him? As His child God has accepted you, but He wants you to live a life that pleases Him. When we obey Him, He is pleased; but when we disobey Him, He is grieved. His desires for us are given in the Bible, our instruction book for living the Christian life.

ACCEPTANCE with God is based in the blood of Jesus.
I cannot add to His sacrifice.

PLEASING God involves obeying God as His revelation, called the Bible, shows us how.

BAPTISM does not have anything to do with my acceptance with God, but it is the first Step of obedience that God wants me to take in pleasing Him.

3. Baptism is Important

Baptism is important to our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus began His own ministry on earth by being baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. One of the last things Jesus commanded His disciples to do was to baptize new converts.

Baptism Commanded by Christ

Jesus came and told His disciples, " I have been given complete authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." (Mathew 28:18-19)

This command of our Lord applies to us today. In the next verse, verse 20, the Lord makes this fact clear.

Review Question

Is it God's desire that we be baptized? _____

The Early Church Practiced Baptism

The Church began on the Day of Pentecost. This event is recorded in Acts, chapter 2. The practice of baptism was found universally in the New Testament Church.

What was the first thing the new Christians were told to do following conversion?

Acts 2:38 _____

(Note: "For" the forgiveness of sins means "because of" the forgiveness of sins. In other words, baptism doesn't save us. It is an act of obedience after we have been saved.)

What was the first thing the new believers did after receiving (believing) the Word?

Acts 2:41 _____

List each step the new believers followed in Acts 2:41-42

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

Read Acts 8:26-38

What did the Ethiopian eunuch ask Philip?

Acts 8:36 _____

What did Philip answer?

Acts 8:37 _____

What did Philip then do?

Acts 8:38 _____

What did Peter do to the new believers he led to the Lord?

Acts 10:48 _____

Believer's baptism was practiced throughout the New Testament Church. Do you believe God desires for you to be baptized? _____

4. Baptism – What Does it Mean?

You have now seen that baptism has nothing to do with gaining acceptance with God and that it is very important to God that you be baptized. Let's look at what baptism means.

“I Pledge Allegiance”

Baptism is the first test of obedience that God gives a new Christian. It shows us whether or not we want to please Him. It is a pledge of allegiance to the Lord.

In baptism we take our stand with Jesus in front of other people and confess our faith and desire to please Him. It is our first step of separation from the world.

Do you desire to please the Lord who died for you? _____

Baptism is a Picture

Baptism is a picture, or symbol, of what happens in salvation. It is identification with what Jesus did on the cross. It outwardly pictures an inward reality.

1. We are baptized into His _____.
(Romans 6:3)
2. We have been _____ with Him in baptism.
(Romans 6:4)
3. We have been _____ with Him to walk in newness of life.
(Romans 6:4-5)

Paul used the symbol of baptism to show that when a person trusts in Christ for salvation, he or she is identified with the benefits of His death and resurrection. We as believers have died in respect to sins power over us and have been empowered by God to live a new life that pleases Him.

5. Who is to be baptized?

A careful reading of the New Testament clearly demonstrates that Christian baptism is believer's baptism. It must follow salvation.

Believers Only

1. What was the prerequisite set forth to the Ethiopian eunuch?

Acts 8:36-38 _____

2. Who were baptized on the day of Pentecost?

Acts 2:41 _____

In the command of Christ to baptize new disciples, it is clear that He is talking about those who have placed their faith in Jesus. All the examples of baptism of the New Testament are people old enough to understand the gospel and to place their faith personally and consciously in Christ. (Biblical examples include Lydia and her "household" would refer to servants, not infants or to children not yet accountable. The Philippian jailer is a similar case. Act 16:34 indicates his household became believers before they were baptized)

Who was Philip baptizing?

Acts 8:12 _____

Baptism signifies identification with Christ and His completed work on the cross and can pertain only to those who have professed faith in Christ for salvation.

6. How am I to be Baptized?

The New Testament Church practiced the mode of immersion (putting the person being baptized completely under the water). In fact, the command to "baptize" is a command to immerse.

"Baptized" Means Immerse

Our English word "baptism" is a transliteration of the Greek word *baptizo*. In other words, the translators simply put English letters to the Greek sounds. If you had lived in New Testament times and heard the word *baptizo*, you would have known that the speaker meant to dip, submerge or immerse.

All the major Greek dictionaries (lexicons) tell us baptize means "to immerse" or "to submerge". In fact, the word could be used to refer to a drowning, to the sinking of a ship or even to the idea of perishing. Every time the New Testament refers to the practice of baptism, it uses the word *baptizo*. If the writer wanted to allow pouring or sprinkling, he would have used other Greek words – but he did not. Neither did Jesus.

Biblical examples of immersion

In every example of the act of baptism, immersion is either implied or allowed for.

Describe the method of Jesus' baptism.

Mark 1:9-10 _____

Why did John the Baptist choose to baptize near Aenon?

John 3:23 _____

The Ethiopian eunuch traveled in a caravan that certainly had an abundant supply of water that could have been used for sprinkling or pouring if either mode were baptism. But where did Philip baptize the eunuch?

Acts 8:36-38 _____

How is his baptism described?

Acts 8:38 _____

Symbolism Demands Immersion

You have already learned that baptism not only demonstrates your loyalty to God, but it also pictures Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. Only immersion can do this.

Does the Bible teach a specific method for baptism? _____

What method does the Bible teach? _____

7. Apply it

What is the only reason that God accepts me? _____

Does baptism help me to be accepted by God? _____

Does God want me to be baptized? _____

What does baptism mean to me? _____

Who is to be baptized? _____

Am I willing to pledge my allegiance to the Lord by being baptized by immersion as a believer?
