

Christian Foundations

Lesson 7

Baptism in Water

This lesson belongs to: _____

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Key Verse: *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:18-20*

Purpose: The purpose of this lesson is to help the disciple understand and experience the importance of scriptural water baptism as the first step of obedience for a new believer and that it symbolizes a washing away of former sins and an identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Baptize: A Word Study

The English word “baptize” is a transliteration of the Greek word *baptizo*, which simply means “to dip, immerse, plunge, submerge.” It also includes the idea of washing. Therefore New Testament baptism in water indicates a complete immersion in water.

1. Jesus commanded those who believe in Him to be _____ in water.
 - Matthew 28:19 *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*
 - Mark 16:15–16 *“And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”*
2. Jesus Himself was baptized in order to _____ all righteousness.
 - Matthew 3:13–16 *“Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ And John tried to prevent Him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?’ ¹⁵ But Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then he allowed Him. ¹⁶ When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.”*
 - Since He had no sin, it was not necessary for Jesus to be baptized by John for the “remission of sins”⁹⁷ but it was necessary for Him to be baptized to “fulfill all righteousness”. If our redemption needed only for Christ to die for our sins, He could have come to earth and immediately gone to the Cross. However, Jesus’ ability to offer Himself without spot on the Cross was predicated on His perfect life of active obedience to the will of God. Jesus was born under the law and fulfilled all righteousness by submitting to every point of the law.⁹⁸ As a result, He was able to offer Himself as the spotless Lamb of God.⁹⁹
 - Although John the Baptist was a prophet, he was also from a priestly lineage, his father Zacharias being a priest.¹⁰⁰ God the Father had already pre-ordained that Jesus would be High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek.¹⁰¹ Jesus baptism by John the Baptist marked His heavenly ceremonial inauguration as High Priest in order to fulfill all righteousness under the Old Covenant and to inaugurate the New Covenant. The subsequent witness of the Holy Spirit descending upon and remaining upon Jesus was the sign given to John so that he might know Jesus to be the Messiah, i.e. “Anointed One”.¹⁰²

Four New Testament Baptisms

In Hebrews 6:2 we find that one of the foundation principles of Christ is the “doctrine of baptisms.” In the New Testament we discover that four baptisms are specifically mentioned. In understanding the differences between these four baptisms, we need to ask ourselves these four questions: Who is the Baptizer? Into what (medium) is the person being baptized? What is the purpose of the baptism? What is the evidence?

⁹⁷ Luke 3:3

⁹⁸ Galatians 4:4-5

⁹⁹ John 1:29; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 1:19

¹⁰⁰ Luke 1:5

¹⁰¹ Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:11, 21

¹⁰² John 1:31-33

- a) Baptism in _____ (Matthew 28:19).
- Baptizer: The believer
 - Medium: Water
 - Purpose: Repentance from sin, washing away of sins, and identification with Christ
 - Evidence: New birth; New creation
- b) Baptism by the Holy Spirit into the _____ (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- Baptizer: Holy Spirit
 - Medium: The body of Christ
 - Purpose: Connection in the church, the body of Christ
 - Evidence: Gifts and callings for service and ministry
- c) Baptism with the _____ (Luke 3:16; Acts 1:8)
- Baptizer: Jesus Christ
 - Medium: Holy Spirit
 - Purpose: Power to be witnesses
 - Evidence: Demonstration of the Holy Spirit and of power (1 Corinthians 2:4)
- d) Baptism with _____ (Malachi 3:2-3; Luke 3:16; 1 Peter 1:6-7)
- Baptizer: Jesus Christ
 - Medium: Fire of testing and suffering
 - Purpose: Refining, purification, proving
 - Evidence: A holy life (sanctification)
3. Baptism in water is obedience to Christ's _____.
- Matthew 28:18-20 *"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*
4. Obeying Christ's command to be baptized in water is evidence that we _____ Him.
- John 14:15 *"If you love Me, keep My commandments."*
5. Baptism in water fulfills God's _____ requirement.
- Matthew 3:13-15 *"Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?' But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him."*
6. Baptism in water is a visible demonstration of our _____.
- James 2:17-18 *"Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, 'You have faith, and I have works.' Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works."*

Scriptural Requirements Preceding Baptism

7. _____ of sin.
- Matthew 3:5-6 *"Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins."*
8. _____ worthy of repentance.
- Luke 3:7-14 *"Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, 'Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.' So the people asked him, saying, 'What shall we do then?' He answered and said to them, 'He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.' Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, 'Teacher, what shall we do?' And he said to them, 'Collect no more than what*

is appointed for you.' Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, 'And what shall we do?' So he said to them, 'Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages.'"

9. _____ the message of the Gospel from the heart.
- Mark 16:15-16 "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.'"
 - Acts 8:12 "But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized."
 - Acts 8:36-38 "Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, 'See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?' Then Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' And he answered and said, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him."
 - Romans 10:8-10 "But what does it say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
10. According to the preceding verses _____ would not be candidates for believer's baptism because they cannot understand, repent, or have heartfelt belief in Christ as Savior. The practice of infant baptism by some denominations would only qualify Biblically as a sanctifying act of dedication of the child to God by believing parents until such time as their conscience is awakened to sin and their need to be saved.
- 1 Corinthians 7:14 "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by her husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy."
 - Romans 7:9 "I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died."

The Symbolism of Water Baptism

Water baptism finds its significance in spiritual symbolism. Water baptism by immersion is considered the first step in our obedience to Christ after believing in Him as Lord and Savior. Baptism also serves as a public witness and profession of our faith through identifying with the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. When a person enters the baptismal waters, they acknowledge their need to be saved and cleansed of their sin. It is in water baptism that new believers make a public confession of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and acknowledge their belief in the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.¹⁰³ Through water baptism believers are immersed in a type of watery grave in identification with the death and burial of the Lord.¹⁰⁴ Immersion signifies the spiritual reality of the believer's death with Christ on the Cross,¹⁰⁵ freedom from the penalty of sin,¹⁰⁶ washing away of sin,¹⁰⁷ separation from the former life in sin,¹⁰⁸ freedom from the former slavery to sin,¹⁰⁹ and the end of obligation to keep the Law to be made righteous.¹¹⁰ Upon being raised from the water, they identify with the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and demonstrate their commitment to walk in a newness of life in Christ Jesus.¹¹¹

11. Water baptism signifies _____ with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- Romans 6:3-4 "Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism 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. For if we have been united in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be in the likeness of His resurrection."
 - Colossians 2:12 "buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead."
 - Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."
12. Water baptism signifies deliverance from the former _____ to sin.
- Romans 6:6-7 "knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin."

¹⁰³ Romans 10:9-10

¹⁰⁴ Romans 6:4

¹⁰⁵ Romans 6:3; Galatians 2:20

¹⁰⁶ Colossians 2:11-14

¹⁰⁷ Acts 22:16

¹⁰⁸ Romans 6:2

¹⁰⁹ Romans 6:6

¹¹⁰ Romans 10:4

¹¹¹ Romans 6:4-5

- Romans 6:14 *“For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.”*
13. Water baptism signifies the _____ of our sins.
- Acts 22:16 *“And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”*
14. Water baptism signifies a spiritual _____ of the hardened fleshly heart toward God. This work is performed by Christ rather than by the hands of man.
- Deuteronomy 10:16 *“Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.”*
 - Ezekiel 36:26 *“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.”*
 - Colossians 2:11-12 *“In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”*
15. There is only _____ baptism that unites all believers.
- Ephesians 4:4–6 *“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”*
 - There is only one universal Church although there are many local churches. Although many Christian denominations have formed due to sectarian divisions, Christ has only one Church. Just as there is only one faith, there is only one baptism that accompanies that faith—not two, three, or four baptisms. There is not a Baptist baptism, a Methodist baptism, a Presbyterian baptism, a Pentecostal baptism, or a Charismatic baptism. There is one baptism shared by all that unites all. Paul declared that sectarian divisions over baptism are carnal and not of God.¹¹²

Water Baptism and Washing

Once we place our faith exclusively in Christ and the work of His Cross, we are to begin living out our new life in Christ being separated unto God. We must yield ourselves completely to Him—spirit, soul, and body.¹¹³ Through salvation and water baptism our bodies are set apart to be a holy temple of the Holy Spirit.¹¹⁴ When we make Jesus our Lord and Savior, we are commanded to have our bodies washed in baptism as a symbol of cleansing from sin and separation unto God.¹¹⁵

16. Levitical priests served the Old Testament Tabernacle of Moses. Before entering the priesthood, the priestly candidate first had to be sanctified (set apart as holy) in the outer court through the washing of water and the sprinkling of blood.¹¹⁶ Under the New Testament, all believers in Christ have now been made part of a _____ inaugurated to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God. As such our hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.
- Exodus 29:4 *“And Aaron and his sons you shall bring to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and you shall wash them with water.”*
 - Exodus 29:21 *“And you shall take some of the blood that is on the altar, and some of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and his garments, on his sons and on the garments of his sons with him; and he and his garments shall be hallowed, and his sons and his sons’ garments with him.”*
 - 1 Peter 2:9 *“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”*
 - Hebrews 10:22 *“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”*

The Body and Water Baptism

In his book *The Holiest of All*, Andrew Murray (1828-1917) says, *“Man belongs to two worlds, the visible and the invisible. In his constitution, the material and the spiritual, body and soul, are wonderfully united...It is not only in the interior life of the soul, but in that of the body too, that the power of redemption can be manifested...It is in the body, as much as in the spirit, that the saving power of Christ must be felt. It was with this view that our Lord adopted one of the Jewish washings, and instituted the baptism with water. He that believed with the heart, came*

¹¹² 1 Corinthians 1:12-17; 3:1-4

¹¹³ 1 Thessalonians 5:23

¹¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

¹¹⁵ Hebrews 10:22

¹¹⁶ Exodus 29:4, 21

with the body to be baptized. It was a token that the whole exterior physical life with all its functions and powers, was to be His too...The same Spirit who applies the blood in power to the heart, takes possession and mastery of the body washed with water...It is not only in the spirit, but with the body too, we enter into the Holiest of All. It is on us here, where we are in the body, that the presence of God descends. Our whole life in the flesh is to be in that presence; the body is very specially the temple, and in charge of the Holy Spirit; in the body the Father is to be glorified. Our whole being, body, soul, and spirit, is in the power of the Holy Spirit, a holy sacrifice upon the altar, a living sacrifice for service before God. With the body, too, we live and walk in the Holiest. Our eating and drinking, our sleeping, our clothing, our labour and relaxation—all these things have more influence on our spiritual life than we know. They often interrupt and break the fellowship we seek to maintain. The heart and the body are inseparably joined—a heart sprinkled from an evil conscience needs a body washed with pure water.”¹¹⁷

17. Through water baptism our body is set apart or _____ unto the Lord.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:23 *“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
18. Obedience to Christ’s command to be baptized assures the answer of a good _____ toward God.
- 1 Peter 3:21-22 *“There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.”*
19. Water baptism is among the three _____ that confirm and testify of our salvation.
- 1 John 5:8 *“And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.”*

Water Baptism and the Circumcision of the Heart

Circumcision was given to Abraham as a seal of his covenant with God.¹¹⁸ Although Abraham received righteousness from God by faith before being circumcised¹¹⁹, God required that Abraham and his descendants be circumcised as an act of obedience for a “seal” of that righteousness.¹²⁰ So it is with our salvation unto righteousness with God. We are saved by faith in Christ. As we are baptized into Christ through water baptism, we experience the circumcision of the heart to which the natural rite of circumcision pointed.

20. Water baptism represents the circumcision made _____.
- Colossians 2:11-12 *“In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”*
21. Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize new believers in the name of the _____, and of the _____, and of the _____.
- Matthew 28:18-20 *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.”*
 - Each of the three Persons of the Godhead—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—are uniquely involved in the work of salvation. It is God the Father whose love sends the Son and draws men to Christ,¹²¹ it is the Son who was sacrificed for our sin and who mediates as our High Priest before the Father,¹²² and it is the Holy Spirit that performs within us the new birth.¹²³

In What Name?

Jesus Himself commanded that disciples be baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.¹²⁴ Early records of church history reveal that baptizing “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the

¹¹⁷ Andrew Murray, *The Holiest of All* (Springdale, PA: Whitaker House, 1996), 381-2, 383

¹¹⁸ Genesis 17:10-11; Romans 4:11

¹¹⁹ Genesis 15:6

¹²⁰ Romans 4:11

¹²¹ John 3:16; 6:44

¹²² John 3:16; Hebrews 4:14; 9:14-15

¹²³ John 3:5-8; Titus 3:5

¹²⁴ Matthew 28:19

Holy Spirit” was the normally prescribed pattern. However, some insist that the accounts in the Book of Acts require baptizing believers “in Jesus’ name”. According to the Encyclopedia of Early Christianity (Garland Publishing, 1990), “Triune immersion may have been based on the command to baptize ‘in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit’ (Matthew 28:19). That phrase is frequently attested in the second century as the formula accompanying baptism. Baptism ‘in the name of Jesus’ appears to have been a description of the meaning of the act or a reference to the confession accompanying the baptism and not a formula pronounced at the baptism.” (p. 132) Therefore, baptizing believers “in Jesus’ name” was the author’s way of distinguishing Christian baptism from the baptism of John the Baptist and Jewish baptisms of proselytes.¹²⁵ The reference to baptizing “in Jesus’ name” referred to baptizing “in the authority of Jesus”, much in the same way that a representative or ambassador acts “in the name of” or “in the authority of” the one they represent. A proper understanding of this can be reflected in the following baptismal pronouncement: “_____”, because of your profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and by His authority, I baptize you now in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” Of equal importance is the realization that baptism is not a matter of pronouncement only but also of the faith placed in the One in whose Name and authority they are being baptized. There is only one Lord and thus only one baptism. A church, denomination, or ministry should never use baptism for the purpose of making disciples unto themselves rather than unto Jesus Christ.

¹²⁵ Matthew 23:15