

LESSON 7

THE ORDINANCE OF WATER BAPTISM

Scripture Texts: Hebrews 9:1-19; Matthew 3:13-17; Romans 6:3-6; 1 Peter 3:20-21



Jesus commands His people to be baptized. We are to be baptized in the same way Christ was baptized. He was our example in all things. We are to be baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. Only saved people are in shape for baptism. Baptism does not save. It is symbolic of the work God has done in us. God has given the church three ordinances to keep. An ordinance is an outward observance commanded by God and symbolic of a spiritual work and of the person's relation to it. The ordinances are Water Baptism, The Lord's Supper, and Feet Washing. Today we will see

what the Bible says about the observance of Water Baptism.

MEMORY VERSE: *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

Mark 16:16

Ordinances Given to Moses

Hebrews 9:1-19 Moses gave ordinances for the old tabernacle—an earthly house. Christ gave ordinances for the new tabernacle—a new house of God, a spiritual house. To be an ordinance it must:

- (1) Be ordained by Christ
- (2) Have been practiced by Christ
- (3) Be a commandment to the church

Some of the old ordinances were nailed to the Cross—those ones that were against us (Colossians 2:13-15). But water baptism was not one of them. Christ had already died, been buried, and arose when He gave this ordinance.

Ordained by Christ

Matthew 3:13-17 We are to be baptized just as Jesus was. He did all things for our example. Done right, it becomes part of our salvation. This ordinance is done only one time unless salvation is lost. It is part of the first works. This ordinance does not save; it is simply a symbol of the washing of the blood which has already been applied to our lives. It is a testimony to the world of our death to sin—the old life buried in a grave of water, arising to live a life made new in Christ Jesus. It is possible to get to Heaven without being baptized in water—one may not have that opportunity—but none will go to Heaven without being baptized in the blood of Jesus (Luke 23:43). Baptism signifies separation from Satan.

Practiced by Christ

Romans 6:3 Those of us who **were** (past tense) **baptized into Jesus Christ**—salvation that God performed in us. He put us **into Jesus Christ**. He submerged us in Him. He covered our old sinful life with Christ's righteous one. When this happened we **were baptized into his death**.

Romans 6:4-5 **Therefore**—because of this—**we are** (present tense) **buried with him by baptism into death**—buried in water to symbolize, to picture, our entrance into His death. Water baptism is a symbol not only of Christ's death, but of His resurrection also. **As Christ was raised up from the dead**, we are raised up from the water. This symbolizes how **we also should walk in newness of life**—changed, sin gone, Christ ruling. The main thought of this chapter is that the Christian life is a holy life.

Romans 6:6 **Our old man**—our sinful self—**is crucified with him. Henceforth**—from now on forever—**not serve sin**—live holy. We testify of our belief in a literal resurrection later on.

There is only one mode—be baptized **IN** water. There is only one formula—in the trinity. No one has the right to choose his own way; our only choice is whether or not we will follow Christ.

Commanded by Christ

Matthew 28:19-20 Shortly before Jesus returned to Heaven He gave the eleven disciples the command to **Go . . . and teach all nations** the things He had taught them. They were to crown their teaching by baptizing those who accepted it. They were to baptize **in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost**, thus acknowledging and honoring and entering into relationship with all three Persons of the Godhead. The command affected **all nations**, including you and me.

A Part of Salvation

Acts 8:36 The good news of salvation through Christ's death was new to the eunuch. Hearing it for the first time from Philip, his hungry heart opened to it. **What doth hinder me to be baptized?**

Acts 8:37 **If thou believest with all thine heart.** This is necessary for all before baptism. He did **believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God**. This includes belief in His Words, His power to save and to keep, and all His promises. It takes more than just knowledge and understanding. True belief brings salvation (Galatians 2:16).

Acts 8:38-39 **Both into the water . . . come up out of the water**—a description of immersion. Sprinkling or pouring would not require this. After the miraculous removal of Philip, the eunuch **went on his way rejoicing**—the normal result of salvation. If a person does not already possess the spiritual grace which the ordinance symbolizes he is not fit to take part in its observance. To do so is sacrilege.

Infant Baptism

1 Peter 3:20-21 **But the answer of a good conscience toward God.** Babies have no conscience with which to answer God. Everyone must make a choice before being baptized, and babies cannot choose. People must be taught the Scriptures as Philip taught the eunuch. Babies cannot be taught the Scriptures, and they have no understanding of them. Babies have no sin and are not lost. If they *were* lost baptism could not save them. Infant baptism is a trick of Satan to make people feel they are saved and in a church



because they were baptized when an infant.

The ark saved only those who got into it first. The ones who got in the water first were destroyed. We must be in the ark first, then baptized.

Baptism Is Immersion

Our word "baptize" comes from a Greek word "baptizo," meaning to dip, to submerge, to cover completely. All Bible examples either plainly describe immersion or give circumstances consistent with immersion. The words "into," "buried," and "planted" indicate immersion. Neither sprinkling nor pouring is baptism. Baptism does not put one into the church. It symbolizes one's entrance into it. Baptism is a work, an outward act, and we are not saved by works (Ephesians 2:8-9).

JUST A THOUGHT

**Spiritual blessings are lasting.
Worldly pleasures are fleeting.**

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