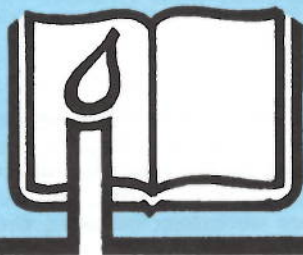


STUDIES IN THE BIBLE



Scriptural Baptism

Lesson 22

Jesus said, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26.) Any subject that relates to the salvation of our most important possession — the soul — needs our careful study. Since Jesus also said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," baptism in water is such a subject.

In this lesson our aim is to determine the place that baptism filled in New Testament times rather than to examine its modern usage. We will try to answer these questions: (1) What method (immersion, sprinkling, or pouring) was employed? (2) What was the purpose of baptism? (3) Who were baptized? (4) In whose name were they baptized? First, however, note that water baptism should not be confused with Holy Spirit baptism to be examined in another lesson. Except for the six times that Holy Spirit baptism is mentioned, almost every scripture using the words "baptize" and "baptism" applies to baptism in water.

The Method

A vital question is whether immersion, sprinkling, pouring, or all three are authorized in the Scriptures. Almost all Greek scholars agree that the word baptize as used in the New Testament means to dip, submerge, or immerse. Whether they are correct can be determined by uses of the word in the New Testament.

The first person to baptize in New Testament times was John the Baptizer. Of him it is said, "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there." (John 3:23.) We are certain that John immersed since neither pouring nor sprinkling requires much water. However, immersion does. When Jesus was baptized by John it is said, "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." (Matt. 3:16.) "And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened." (Mark 1:10.) Had Jesus not gone into the water He could not have come up out of it. Furthermore, He would have been foolish to have walked into the River Jordan up to His waist only to have John sprinkle some water on Him when such could have been done on the shore. Every indication is that Jesus was immersed.

We are told of the conversion of the Ethiopian, "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip." (Acts 8:38, 39.) This clearly shows that the eunuch was immersed.

Paul calls water baptism a burial. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death." (Rom. 6:4.) "Buried with him in baptism . . ." Col. 2:12.) Only immersion can truly be called a burial. But were sprinkling and pouring ever used in apostolic days? A careful study of the New



Testament reveals not a single passage mentioning either sprinkling or pouring of water. We must conclude that neither was employed or authorized by the apostles.

The Purpose

Those baptized in apostolic times were immersed for the remission or forgiveness of sin. "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." (Acts 2:38.) "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." (Acts 22:16.) Since we cannot be saved without forgiveness it follows that baptism is necessary for salvation. Thus we read, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16.) "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us." (1 Peter 3:21.)

But why does baptism save? It saves because it puts us **into Christ** where we may obtain forgiveness through His blood. Paul speaks of "the redemption that is **in Christ Jesus**." (Rom. 3:24.) He also teaches, "For as many of you as have been **baptized into Christ** have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:27.) "Know ye not, that so many of us as were **baptized into Jesus Christ** were baptized into his death?" (Rom. 6:3.) Therefore we cannot be saved unless we are **in Christ** where we reach His redeeming blood, and we cannot get **into Christ** without being baptized.

We must also conclude that forgiveness never precedes baptism, but is a direct result of it. Never is baptism called "an outward sign of an inward grace". It never expresses the idea that one is already a child of God, but it is the act by which one becomes a Christian.

The Subjects

It is sometimes asked whether the Bible teaches infant or adult baptism. Actually, neither is taught. What is taught is believers' baptism. Jesus says, "He that **believeth** and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16.) In Acts 18:8 we read, "And many of the Corinthians hearing **believed**, and were baptized." We have no command to baptize those incapable of believing. Furthermore, those to be baptized must be teachable. In the Great Commission Jesus says, "Go ye therefore, and **teach** all nations, baptizing them . . ." (Matt. 28:19.) Again, repentance is a prerequisite of baptism. "**Repent**, and be baptized . . ." (Acts 2:38.) The one who has not sinned has nothing of which to repent and is not told to be baptized.

An infant which cannot believe, be taught, nor repent is not a subject of baptism. Furthermore, it has no need to be baptized "for the remission of sins" because it has no sins to be remitted. There is not a command or example in the Scriptures that even hints at infant baptism. Advocates of infant baptism cite Matthew 19:14 as authority. This says, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." But Jesus was not here discussing baptism. Furthermore, those mentioned were able to "come" to Him. He certainly does not say, "Bring little children to me to be baptized." The little child who has not sinned is as sure of heaven as any adult until he becomes old enough to sin.

In Whose Name

In the Great Commission Jesus says, "Baptizing them **into** the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matt. 28:19.—A.S.V.) Since these are the words of the Savior, we cannot go wrong when we baptize into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In Acts 2:38 Peter commanded baptism "in the name of Jesus Christ". The expression "in the name of . . ." often means "by the authority of . . ." A policeman who shouts to a fleeing criminal, "Stop, in the name of the law!" means, "Stop, by the authority of the law!" When one is baptized **into** the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy

Spirit, he is baptized in the name of Jesus or by His authority since Jesus gave the command Himself.

When changes are made on such subjects as baptism it is extremely dangerous. If we wish to reach the heavenly home we will find it is much safer to comply with the Lord's command on baptism than to risk our eternal salvation by altering it in some way.

Have you been scripturally baptized? If you have not and wish our assistance, we will be happy to help you.

Check if you wish our help. _____

“Seek and Ye Shall Find”

In the blanks write the scripture location of each statement:

- 1. “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.”
- 2. “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water.”
- 3. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”
- 4. “Buried with him in baptism.”
- 5. “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us.”
- 6. “And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip.”
- 7. “And many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.”
- 8. “Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.”
- 9. “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them”

Fill in the blanks:

1. The method of baptism employed in New Testament times was
2. This is proved by Romans 6:4 which teaches that “we are with him by baptism into death.”
3. In apostolic times sinners were baptized in order to receive the of sins.
4. Forgiveness and redemption are to be found in
5. We get into Him by being
6. Infants are not proper subjects of baptism, but those who are capable of must be baptized if they wish to be saved.

Match each scripture reference with the statement which most nearly expresses the thought in that scripture by writing the correct letter in the corresponding blank:

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. There is no condemnation IN CHRIST. | a. Rom 12:5 |
| 2. All will be made alive IN CHRIST. | b. Phil. 2:1 |
| 3. There is one body IN CHRIST. | c. Rom. 6:3 |
| 4. Any man IN CHRIST is a new creature. | d. II Cor. 5:17 |
| 5. Redemption is IN CHRIST. | e. Rom. 8:1 |
| 6. Those far off are made nigh IN CHRIST. | f. Gal. 3:27 |
| 7. Gentiles are partakers of His promise IN CHRIST. | g. I Cor. 15:22 |
| 8. There is consolation IN CHRIST. | h. Eph. 3:6 |
| 9. To get INTO CHRIST we must be baptized. | i. Rom. 3:24 |
| (two references) | j. Eph. 2:13 |

Student may write here any comment, question, or request.

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Name..... Grade.....

Address..... Date.....

City..... By.....