

Monday **Spiritual Growth – Baptism**

Many would think of baptism as a fundamental, relatively simple teaching, but there are so many differing views of baptism and teachings about it, it could easily become confusing and overwhelming. Just what does the Bible teach about baptism?

1. Read Matthew 3:13-17 – Jesus went to John the Baptist in order to do what?
2. According to verse 14, what was John’s response?
3. According to verse 15, why did Jesus say He needed to be baptized?
4. According to verse 16, what happened after Jesus was baptized?
5. According to verse 17, what did God say about Jesus after He was baptized?
6. Jesus’ baptism set an example for us. It fulfilled all righteousness. It was right for Jesus to be baptized. It pleased His Father; He said so Himself. If it was right for Jesus to be baptized to be baptized and it pleased His Father, is it right and pleasing for His other children to be baptized?
7. Read Matthew 28:19-20 – What three things are commanded in this passage?
8. Baptism is commanded for disciples of Jesus Christ. Read Acts 10:48 – What did Peter command those who were just saved to do?

Jesus set an example that God’s children should be baptized. God also views it as a matter of obedience. It pleases God for us to obey Him and be baptized. If you are saved and have never been baptized, it would please God for you to be baptized.

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Jesus set an example for us to be baptized when He was baptized Himself. It’s also an act of obedience. God commanded that those who are saved should be baptized. If that were all that we were told, that would be enough. Obedience is always a good motivation, but there are other reasons to be baptized.

1. Read Acts 2:41 – What had the people already done before they were baptized?
2. Read Acts 8:12 – What had the people already done before they were baptized?
3. Read Acts 18:8 – What had the people already done before they were baptized?
4. We get baptized because we are saved. We don’t get baptized in order to get saved. There’s a world of difference between the two! No one in the Bible was ever baptized in hopes of getting saved. There is no benefit in being baptized if you aren’t saved; it does nothing to save you. In fact, you can be saved and go to Heaven and never be baptized. Read Luke 23:40-43 – Was the thief ever baptized?
5. Where did he go after death?
6. Though it’s not required for salvation, salvation is still commanded, and every Believer should be saved. Read John 14:15-21 – People who love God should do what?
7. There are many examples of Believer’s baptism in the Bible. If so many other Believers were commended for being baptized, what should their example teach us?

We get baptized because we are saved, not in order to get saved. God commanded it, and it pleases Him when we obey Him. The example of others should also motivate us to be baptized.

Wednesday
Spiritual Growth – Baptism

It's one thing to know the importance of being baptized. It's something altogether different to know the significance and meaning of it. It's not so prevalent in our culture, but in Bible times and in many places around the world today, baptism is a major, life-changing and even life-threatening decision. What's so significant about it?

1. Read Colossians 2:8-12 – Of what did Paul warn the Colossian Christians?
2. What four things did Paul identify that could deceive us?
3. According to verse 9, what dwells in Christ?
4. According to verse 10, how are those who are in Christ described?
5. According to verse 11, the work that Christ did in our hearts is pictured with the practice of circumcision. It was first instituted with Abraham and later reinstated after the Israelites left Egypt. It pictured that the reproach of Egypt was being rolled off them. What is the spiritual “circumcision” that Christ did in our hearts?
6. Because Christ has done the work mentioned in verse 11, we can participate in the picture of baptism explained in verse 12. According to that verse, what does going under the water picture?
7. What does coming up out of the water represent?

Baptism is a beautiful picture and symbol of the work that Christ did in our hearts and lives. When we are baptized, we show all those who see what Christ has done for us.

Thursday
Spiritual Growth – Baptism

Baptism is a beautiful picture and symbol of the work that Christ did in our hearts and lives. When we are baptized, we show all those who see what Christ has done for us. It does more, though. It provides us a way to make a public identification with Him. It tells everyone else that not only what Christ did for you, but also that you are not ashamed to be identified with Him.

1. Read Romans 6:1-6 – According to verses 1-2, what should people who are saved not do any more?
2. Paul began to give the reason in verse 3. What had the people done?
3. At the time of salvation, the people were baptized into Jesus Christ, meaning that they were made part of His death, burial, and resurrection. Verse 3 isn't talking about a physical baptism, but it's a word picture that helps us understand what happened to us at salvation. According to verse 4, by what are we buried with Him in death?
4. Baptism, then, for the Believer is an act of identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is a public testimony of what Christ has already done for you. According to verse 4, now that we have been buried and raised with Christ, what should we do?
5. Verse 5 tells us that we have been buried with Him and raised with Him. What does verse tell us that we should do considering our position in Christ?
6. How does public identification with Christ make that responsibility even more binding and significant?

Baptism tells the world that we are not ashamed to identify with Christ. That should significantly change the way we live!

Friday **Spiritual Growth – Baptism**

It's great to want to identify with Jesus Christ, but baptism isn't for everyone. The Bible is very clear on the issue of who should be baptized and who most certainly shouldn't.

1. Read Acts 2:41 – Who was baptized in this passage?
2. Read Acts 8:12 – Who was baptized in this passage?
3. Read Acts 18:8 – Who was baptized in this passage?
4. What had they all done before they were baptized?
5. Read Acts 8:36-38 – The Holy Spirit sent Philip to the desert to talk to the Ethiopian eunuch and explain the Scriptures to him. As Philip was explaining to the eunuch, the eunuch asked if he could be baptized. According to verse 37, what requirement did Philip put on the eunuch before he could be baptized?
6. Baptism is only for people who are saved. It does no good to people who aren't because they haven't participated in the actions mentioned in Colossians 2 or Romans 6. Another group of people who shouldn't be baptized is babies. Why do you think that they should or that it doesn't do any good?
7. There are no references in the Bible to baby baptism. There are some people who teach that baby baptism is equated with Old Testament circumcision. There is nothing in the Bible that even hints at that. On the contrary read Galatians 5:6 and 6:15 and tell what Paul says about the benefits of physical circumcision.

Baptism is only for people who have trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior. If they haven't, they're only getting wet. No matter your age, if you're not saved, don't get baptized.

Saturday **Spiritual Growth – Baptism**

It is an act of obedience to be baptized after you are saved. Therefore, there is really no reason to put it off. You should obey God immediately! You should be baptized as soon after you are saved as possible. There are many examples in the Bible of people who were baptized very shortly after salvation.

1. Read Acts 2:41 – How long after they were saved did these people wait to be baptized?
2. Read Acts 8:36-38 – How long after he was saved did the Ethiopian eunuch wait to be baptized?
3. Read Acts 9:3-18 – How long after he was saved did Paul (or Saul) wait to be baptized?
4. Read Acts 10:44-48 – How long after they were saved did the household of Cornelius wait to be baptized?
5. Read Acts 16:30-33 – How long after they were saved did the household of the Philippian jailor wait to be baptized?
6. In those days public identification with Christ would result in being ostracized from your family and would put your life in danger. In spite of the fears and apprehensions that all those people undoubtedly experienced, they obeyed God and were baptized as soon as possible after they were saved, many of them the very same day. If you are saved, what fears or apprehensions are keeping you from being baptized?
7. Read II Timothy 1:7 – What does this verse teach about the fear we are experiencing?

If we are fearful to be baptized, it is not a fear that comes from God. Obey God, and watch Him give you the strength to do it.

Sunday Spiritual Growth – Baptism

Baptism is a matter of obedience and public identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Since it's so important, God has prescribed a proper way to carry out the matter of baptism: immersion.

1. Read John 3:23 – Why did John choose this particular place to baptize?
2. Read Acts 8:38-39 – Where did Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch go to be baptized?
3. Would they both need to go into the water if Philip were only going to sprinkle the eunuch?
4. The picture of baptism also helps us to understand the importance of how we do baptism. Read Colossians 2:12 – What does the act of baptism represent?
5. Does sprinkling or pouring show those actions?
6. The Greek word “baptize” literally means to immerse. It was used to say that a boat had sunk or when someone wanted to dye some material. Boats don't sink when they get sprinkled, and material doesn't get dyed when a little dye is poured on it. Both have to be completely baptized or immersed. What does the meaning and use of the Greek word “baptize” teach you about the proper mode of baptism?
7. Baptism by immersion isn't just something we do because it's what we've always done. It portrays a very important picture and testimony to the world. What difference would any other way of baptism make?

Baptism is God's idea, not man's, and we ought to practice it God's way, not man's. Immersion is God's way.