



LESSON 8: BAPTISM... IS IT NECESSARY?

Everybody loves a wedding. It's a joyful celebration and symbol of a commitment that a man and woman make with each other. It marks the end of each of their single lives and the beginning of their married life as a couple.

There is a similar celebration and symbol of your new life in Christ. It, too, symbolises a change from your life alone and apart from God to one in union and partnership with Him. The celebration and symbol of your commitment to Jesus is called baptism.

BAPTISM - A BEGINNING

What did Peter say people should do after they hear about Jesus and repent of their sins? Acts 2:38

Is baptism important? Mark 16:16

Baptism is important because it is a public demonstration that you have become a member of the family of God. It doesn't, however, guarantee salvation. It is only the outward sign of an inward change that has already taken place.

PREREQUISITES FOR BAPTISM

Is there anything you need to do before you are baptised? Acts 8:12

You must believe that Jesus, the Son of God, died to save you. But before you can believe, you must learn. What did Jesus instruct His followers to do when He sent them into the world to witness for Him? Matthew 28:19-20

Notice the preaching and teaching that preceded the believing and baptism of the individuals in the following stories. Acts 8:35-38

Acts 16:30-33

What else do you do before you are baptised? Acts 2:38

What does it mean to repent of your sins? Matthew 3:6

When you're really sorry for your sins and confess them to the Lord, what does He promise you? 1 John 1:9

Repentance and confession involve turning from your sins and turning to Jesus for forgiveness and power to resist temptation.

HOW SHOULD YOU BE BAPTISED?

How will you be baptised? Jesus left an example of how to be baptised. Where was He baptised? Mark 1:19

Look at the story of Philip and the eunuch again. How was the eunuch baptised? Acts 8:36-38

Notice that Jesus was baptised in the river Jordan and the eunuch was also baptised in a place where there was enough water for both him and Philip to go "down into the water."

The word "baptise" comes from the Greek "baptizo" meaning "to dip, to immerse, to plunge." Neither Jesus nor the eunuch was baptised by sprinkling or pouring. They were immersed. How many ways of baptism are recognised in the Bible? Ephesians 4:5

BAPTISM - A SYMBOL

Baptism is a symbol of your inward change of life. What does it primarily represent? Acts 22:16

What washes away your sins? Revelation 1:5, last part

Baptism is a symbol of Christ's sacrifice for sin. What three things does baptism point back to? Romans 6:3-4

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____

When you're baptised, you show that you believe and accept Jesus, who:

- Died for your sins
- Buried your past, sinful life
- Rose with a new life for you

Does being baptised and receiving this new life mean you'll have no more temptation to sin? What happened to Jesus right after His baptism? Matthew 4:1

Baptism is not an inoculation against temptation. As long as you live on sinful earth, you'll be tempted; but you'll have the power of God to help you. What does He promise? Jude 1:24

Your Lord has the power to change you and keep you changed. But you must let Him work in you day by day.

Is it ever necessary to be re-baptised? Acts 19:1-5

Paul's experience at Ephesus indicates there is a need for rebaptism when believers learn additional truth.

Another time that rebaptism might be necessary is when a Christian completely divorces himself from God for a period of time, then repents and comes back to Jesus. Rebaptism would signify his desire to become a member of God's family once more.

BAPTISM - ADOPTION INTO A FAMILY

The Bible says that when we accept Christ, we are adopted into His family. See John 1:12, Romans 8:15, Galatians 4:5, Ephesians 1:5, 4:14,15

Who is this family? Revelation 5:9

The family of God is composed of Christians from every culture in the world. He doesn't exclude anyone, so your new brothers and sisters will be people of all colours, languages, personalities and differences.

How can you get along with so many different kinds of people? 1 Peter 2:17, Galatians 6:2, Ephesians 5:21

It won't always be easy to get along with other people in God's family. How can you do it? Jude 1:21

ASK YOURSELF

If I accepted Jesus as my Saviour and Lord, if I have asked Him to forgive my sins and give me new life, shouldn't I be baptised soon and become part of His family?

- Yes. I am going to make arrangements to be baptised soon.
- I'm not sure yet. I have the following problems, concerns and questions.
