

Christian Baptism

“...united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.”

Baptism

This study is designed to explain:

1. Old Covenant Baptism
2. Christian Baptism
3. Old Testament types
4. Details on Baptism

Baptism in water is one of the few New Testament sacraments. It is so connected to the salvation experience that it occurs in every instance of New Testament conversion.

There are two primary aspects of water baptism. First, it is an outward expression of what God is doing in your heart. Second, it is an act of faith that allows God to further work in your heart.

Outwardly, you are saying, "I am crucified with Christ, dead and buried." You are also saying, "I am resurrected with Christ and am living His life now." It is your testimony to the world.

Inwardly, in the Spiritual realm, you yield to God's work of deliverance and empowerment.

1. Old Covenant Baptism

New Testament Salvation was not possible during Old Testament times. The account of Jesus in the gospels shows the change from the Old Testament to the New. Under the Old Testament system, there was a ritual of baptism. It was a type that led to New Testament baptism. We see this Old Testament baptism illustrated in the life of John the Baptist.

John's Ministry

- John preached that people should be baptized “for the remission of sins.” Lk. 3:3
- This included an outward confession of sins. Matt. 3:11; Mk. 1:4
- This ministry was to prepare the way for the Lord. Mk. 1:3

John's baptism not full Christian baptism

- Those baptized by John were later baptized in the name of Jesus. Acts 19:5
- One difference observed in the Acts 19 account is that they received the Holy Ghost after Christian baptism.

John's baptism of Jesus

Much to John's surprise, even Jesus came to be baptized by him.

- John did not really want to do it and thought he should submit to Jesus for baptism. Matt. 3:14
- Jesus did it to fulfill all righteousness. v. 15
- God's approval came immediately after baptism. v. 16-17

Questions

1. What is a difference between John's baptism and Christian baptism?

2. What was John's baptism preparing for?

2. Christian baptism

Christian baptism is an identification with Jesus. It is a participation in His death and His resurrection. Because the old man is buried and you are cleansed, the Holy Spirit can now live in your heart.

Death

- As a Christian “in” Christ, we have been both crucified and buried with Christ. Rom. 6:3-4, 11-12, 14
- Other scriptures speak of “Dying with Christ.” Gal. 6:14; Phil. 3:10

Life

- We also experience the resurrection power and are “alive in Christ.” Rom. 6:4-5, 8:10
- Other scriptures speak of “being alive” in Christ. 2 Cor. 5:17

Other scriptures that exemplify this “life and death”

- Gal. 2:20, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live.”
- Col. 3:1-3, “If ye then be risen with Christ...ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

From these verses we see that initiation into Christ through baptism frees us from living after the old man of sin that used to rule our lives. We are now free to walk in the freedom of the Spirit. That means that we are now led by the Spirit of God.

Questions

1. Explain what death to the old man means to you personally.

2. If going under the water signifies burial, what does coming up signify? How does this apply to you personally?

3. Old Testament types of Baptism

There are two examples from the Old Testament that typify what happens in baptism. The first is when Moses led the children of Israel through the Red Sea. The second is when they crossed the Jordan River.

Passing through the Red Sea

- Paul, a primary writer of the New Testament explained that Moses and the Red Sea was a type of baptism. 1 Cor. 10:1-2
- The children of Israel had been in bondage to the Egyptians (similar to our bondage to sin). Ex. 13:3
- They had to pass through the water (similar to our baptism). Ex. 14:17
- The Egyptians were washed away (just like our sinful nature). Ex. 14:27-28

Crossing the Jordan River

- Once again they passed through the water. Josh. 5:1
- This time they came into the promised land (compared to our life in Jesus and the Kingdom of God). Josh. 1:2-5

Both of these crossings involve leaving a place of death and entering into a place of life. From Egypt, the land of bondage, to Canaan, the land of promise, is truly the story of Christian faith and baptism.

Questions

1. What did the Children of Israel experience in Egypt?

2. What did they find in Canaan?

3. How does this compare to baptism?

4. Details on baptism

Questions about baptism

- Who? Every believer should be baptized. Acts 16:32-34
- What? Baptized unto His death and resurrection. Rom. 6:1-8
- When? Immediately after confession. Acts 19:17-18, 16:14-15, 33
- Where? Wherever you can find enough water. Acts 8:36-39
- Why? To fulfill all righteousness and for identification with Christ. Matt. 3:15
- How? By immersion. Jn. 3:23

John was immersing people in the river

Sometimes there is a question about how baptism takes place. John's example gives some insight.

- John baptized at a place specifically noted for having "plenty of water." Mk. 1:5
- The word "baptism" is actually translated "to immerse in a liquid" according to the Strong's concordance.
- The same word used for baptism in this portion of scripture is also used to mean dip. Acts 16:33; Jn. 13:26

Conditions that prepare a person for baptism

- Being taught the simple gospel (notice that there is teaching before and after baptism). Matt. 28:19-20
- Repentance usually precedes baptism. Acts 2:37-38
- You must believe in Christ. Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 8:36-38
- Repentance and faith produce a good conscience toward God. 1 Pet. 3:21

Questions

1. Who?

2. What?

3. When?

4. Where?

5. Why?

6. How?

7. What conditions prepare one for baptism?

In baptism, the new believer enters the water and is immersed by another. This both signifies and seals a death with Christ. When the new believer is pulled from the water, it signifies and seals resurrection life in Christ. It is a glorious time when a new Christian follows Christ in Baptism...are you ready?

Practical Hints:

- When you arrive for baptism, make sure you have:
 - A towel
 - A change of clothes (undergarments included)
 - A comb or brush
- Ladies, for modesty's sake, you should remember that your shirt will be wet. White t-shirts are not the best.
- Also, baptisms are a great time to invite family and friends.
- You may want to bring a camera.