

Church 101

Lesson 3

Baptism

PART I EXPLANATION

Introduction: Baptism is one of the two ordinances of the local church. As an ordinance it has both a purpose and a function. The purpose of baptism is to identify ourselves with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It gives an individual the opportunity to publicly confess Christ as their Lord and Savior (purpose) while at the same time covenanting with a local church to live a gospel lifestyle (function).

Baptism is a symbol of our identification and position in Christ. We are buried in the **likeness** of His death. The individual going under the water is illustrating the death of Christ and their identification with that death. It is picturing their death to the bondage of sin and their own self. When the individual is raised out of the water, they are illustrating the resurrection of Christ and their identification with the power of that resurrection. (Gal. 3:27) It is picturing the power to walk in newness of life and to overcome the grip of sin in their life as Christ overcame death.

In this way, baptism is similar to a marriage ceremony. It is a commitment to live a certain way by keeping covenant vows. In marriage, a couple is covenanting before God to fulfill their specific role as husband and wife. The wedding ring is a token of that covenant and the lifelong commitment that is being made. In the same way, baptism is the token of a covenant with a church before God to live a gospel lifestyle. Because of this baptism functions as a requirement for entrance into the local church. While the individual obviously must be regenerated (a prerequisite to baptism) they cannot become a member of a local church without Scriptural baptism. This is a way of identifying and distinguishing who is a member of the church and who is not.

The four requirements for Scriptural baptism are:

1. A Scriptural subject - the individual must have a credible profession of faith in Christ.
2. A Scriptural mode - the individual must be baptized by immersion in water.
3. A Scriptural meaning - the intention of the individual and administrator must be purely for the sake of identification with Christ and not in any way contributing to their salvation.
4. A Scriptural administrator - a Scriptural, local church is who Christ has authorized to baptize.

Each church needs to determine the identifying marks of a true church and what criteria they will use to determine who is a Scriptural administrator. There are three primary areas to evaluate: their presentation of the gospel, their position concerning the two ordinances, and their distinction from the world through holiness and church discipline. We believe that these are the identifying marks of a true church of Jesus Christ.

While the goal is certainly not to pass judgment upon another church, God has chosen the church to preserve the truths of the gospel. The church is called the “*pillar and ground of the truth*”. All universities require accreditation for the sake of maintaining the integrity of receiving a college degree. Electricians and plumbers require licensing to maintain a standard of quality and knowledge to perform a job. In the same way, churches are expected to maintain the purity of the gospel and the ordinances to pass down to future generations. (Jude 3)

Definitions: *For English use the Webster’s 1828 Dictionary and copy all appropriate definitions for each word. For the Greek and Hebrew use a Strong’s Concordance and copy the definition. The Strong’s number is in parenthesis.*

English: **Baptism** -

Greek: (907) **baptizo** *bap-tid'-zo* -

(911) **bapto** *bap'-to* -

Quotation:

“There is no standard Greek-English lexicon that gives sprinkle or pour as one of the meanings of the Greek word baptizo.” Prof. HW Humphreys Vanderbilt University

“Christian baptism is a specific act to be administered by a specific body to persons professing specific qualifications for the profession of specific truths.” JR Graves

“The time had come for Jesus to be baptized. Sixty miles away was a man sent of God to baptize. Around Nazareth were many beautiful streams and pools. Jesus could have chosen some one in Nazareth, and had that one baptize Him in one of the beautiful pools. That would have been alien baptism. But this He did not do. Instead, He started out, and walked sixty miles to get to some one who had the God-given authority to baptize Him.” William Nevins

“They acquired the name of Anabaptists by their administering anew the rite of baptism to those who came over to their communion. They rebaptize all those who left other Christian churches to embrace their communion.” Mosheim

“It cannot be proved by the sacred Scriptures that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians after the apostles.” Luther

Confessions (Look up and read these articles)

New Hampshire Baptist Confession of Faith of 1833

Article XIV Baptism and the Lord's Supper

London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689

Chapter 28 Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper - paragraphs 1-2

Chapter 29 Of Baptism - paragraphs 1-4

Spurgeon's Catechism

Questions: 74-79

PART II EXPLORATION

Key Questions (*Answer in writing*)

1. What are the four requirements for a Scriptural baptism?

Mark 1:4 John preached the baptism of _____ .

Luke 3:7-16 When the _____ came to be baptized of John, he warned them of the _____ to come and required them to bring forth _____ worthy of showing the genuineness of their _____. The warning was for those who did not bring forth _____. The people asked him for specific examples of the fruit he required and he responded by dealing with sins that were common in their particular walk of life. John baptized with _____ but revealed that Christ would baptize with the _____ .

John 4:1-2 Jesus _____ and _____ more disciples than John even though Jesus did not personally baptize them but allowed his _____ to do it by His authority.

Acts 2:37-38 On the day of Pentecost when thousands of Jews were converted, Peter's message was to _____ and be _____ in the _____ of Jesus just as John did.

Acts 8:36-39 The questioned was asked what would _____ someone from being baptized. They must first _____ with all their _____. When Philip baptized him, they went down _____ the water and came _____ the _____ .

Galatians 3:27 Being baptized into Christ is to _____ Christ.

Colossians 2:12 In baptism we are _____ with Him and profess faith in His being raised from the _____ .

I Peter 3:20-21 Baptism does not serve to put away the _____ of the _____ but gives a good _____ toward God and is a _____ of the resurrection of Christ.

Key Chapter(s) (*Read daily and summarize in your own words the meaning of the chapter*):

Romans 6:1-11

Acts 19:1-7

PART III EXPECTATION

Memory verse: Romans 6:3-4

Personal definition: (*Write a definition in your own words*)

Baptism -

Personal confession: : (*Study the confessions and write your confession in your own words*)

Baptism -

Meditation question: *(be prepared for discussion)*

Is there a difference between the baptism of John the Baptist and the apostles of Christ?

Extra credit: Research the Protestant justification for infant baptism and write a short refutation.