

## 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. It is picturing the power to walk in newness of life and the power to overcome the grip of sin in their life.

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.

In this way, baptism functions as a requirement for entrance into the local church. While the individual obviously must be regenerate (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. As it serves this function, there are certain requirements that must be met in order for baptism to be valid.

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 the salvation of the individual.
4. A scriptural administrator - a scriptural, local church is the institution that Christ has given the authority to baptize.

Note: each church needs to determine what criteria they will use to determine who is a scriptural administrator. This is a difficult decision because there are so many different belief systems in the world to define what is a church of like faith and practice.

Our church has determined to evaluate an administrator upon three criteria: their presentation of the gospel, their position concerning the two ordinances, and their maintaining distinction from the world through holiness and church discipline. We believe that these are the identifying marks of a true church of Jesus Christ. In practice, our expectation is that:

1. The church must not endorse or practice “easy believism”, “pray after me”, “works salvation” etc. We consider those to be false gospels.

2. The church must not practice open communion or endorse and accept all baptisms by immersion, regardless of the administrator.
3. The church must not refuse to maintain holiness through the practice of church discipline.

(Any individual baptized into this belief system we would expect to be re-baptized to join our assembly.)

While it is difficult to pass judgment upon another church, God has chosen the church to preserve the truths of the gospel to all generations. The church is called the “*pillar and ground of the truth*”. Colleges and Universities require accreditation in order to hand out degrees, for the sake of maintaining the integrity of receiving a 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**

**Q** - How do Baptism and the Lord's Supper become spiritually helpful?

**A** - Baptism and the Lord's Supper become spiritually helpful, not from any virtue in them, or in him who does administer them (1Co 3:7 1Pe 3:21), but only by the blessing of Christ (1Co 3:6) and the working of the Spirit in those who by faith receive them (1Co 12:13).

**Q** - What is Baptism?

**A** - Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ (Mt 28:19) to be to the person baptised a sign of his fellowship with him, in his death, and burial, and resurrection (Ro 6:3 Col 2:12), of his being ingrafted into him (Ga 3:27), of remission of sins (Mr 1:4 Ac 22:16), and of his giving up himself to God through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life (Ro 6:4,5).

**Q** - To whom is Baptism to be administered?

**A** - Baptism is to be administered to all those who actually profess repentance towards God (Ac 2:38 Mt 3:6 Mr 16:16 Ac 8:12,36,37 10:47,48), and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and to none other.

**Q** - Are the infants of such as are professing to be baptised?

**A** - The infants of such as are professing believers are not to be baptised, because there is neither command nor example in the Holy Scriptures for their baptism (Ex 23:13 Pr 30:6).

**Q** - How is baptism rightly administered?

**A** - Baptism is rightly administered by immersion, or dipping the whole body of the person in water (Mt 3:16 Joh 3:23), in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, according to Christ's institution, and the practice of the apostles (Mt 28:19,20), and not by sprinkling or pouring of water, or dipping some part of the body, after the tradition of men (Joh 4:1,2 Ac 8:38,39).

**Q** - What is the duty of such as are rightly baptized?

**A** - It is the duty of such as are rightly baptized, to give up themselves to some particular and orderly Church of Jesus Christ (Ac 2:47 Ac 9:26 1Pe 2:5) that they may walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless (Lu 1:6).

## **PART II EXPLORATION**

**Key Questions** (*Answer in writing*)

1. What are the four requirements for a scriptural baptism?
  
2. What are the three criteria that our church evaluates a scriptural administrator?
  
3. Give a scriptural defense of baptism by immersion. (Use at least one scripture reference)
  
4. Where is the authority to Baptize given?
  
5. What is the purpose of Baptism?
  
6. What is the function of Baptism?
  
7. Who is a scriptural candidate for Baptism?
  
8. What did John the Baptist require from people before he would baptize them?
  
9. What covenant is being made when a person is baptized?
  
10. What is the baptism of repentance spoken of in reference to John the Baptist?

**Key Scriptures:** *(summarize what each verse teaches in your own words)*

Matthew 28:18-20 All authority was given to Christ and He gives it directly to His church to \_\_\_  
 \_\_\_ \_\_\_ and to baptize them in the \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ of the Trinity.

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 \_\_\_\_\_.

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 figure of the \_\_\_\_\_ 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:** Explain why circumcision and baptism are not equivalent tokens of the Old and New Testaments (which is a primary argument for infant baptism).