

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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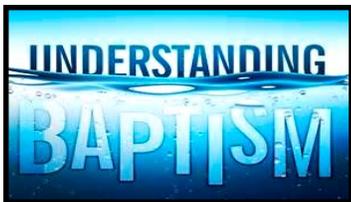
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June 30, 2019

“Baptism: Who? How? When? & Why?” Pt. 1

By Brian Meade

Although most of the religious world around us downplays the need for water baptism—the disciples of the early church did not! When we carefully study the New Testament, we see the apostles carrying out the great commission by preaching the gospel and baptizing sinners wherever they went (Acts 2:41; 8:12; 8:38; 9:18; 10:48; 16:15; 16:33; 18:8; 19:5).



With so much emphasis being placed on baptism, there is the great need for us to study this vital and important part of God’s ordinances for us.

As good Bible students or disciples of the word, we should fully pursue the meaning that God places on baptism—and reject all false theories, traditions, and creeds that differ with the New Testament teaching on this subject.

With that in mind, let us look at:

I. Who should be baptized?

The Bible teaches us in Matthew 28:18-20, *“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

In these last words of instruction by the One God gave *“all authority”*, Jesus is instructing the disciples to *“make disciples of all the nations.”*

Even though the gospel was first preached to the Jews (Rom. 1:16), it would be for both Jew and Gentile to obey the same gospel (Acts 10:33-48). God wanted all peoples from all nations to obey the gospel and be saved (Isaiah 2:2-4; Daniel 7:14; Acts 13:46; 26:23; Romans 16:25-26). This includes men and women to be baptized (Acts 8:12), bond slave or free (Philemon 10-16; Colossians 3:11), Greek or Jew (Galatians 3:26-28).

From what we have looked to so far in answering the question, who needs to be baptized?

(1) All who are able to be taught the gospel.

Jesus said in John 6:44-45, *“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. “It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught of God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.”*

That’s why in Acts 2:41, *“So then, those who had received his word were baptized;”* Just as in the case of the Lydia, in Acts 16:14-15, *“...was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul. And when she and her household had been baptized...”* The teaching came before the baptizing. Why? Because faith comes after hearing God’s word (Romans 10:14-17). It is also required that one can comprehend the message and make a reasonable choice to obey it (Romans 6:17-18).

(2) All who are able to believe the gospel.

Faith in Jesus Christ is an absolute requirement to salvation (John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6). I don't believe anyone would dispute the fact that faith is needed for salvation. Jesus said in Mark 16:16, *"He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned."*

(3) All who are able to repent of their sins.

Repentance is a required command of God for salvation (Acts 17:30; 11:18), and Jesus said in Luke 24:46-47, *"Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."* (NKJB)

We see this performed for the first time in the gospel age on the Day of Pentecost, when Peter told the Jews to *"Repent and be baptized...."* (Acts 2:38).

In repentance, it is absolutely required that a person first have a conviction of their sin & then resolve to amend their ways (see Vine's definition of repent).

(4) All who are able to confess Jesus.

Confession is also a prerequisite for salvation as Romans 10:10, *"For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."* (NKJB)

When the Ethiopian treasurer was taught God's word about Jesus and the connection of Him in Isaiah 53, he saw the need to be baptized. The text of Acts 8:36-38 tells us, *"Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, 'See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?' Then Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' And he answered and said, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him."* Individuals desiring to be baptized will need to make confession of their faith in Jesus.

Some might argue, "What about those who are mute or deaf and cannot speak?" Confession of Jesus for them may be non-verbal, but still can be given. They can let it be known that they believe in Jesus in other ways!

We Do Not Baptize:

(1) Babies or infants.

People began baptizing infants as a result of the very false teaching that babies are born with sin. This doctrine is called the "original sin" The Catholic Church teaches that infants need baptism to secure their salvation. The following is an excerpt from a website, [Catholic Answers](#), on the subject of infant baptism:

"So can I give you a Bible verse on infant baptism? Yes, if you remember two things:

1. We are by nature children of wrath. Original sin is real. It is not something the Catholic Church invented. We are born of the flesh, not of the Spirit. We are not born in a state of holiness. We are born in a state of original sin.
2. Through baptism we are "born again" and made new creatures in Christ; through baptism our sins are forgiven. Through baptism we become members of the body of Christ, which is the Church. Through baptism we receive the Holy Spirit; through baptism we are saved. Baptism is necessary for salvation." (end quote)

But the whole problem of infant baptism is that babies can't believe or repent of sins because they don't have any yet! Because sin is an act, not a disease—James 1:13-15. Infants can't confess their faith in Jesus Christ because it is impossible to do so as a baby!

They assume when households were baptized in the New Testament (Acts 16:33; 1 Corinthians 1:16). Which is making arguments and assumptions on the silence of the Scriptures— and of things that they hope and wish took place for their teaching to be true.

This whole practice is done out of tradition and ignorance of what sin is, rather than out of genuine need and truth of the Scriptures.

(2) Unbelievers.

In Mark 16:16, Jesus teaches the need to believe and be baptized— both are required. *"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."* (NKJB) Faith must precede the baptism and even leads us to do all the requirements of obeying the gospel, and thus, is the foundation for the rest to follow. One will not genuinely repent of his or her sins if one does not believe. The same is true for the subsequent confession and baptism. Because without faith, one is condemned already, as in John 3:18, *"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."*

And if, for whatever reason, an unbeliever is baptized and still continues to disbelieve— we understandably say, *"They just got wet."* As it will do them no good whatsoever to just get baptized, if they do not obey *"from the heart."* (Romans 6:17-18) That's why baptism alone does not save anyone.

(3) The Unrepentant.

It should go without saying that those who still hold on to such sins as adultery, fornication, stealing.... *"Will not inherit the kingdom of God."* (1 Corinthians 6:9). Paul said in the next verse (10), *"And such were some of you."* They *"were"* (past tense) adulterers and homosexuals.... If those wanting baptism are unwilling to give up sin, they

are just like the unbeliever in point #2. “*Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not!*” (Rom. 6:1-2)

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Martha Norvell (Mississippi Care), June Lawson (Lisa Busby’s Mom), Debbie Keplinger, Gaddy Hall, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Tammy Kilgore (Jerry’s niece), Betty Hurst, Peggy Harville (cancer), Linda Harris, Katie Ward Coburn, Kathryn’s grandmother, Hazel Corner, Clay Ford, & Allison (12 year old girl that received burns from a house fire/ 80% of her body was burned), Karey Trimble, Clois Wright (recent stroke).

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Paul Johnson
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1. “*What Happiness Is And How To Find It*”

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Jerry Kennemur
The Book of Acts (Jason Longstreth)
Page 43, Question #5

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Russell Briggs
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Fred Johnson

Song Leader: Adam Harris
Lord’s Supper: Paul Johnson
Assisting: Nathan Meade & Adam Harris
Singing Service: *Men of the Congregation Lead in Singing*
Invitation: Brian Meade
Closing Prayer: Chris Callahan

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

July 3rd:

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Johnson
The Book of Job (Mike Willis)
Page 14, Question #24
Invitation: Doug George
Song Leader: Paul Busby
Closing Prayer: Tim Harris Sr.