

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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“Baptism: Who? How? When? & Why?” Pt.2

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.

Last Week, we looked at *Who* should be baptized and the great need that everyone has to obey God in being born again (John 3:3-5). This week, we want to continue our study further.

II. How should One be baptized?

Among the many groups who call themselves Christians, there are different forms or modes of baptism. Some call sprinkling a few drops of water on the head of a baby baptism; while others pour a cup of water on a child’s head and call it baptism as well; others baptize by immersion, a burial in water. Which mode is correct by the Bible?

Going the Bible’s original language, the Greek, will help us sort out the proper mode for baptism. The Greek word for baptism— *Baptisma* is defined by “Consisting of the processes of immersion, submersion, and emergence.”

The verb form of the Greek word for baptism is *baptizo*— which means “*to immerse, plunge, sink, submerge.*”

So basically, baptism is not a translation of the Greek to an English word, but rather a transliteration. The translators took the Greek word and just anglicized it by adding the ending “*ism.*”

Here is an excerpt from Jimmy Thomas on this particular subject,

“Had the Greek word *baptizo* been translated into English, instead of having been transliterated, we would have “dip, plunge, submerge, plunge” rather than a new word “baptism.” Baptism never meant sprinkle or pour. The Greek word for “sprinkle” is *rantizo*, and for “pour” it is *cheo*. *Rhantizo* and *cheo* never mean immerse. These three words in the both Greek and English, suggest different actions. (*cf.* Lev. 14:15,16). One can no more be baptized by sprinkling or pouring than he can run by crawling or walking.

Our current English versions show that baptism is immersion. It is a *burial and a resurrection* (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12). “*Much water*” is required (John 2:23). There is a coming to the water, a going “*down into the water*” and a “*coming up out of the water*” (Acts 8:36-39; Mark 1:10). Only immersion can meet all of these conditions.” (ASK AND THE BIBLE ANSWERS, by Jimmy Thomas, Pg. 52-53)

The picture of baptism that the Bible gives us is the likeness of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (Matthew 27:57-60; 28:1-8).

The very words of Paul give us the meaning of baptism as a burial, “*Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death Therefore we have been buried with Him through*



baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection.” (Romans 6:3-5)

Thus, every time someone is baptized, they get to re-enact this very scene in the obedience to the gospel. We die to sin with Christ (in baptism), we are buried with Christ, and we are raised with Christ to walk in a “*newness of life.*”

III. When should One be baptized?

As we have already determined, it is not when they are an infant or when someone is not willing to give up sin (Mark 16:16; Luke 13:3). But it is when we are able to understand what sin is and understand the need for a Savior — what we sometimes call, “*the age of accountability.*”

Babies and the mentally impaired are not able to understand right from wrong, and thus are safe. Notice the words of Paul, “*I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died; and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.*” (Romans 7:9-11) This is how sin, the laws of God, and accountability to sin works for us. The law and our understanding of sin brings guilt, shame, and spiritual death to us only when we can comprehend it.

The age at which one understands this truth is not the same for everyone, so there is no set age to obey the gospel. Some see the need to obey the gospel earlier than others, as exposure to teaching may be one factor. As parents teach their children right from wrong and they learn Bible truths— they learn accountability for their sins— and are responsible for their own actions.

When someone is under conviction from Bible teaching about their sins and understands why Jesus died (for their sins— John 3:16; Romans 5:6-10), they are ready to obey the gospel and be saved.

We see examples in the New Testament of men and women who heard the gospel and were convicted of sin and did what was necessary to comply to the commands of God concerning salvation.

(1) In **Acts 2:14-36**, Peter is preaching the first gospel sermon on the Day of Pentecost. He is preaching Christ and how Jesus was the Messiah, who they crucified (verse 36). The Jews at that point in Peter’s sermon, stopped him to ask the very important question about what they were to do. The Bible says, “*Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?”.*” (Acts 2:37)

Peter then gives them the inspired answer given by God, *Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”* (Acts 2:38) In verse 41, we see the ones who were ready to obey on that day, “*So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.*” The *when* for them was “*that day.*”

(2) In **Acts 8:5-12**, the Bible teaches us, “*Philip went down to the city of Samaria and began proclaiming Christ to them. The crowds with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the signs which he was performing.* (Verse 5-6).

And in Acts 8:12, “*But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.*” The *when* for the ones in the city of Samaria, was “*when they believed Phillip*” as he proclaimed Christ to them.

(3) In **Acts 8:26-40**, Phillip preaches Christ to the Ethiopian treasurer (verse 35). And the result is found in verse 36-38, “*As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, “Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?” And 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.” And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him.*”

The *when* for the treasurer was *when* he saw the need to obey the gospel and *when* they came to some water for the baptism. Acts 8:39 also teaches us that is *when*, he “*...went on his way rejoicing.*”

(4) In **Acts 9:1-18**, Saul of Tarsus was traveling to Damascus to arrest disciples of Jesus. He meets Jesus and is told, “*...but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do.*” Once he gets there, he is told by Ananias, “*Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.*” (Acts 22:16— Paul tells the account of his conversion in Acts 9)

The *when* for Saul was *when* he believed in Christ, *when* he repented of his persecution of the saints (22:19), and then was baptized. He did not delay!

(5) In **Acts 16:30-34**, Paul and Silas get the opportunity, while imprisoned in Philippi, to teach the gospel to the jailor who had imprisoned them. After the earthquake had released all the prisoners, he was in fear for his life (Acts 16:26-29). The Bible teaches us, “*And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his*

house. And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household. (Acts 16:32-33) The *when* for him and his family was “immediately.”

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).

Next Saturday we will meet at the building for a *Summer Study* for our young people and young & older adults as well. We will meet at 11:00 AM at the building and will conclude at 12:30 PM. The last 30 minutes will be a singing service of VBS songs. All are welcome, so bring a friend.

East Side Church of Christ in Red Bay, AL. is having a Gospel Meeting starting today! (details in the foyer)

Pleasant Plains Church of Christ is also having an event for young people July 19th-20th. (details also in the foyer)

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Tim Harris Sr.
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: “How Christians Should Handle Controversy”

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am: Paul Johnson
The Book of Acts (Jason Longstreth)

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Jerry Kennemur
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Doug George
1 Timothy 4:1-6
Song Leader: Lee Busby
Lord’s Supper: Fred Johnson
Assisting: Dan Cottrell & Chris Callahan
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #2: “Why The Church of Christ Is Not A Denomination”
Closing Prayer: Nathan Meade

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

July 10th:

Auditorium Bible Class: Russell Briggs
The Book of Job (Mike Willis)
Page 16, Question #1
Invitation: Dan Cottrell
Song Leader: Adam Harris
Closing Prayer: Paul Busby