

# **Believers Baptism**

## **Bible Study**

I. Water Baptism and Salvation

- A. Many people are misled when they confuse verses dealing with water baptism with those that deal with spiritual baptism. To help with this problem, fill in the chart below.

<u>Passage</u>	<u>Symbol – How it is used (point sought to be made)</u>
Matthew 3: 11	_____
Luke 12: 50	_____
Acts 1: 5	_____
Acts 11: 16	_____
Romans 6: 3,4	_____
I Corinthians 12: <u>13</u>	_____
Ephesians 4: 4-8	_____
Colossians 2: 11, <u>12</u>	_____
I Peter 3: 21,22	_____

- B. Since none of these verses deal with actual water baptism, what conclusions can be made concerning the study so far?

- C. This next chart helps to emphasize the salvation power of spiritual baptism over symbolic water baptism. Fill it in answering the appropriate questions.

<u>Passage</u>	<u>Actual Work of Spiritual Regeneration as spoken of in this verse</u>	<u>How this is visualized through symbolism of water baptism as spoken of in verse</u>
Titus 3: 5	_____	_____
Ephesians 5: 25-27	_____	_____
I Peter 3: 21, 22	_____	_____



- F. Fill in the chart below by giving the chronological order of events which are recorded in each passage.

Passage

Chronology of Events

Acts 10:44-48

Acts 16:14, 15

1. What implications do these passages hold for those who believe water baptism is necessary for salvation?
  
2. If water baptism were necessary for salvation, how would these narratives have to be written?
  
3. How would conversion through water baptism strike at the root meaning of these central doctrines of salvation?

- G. In considering this doctrinal issue, complete the following chart.

<u>Doctrine</u>	<u>Passage</u>	<u>How Doctrine Nullifies Salvation through Water Baptism</u>
Grace	Ephesians 2:8,9	_____
Mercy	Titus 3:5	_____
Propitiation	I John 2:1,2	_____
Imputation	II Corinthians 5:21	_____
Regeneration	Titus 3:5	_____
Faith	Luke 7:50	_____

## II. Believers Baptism

### A. Baptism: An act of obedience on the part of the believer:

1. Read Matthew 3:13 - 17
2. If baptism is necessary for salvation. What would that presuppose about Jesus before He was baptized?
3. What was Jesus' rationale for being baptized?
4. This act of obedience extends as well to our submission to the spiritual leaders God has placed over us. Read Hebrews 13:17. How does this passage relate to the issue of baptism?
  - a. How is this reflected in Acts 10:48 and the use of the word "ordered"?
  - b. How is this reflected in the attitude of the Ananias concerning Paul's baptism?

### B. Baptism: An act of obedience on the part of the leadership of the church

1. Read Matthew 28: 17 – 19
  - a. According to this passage what is the minister commanded to do?
  - b. Turn back to Hebrews 13:17; if he fails to baptize, what has he done?
  - c. If we in turn fail to be baptized, after being properly instructed, what have we done?
    - 1.) How will this affect us?
    - 2.) How will this affect our minister?

3. The chart below reveals it as the norm for the ministers of the gospel.

<u>Passage</u>	<u>Minister(s)</u>	<u>Person(s) Converted</u>	<u>Believer's Baptized</u>
Acts 2:38,41	_____	_____	Y N
Acts 8:12	_____	_____	Y N
Acts 10:48	_____	_____	Y N
Acts 9:11-18	_____	_____	Y N
Acts 16:14,15	_____	_____	Y N
Acts 16:32, 33	_____	_____	Y N
Acts 18:7,8	_____	_____	Y N
Acts 19:1 – 5	_____	_____	Y N
Acts 22:12 – 16	_____	_____	Y N

C. Baptism: An act of obedience on the part of the church body.

1. Read I John 5:8. From this passage, what is “the water” (baptism)?
2. For it to be a witness, how must the church respond to the ordinance of baptism?
3. For it to be a witness, what must take place during the baptismal service?
4. What is the ordinance of baptism a witness of or to?
5. For this to be true, what must have taken place in the life of the candidate?
6. How does this impact the practice of baptizing children?

III. From this study:

- A. Who should be baptized?
  
- B. What is baptism?
  
- C. Why are we to be baptized?
  
- D. Have you been baptized as a believer?
  
- E. If not, what are you going to do about it?

# Appendix

**A Personal Word Of Testimony**  
**Rev. John S. Mahon**

When I was in the fourth grade our Baptist pastor came into our Sunday school and presented the plan of salvation and we all responded. Then he told us about baptism and we all responded. That night I was baptized. I was not a believer, I simply did not want to be left out. After all, who was I to disagree with the pastor of our church? Besides, as I had seen when my brother was baptized, you go out for ice cream afterwards and everybody makes a fuss over you.

When I was 16 I prayed to receive Christ at a youth retreat with our church. I slowly began to grow in my understanding of the Christian life and of baptism. I went to my pastor and shared with him that I had been saved for over a year but had come to the conclusion that I had never been scripturally baptized. That I had never followed the Lord in believers baptism. That following Sunday night I was baptized as a believer.

Eleanor grew up in the Episcopal Church. As such she was baptized as an infant. Later, during her collage years she received Christ through a Bible study in her dormitory. As she began to grow she realized that she had never been scripturally baptized, that she had never followed the Lord in believers baptism. She went forward in her church, was presented for baptism and was then baptized later that month.

In both cases we were baptized as children, came to the realization that we had not been scripturally baptized since we were not Christians at the time, rather we had taken part in a ritual washing. As a result of this realization we both made a decision to follow the Lord in believers baptism. In my case, my parents were surprised, shared with me that they thought I had been “already done that”, but did not oppose my decision. In Eleanor’s case, her family took it as a personal affront, as though she were changing her religion.

The decision though to follow the Lord in scriptural baptism, in believers baptism is not one that can be made in terms of the acceptance or reaction of family and friends. It is an act of obedience before the Lord and by the candidate Christian.

The issue is not how long it has been since we became a Christian. The issue is not what we did before we were Christians, not what others did or believed on our behalf, not what we have done or witnessed for the Lord in other areas of our lives, but only this, the issue is obedience. Have we or have we not been scripturally baptized? Have we followed the Lord Jesus Christ in believers baptism?

### Observing the Ordinances of the Church

In the Old Testament, God gave the nation of Israel many rites, rituals, or “ordinances” to observe as signs of belonging to Him. One such rite was circumcision; and the following passage shows how seriously God viewed this ordinance.

God said further to Abraham, “Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you.... But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, *that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.*” (Gen. 17:9-14, emphasis added)

When the old covenant was in force, no man could be a part of God’s people if he did not partake in this ordinance of circumcision that God had established. The responsibility to participate in the other ordinances, such as the ordained feasts, was just as grave.

God has established two ordinances in the new covenant – baptism and the Lord’s Supper – and He takes them just as seriously as the former rites. Yet, unfortunately, many professing Christians today think of them as merely nice suggestions that they can take or leave. On the contrary, they have been designed to be essential elements of the corporate worship of the church in which all the members must participate.

*Baptism.* The first way in which every believer must participate in the ordinance of baptism is to *be baptized* (cf. Matt. 28:19-20). This is simply not an option for anyone who claims to know Christ as Lord and Savior, contrary to the impression given by the masses of unbaptized church members and attendees in evangelical churches. When someone in the first century professed belief in Christ, he or she was immediately baptized (cf. Acts 2:41; 8:12, 36-38; 9:18; 10:47-48). As F.F. Bruce comments, “The idea of an unbaptized Christian is simply not entertained in the New Testament.”

That is why baptism and salvation are linked so closely together in some passages (e.g., Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16) – not because the rite in itself saves anyone (it does not), but because it is the first step of obedience in which the believer outwardly identifies himself with Jesus Christ and His church. It is the initial sign of being a part of the new covenant. Furthermore, baptism is related to salvation in the sense that those who refuse it disobey a direct commandment of God and thus bring the validity of their faith into serious question (cf. John 14:15; 1 John 2:3; James 2:14-26).

So to say that every believer has the responsibility to be baptized is an understatement. But it is also important to note that our responsibilities regarding baptism do not end after we are baptized. We then have the responsibility to witness the baptism of others entering the body, confirm them in their outward identification with Christ and the church, and hold them accountable to the commitment they are making to both in baptism.

*The Lord’s Supper.* This second ordinance of the new covenant is not linked in Scripture with salvation the way baptism is, but it is by no means less important. Whereas baptism is an outward sign of entrance into the covenant, the Lord’s Supper (or Communion, as it is often called) is a memorial of the death of Jesus Christ, the event that initiated the new covenant and actually made it possible. And our Savior Himself commanded that we partake of the bread and wine that symbolize His body and blood. He said, “Do this in remembrance of Me” (1 Cor. 11:24).

Since that command came from the lips of Jesus Himself, it is not surprising that the book of Acts depicts the church celebrating the Lord's Supper repeatedly. In fact, Acts 2:42 says "they were *continually* devoting themselves ...to the breaking of bread." The importance of this ordinance is further emphasized by Paul in I Corinthians 11:26-30.

As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. for he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep [in other words, they have died].

That passage makes clear that we must take Communion very seriously and approach it with the right attitude. When we do, not only will we avoid the judgment of God, but we will also experience the special blessing this celebration can bring. Charles Spurgeon's advice is helpful: "Never mind that bread and wine, unless you can use them as folks often use their spectacles. What do they use them for? To look at? No, to look *through* them. So, use the bread and wine as a pair of spectacles. Look through them, and do not be satisfied until you can say, 'Yes, yes, I can see the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.'"

So the Lord's Supper is a blessed ordinance that every believer must partake of regularly to be a true worshiper of God. The words of songwriter Michael Card apply to all who desire to obey Christ in this matter.

Come to the table He's prepared for you;  
The bread of forgiveness, the wine of release.  
Come to the table and sit down beside Him.  
The Savior wants you to join in the feast.

### **Baptism In The Bible:**

MAT 3:6 and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins.

MAT 3:11 "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

MAT 3:13 ¶ Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him.

MAT 3:14 But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?"

MAT 3:16 And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him,

MAT 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

MAR 1:5 And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

MAR 1:8 "I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

MAR 1:9 ¶ And it came about in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

MAR 10:38 But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking for. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?"

MAR 10:39 And they said to Him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you shall drink; and you shall be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized.

MAR 16:16 "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.

LUK 3:7 ¶ He therefore began saying to the multitudes who were going out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

LUK 3:12 And some tax-gatherers also came to be baptized, and they said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?"

LUK 3:16 John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

LUK 3:21 ¶ Now it came about when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also was baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened,

LUK 7:29 And when all the people and the tax-gatherers heard this, they acknowledged God's justice, having been baptized with the baptism of John.

LUK 7:30 But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God's purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by John.

JOH 1:25 And they asked him, and said to him, "Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

JOH 1:26 John answered them saying, "I baptize in water, but among you stands One whom you do not know.

JOH 1:28 These things took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

JOH 1:31 "And I did not recognize Him, but in order that He might be manifested to Israel, I came baptizing in water."

JOH 1:33 "And I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.'

JOH 3:22 ¶ After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He was spending time with them and baptizing.

JOH 3:23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and they were coming and were being baptized.

JOH 3:26 And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have borne witness, behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him."

JOH 4:1 When therefore the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John

JOH 4:2 (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were),

JOH 10:40 ¶ And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there.

ACT 1:5 for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. "

ACT 2:38 And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

ACT 8:13 And even Simon himself believed; and after being baptized, he continued on with Philip; and as he observed signs and great miracles taking place, he was constantly amazed.

ACT 8:16 For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

ACT 8:36 And as they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?"

ACT 8:38 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.

ACT 9:18 And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he arose and was baptized;

ACT 10:47 "Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?"

ACT 11:16 "And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'

ACT 16:15 And when she and her household had been baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.

ACT 19:3 And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism."

ACT 19:4 And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus."

ROM 6:3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

ROM 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

1CO 1:13 Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

1CO 1:14 I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius,

1CO 1:15 that no man should say you were baptized in my name.

1CO 1:16 Now I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any other.

1CO 1:17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, that the cross of Christ should not be made void.

1CO 10:2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

1CO 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

1CO 15:29 ¶ Otherwise, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them?

GAL 3:27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

EPH 4:5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

COL 2:12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

1PE 3:21 And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you-- not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience-- through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,