

**PURPOSE OF STUDY:** To help the student to understand the importance of Biblical baptism in the water and in the Spirit, and invite them to respond to the Lord's invitation to baptism.

**TEXTS:**

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|----------------|---|
| 1. MK 16:15-16 | b. RO 10:9, first part                  |
| 2. EPH 4:5     | c. RO 10:9, last part                   |
| 3. MK 1:9-10   | d. MT 28:18-20                          |
| 4. AC 8:38     | 10. AC 2:41, 46-7 (1CO 12:13; COL 1:18) |
| 5. JN 3:23     | 11. 2CO 11:2                            |
| 6. RO 6:3-6    | 12. GA 2:20 (2CO 5:7, 17)               |
| 7. JN 3:3-5    | 13. AC 19:1-5                           |
| 8. MT 3:16-17  | 14. AC 22:16                            |
| 9a. AC 2:38    |   |

**THE STUDY:**

- 1. How important is baptism? MK 16:15-16**  
*Jesus taught that baptism was essential for salvation. Of course, there may be exceptions to this, like the thief on the cross; but he couldn't be baptized. If it is possible for us to be baptized, then we need to be.*
- 2. How many methods of baptism does the Bible teach? EPH 4:5**  
*The Bible teaches that there is one Biblically approved method of baptism.*
- 3. How was Jesus baptized? MK 1:9-10**  
*When John the Baptist had finished baptizing Jesus, the Bible says Jesus "came up out of the water" (NKJV, margin). Jesus was baptized by immersion (being immersed under the water). The word "baptize" comes from the Greek word "baptizo" which means "to cleanse by dipping or submerging."*
- 4. How did the New Testament Church perform baptisms? AC 8:38**  
*When Philip baptized the Ethiopian official, they "went down into the water" for the baptism, then they "came up out of the water" afterward. Philip also baptized by immersion.*
- 5. Why does the Bible tell us that John the Baptist was baptizing in the Jordan River? JN 3:23**  
*John baptized where there was "much water". This would only be necessary when immersing people under the water.*
- 6. Why is the method of a person's baptism so important? RO 6:3-6**  
*God intended that the method of baptism would teach the meaning of baptism. Baptism is symbolic of the burial of our old life of sin and our resurrection to a new life with Jesus.*
- 7. Jesus taught that there were two parts to baptism. One part is being baptized in the water. What is the other part? JN 3:3-5**  
*Baptism must be BOTH in the water and in the spirit. While the water is an outward symbol of having our sins washed away, the water itself does not change us. It is the Holy Spirit that washes the sin from our hearts and gives us power to live a new life. This is what it means to be "born again". Through the Holy Spirit we receive a transformed, renewed nature that finds enjoyment in Spiritual things.*

**8. What can a person expect to happen at their baptism? MT 3:16-17**

*When Jesus was baptized, the voice of God the Father was heard saying “This is my beloved Son” and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him. In the same way, when we are baptized we are accepted as sons and daughters of God, and the assuring voice of God will say “This is my beloved son,” or “This is my beloved daughter, in whom I am well pleased.” Then He will give us the Holy Spirit to strengthen us for the temptations to come.*

**9. What steps must a person take to prepare for baptism?**

**a. AC 2:38 – We must repent, or turn from our sins.**

*The word “repent” in the Bible means to turn and go the opposite direction. It is more than just saying “I’m sorry.” It means a change of heart and attitude, and a true sorrow for sin.*

**b. RO 10:9, first part – We must confess that Jesus is our Lord.**

*The word “Lord” means “Master.” When we choose to follow Christ in baptism, we are choosing to follow Jesus as our new Master, taking our orders from Him and pledging ourselves to obey His will in all things.*

**c. RO 10:9, last part – We must believe in the power of Jesus to save.**

*By believing that God raised Jesus from the dead, the Christian acknowledges Christ’s triumph over sin and death, as well as His power to justify him and raise him to newness of life.*

**d. MT 28:18-20: We must learn what it means to be a faithful disciple of Christ.**

*Before a person is baptized, he must learn what it means to be a disciple of Christ. He should understand all that is involved in the commitment he is about to make, so that he can be faithful to the One who has called him to be His disciple. He should be willing to follow “all things” Jesus teaches him.*

**10. In being joined to Christ, what else is the believer joined to? AC 2:41, 46-7 (1CO 12:13; COL 1:18)**

*We are joined to Christ’s body, the church. We become part of the family of God – part of a church body – so that we may help each other grow spiritually and successfully carry forward our God-given mission.*

**11. What does the Bible compare this new union with Christ to? 2CO 11:2**

*A marriage commitment. Baptism is not about being perfect, but about being committed to Jesus. Just as there are many people who want the privileges of the married life without the commitment, there are many people who want the privileges of having Jesus as their Savior without the commitment of taking Him as the Lord of their lives.*

**12. How should a baptized person live? GA 2:20 (2CO 5:7, 17)**

*By faith. The baptized Christian must live by faith in what Christ has done and continues to do in the life, trusting that it is Christ who lives within. There will be times when we feel that our sin is very much alive; our feelings will tell us that it’s just no use, that we will never make it as Christians. It is then that we must learn to place our trust in Jesus, despite how we feel. Like Paul, we must believe we are “crucified with Christ” – the “old me” is dead, and now Jesus is working in the “new me.”*

**13. Does the Bible say anything about re-baptism? AC 19:1-5**

*Re-baptism is necessary if a person was never baptized by the Biblical method of immersion or if they have fallen away from the faith. Re-baptism may be considered if a person has learned new truths that they feel have changed their commitment level to Christ, or if they desire a personal recommitment to Christ.*

**14. If a person is considering baptism or re-baptism, what counsel does the Bible give? AC 22:16**

*Why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized!*

**APPEAL:**

Baptism is an essential part of the Christian life, but it is truly only the beginning. For the person who has not been baptized, baptism should be a number one priority. There may be things to learn before the baptism, but there should be no delay in getting started. In the words of Scripture, “Why tarriest thou?” Is it your sincere desire to follow Jesus with all your heart and commit your life to Him through baptism?

## **DIFFICULT TEXTS/OBJECTIONS:**

**1 Co. 15:29: “The Bible speaks of being baptized for the dead. Does this mean we can be baptized for someone else?”** If you read the passage in its context, the apostle Paul is talking about the resurrection; a person who is baptized believes not only in the burial of the old life, but the resurrection of the new. Paul, in trying to convince his hearers of the certainty of the resurrection, referred to the fact that they practiced baptism for the dead, which implied resurrection. He is not condoning the practice, but simply makes the point that they, too, must believe in some resurrection, or why would they be practicing baptism for the dead who would never raise. It was not uncommon for Paul to find common ground in heathen understandings as a vantage point to communicate God’s truth (cf. Ac. 17:22-24). Paul clearly understood that baptism required a personal decision, repentance, faith and commitment. In no place does the Bible teach that we can be baptized in place of someone else.

**“What does the Bible say about infant baptism?”** Because baptism requires personal choices to repent, confess and believe, coupled with a commitment based upon an understanding of God’s truth, it would be impossible for an infant to be baptized Biblically. The Bible records child dedications (1 Sa. 1:24-28; Lk. 2:21-24), but these were more an acknowledgement by the parents of their responsibility to raise the child in the fear and admonition of the Lord, as a heritage from the Lord (Ps. 127:3), and a pledge of themselves to fulfill their important and sacred duty.