

## Our Firm Foundation on Water Baptism

Water baptism is the third of the foundational truths which require something of us. Grace, of course is a gift from God which makes Belief, Repentance and Water Baptism key steps in our salvation. Very few Christian religions of today accept the Doctrine of Water Baptism in the way that the Apostles clearly taught, preached and practiced it and consequently make true the statement of our Lord that "strait is the gate and narrow is the way...and few there be that find it."

### GOLDEN TEXT:

**Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.**

Acts 2:38

### SCRIPTURE TEXTS:

Acts 2:38,39,41; 8:12, 16; 10:48;  
19:4,5; Romans 6:3,4

ACTS 2:38,39,41

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

41 Then they that gladly heard his

word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.

ACTS 8:12,16

12 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

16 (For as yet He was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

ACTS 10:48

48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

ACTS 19:4,5

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of

Repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

ROMANS 6:3,4

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?

4 Therefore we are buried with Him in baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

### INTRODUCTION:

While Jesus was on earth, He had the power to forgive sins. (See Mark2:5). He also promised that Simon Peter would have the keys to the *Kingdom of Heaven*.. Most Bible scholars will agree that the Kingdom of Heaven is the Church and will admit that the birthday of the church itself was the day of Pentecost. In response to the obedience of the hundred and twenty, the Holy Spirit staged a "spectacular." In response to this phenomenon, a crowd was drawn and asked "What meaneth this?" Peter preached the meaning of what they had seen and heard and the crowd proved their Belief by asking what they should do. Peter gives them the key - the key to the Kingdom of Heaven - Repentance and Water Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ - and three thousand souls walked through the doorway into the Kingdom of Heaven. That baptism was preached as vital to salvation by all the original Apostles and their followers throughout the New Testament is evident by the actions of all their recorded converts Why does the church today try to say that baptism is not necessary to our salvation?

### 1. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE WORD "BAPTIZE"?

When the King James Version was translated in 1611 A.D. the practice of sprinkling or pouring water over the head of the convert or infant was the official doctrine of the church. For the translators to have translated the Greek word "*Baptizo*" would have been worth their lives in that age of intolerance, and the King James Version would never have reached publication. By definition and usage, *baptizo* means "to put into or under water (or



*other penetrable substance) so as to entirely immerse or submerge."* Clear evidences of this definition in the Bible are found in Matthew 3:16, Mark 1:10, Acts 8:38, Romans 6:3, Galatians 3:27 and Colossians 2:12. In the first two, Jesus comes up "out of the water," in the third, Philip and the eunuch "went down into the water," and in the last three, Paul describes the symbolism of baptism as a burial of our old sinful nature with Jesus Christ. You do not bury a body by throwing or pouring a handful of dirt over it!

## 2. BY WHAT AUTHORITY DID THE APOSTLES TEACH BAPTISM?

a) Jesus Commanded it.

*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost. Matthew 28:19*

*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned. Mark 16:15,16*

*And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Luke 24:47*

Many Biblical historians question the validity of the latter portion of both the Matthew and the Mark passages and say only the first part of both verses was actually written by the original authors, but Luke seems quite safe from this criticism. Since each of the Gospel writers tried to take a different approach to the same incident and since the practice of the Apostles confirm the importance of baptism, we need have no qualms about accepting the Matthew and Mark commandments. Notice that the three accounts are assuredly telling of the same commandment of our Lord. Matthew uses the word "baptizing" and Mark uses "baptized", and for the same statement, Luke refers to "remission of sins" which is also in perfect agreement with Acts 2:38 "...be baptized every one of you for [to obtain, to get or to receive] the remission of sins..." and Mark's "...in His name..." also agrees with that same verse. So, too, does Matthew 28:19, when we notice that Jesus uses the singular word, "name," not names and the words, "Father," "Son," and "Holy Ghost" are not names but a few of the many titles of God.

b) The "Key Keeper" Commanded it.

*Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be Baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts 2:38*

Those who had heard Peter's commandment and "...gladly received his word were baptized..." (verse 41). Matthew was present and did not correct Peter to tell him that Jesus had commanded differently, as some teachers today would have you believe. In fact, it was not until about 115 A.D., after the death of the last of the original apostles, that anyone was ever baptized in the "Trine formula" of "Father, Son and Holy Ghost," according to such authoritative sources as *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* [Hastings].

## 3. WHAT IMPORTANCE DID THE APOSTLES PLACE ON BAPTISM?

*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized... Acts 4:12*

*But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized... Acts 8:12*

*And as they went on their way, they came to a certain water:and the eunuch said, See, here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized?...And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." (Acts 8:36, 38).*

*And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith and arose and was baptized. ( Acts 9:18).*

*And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. [Note: the original Greek*

and most other translations say "Jesus Christ" instead of "Lord".] *Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.* (Acts 10:48).

*And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household...* Acts 16:14,15a

*And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.* Acts 16:33

*When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.* Acts 19:5

So here are eight instances of obedience to the ordinance of baptism and, as it will be seen that these are also the instances of persons who had already believed. There was no period of waiting to see if that person was going to live a Christian life before baptism, nor until there were several to be baptized at the same time, nor until a crowd could be on hand to witness, nor until they could get a change of clothes, even! It was a "right now" event. Nor was it optional. Notice how often the word "commanded" is used!

#### 4. OF WHAT SIGNIFICANCE IS BAPTISM?

##### a) For the Remission of Sin.

As we noted in heading 2 a) in this lesson, Jesus was saying the same thing in Luke 24:47 as He said in Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:15,16. A close examination of these passages draws a clear parallel between baptism and Remission of Sins and harmonizes perfectly with Peter's commandment on the day of Pentecost.

Now let us examine Acts 2:38 a little more closely, with special attention to meanings of words and grammar.

*"Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."* What definition can we place on the word "for" in this context? The word "for" has more than thirty shades of meaning and the context or setting in each case determines which applies. Here, the questioners, who had already believed and for that reason felt the conviction of the Holy Spirit, asked what they must do to be saved. Only the understanding "to get," "to obtain," or "to receive" fit the situation. It would make no sense to put "because of" here. These people wanted to know "how to" receive salvation, not "why"! Even the different grammars of different languages do nothing to destroy this principle. Thus we are baptized "into Christ" as the Apostle Paul explains in Romans 6:3, Galatians 3:27 and Colossians 2:12. We will study this point further in Lesson 9.

##### b) Identification of Believers With the Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus.

*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?*

*Therefore we are buried with Him in baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.* (Romans 6:3,4).

*For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.* (Galatians 3:27).

The symbolism which the Bible attached to water baptism is the burial of our old man, our sin nature which was killed in Repentance. Our old man is buried with Jesus Christ and then raised a new creature with him to walk ever after in newness of life. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17). No other form of baptism, such as in the titles of "Father, Son and Holy Ghost" or the substitute practices of sprinkling (*rhantizing*) or pouring (*cheoing*) show forth this meaning. These substitutions, all of which began after the last of the original apostle had died, are actually meaningless rituals of a disobedient church. But it is no wonder that we have false teachers today, for the

Apostle Paul found it necessary to warn his readers of false prophets even in that day.  
(See *Galatians 1:6-9*).

SUMMARY:

This lesson touches on the third and final thing that all mankind MUST do to inherit eternal life or to be "saved". God extended His Grace to us to allow us to hear His Word to show our sin and His love for us. The *first* step we must take toward salvation, which is ours as a free gift dispensed to us by the Grace of God, is **Belief** in Jesus Christ as God's Lamb who paid it ALL; the *second* step is **Repentance** of having lived to please ourselves instead of God. The *third* step we take is our burial with Jesus Christ in water **Baptism**. This is the ONLY "*Plan of Salvation*" known to, preached and practiced by the Apostles.

NOTES: