

## **“God So Loved The World” Bible Study**

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16 (NIV)*

### **Study #7: Why You Need to Be Baptized**

Because God has created mankind with a free will, He will not force His gift of salvation in Jesus Christ on anyone. Only those who receive this gift by faith and are baptized into Christ will enjoy its blessings. In our last study, we discovered that the primary meaning of faith is the surrender of the will to the truth as it is in Christ. Faith says to God, “Yes, I accept my history that you have provided for me in Your Son Jesus Christ. I accept His death as my death, His burial as my burial, and His resurrection as my resurrection to newness of life.” This conversion experience, which is referred to as the new birth or regeneration, is confessed by baptism.

The word baptism was first coined by those who dyed cloth. In Bible days there were basically two kinds of materials—cotton and wool—both of which were white in color. Many of the people preferred to use colored material, the favorite being purple. The ones who dyed the material used the word “baptize” (*baptizo* in Greek) to describe the dyeing process. They took the white material, submerged it totally in a purple dye so that the cloth which went in came out purple.

Jesus used this word baptism to describe the conversion or new birth experience. By being immersed in the waters of baptism, the believer is saying good-bye to the old life of sin, which by faith is surrendered to the cross of Christ, and when the believer is raised out of the waters of baptism, this signifies the resurrection of the believer to a new life in Christ. This study will answer the question of why baptism is necessary for salvation.

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#### **1. What human response, besides believing, is essential for salvation?**

Mark 16:15, 16 \_\_\_\_\_

#### **2. In what three names should a believer be baptized?**

Matthew 28:18-20 (1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

(3) \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** All three members of the God head are involved in the salvation of mankind. God the Father chairs the plan of salvation, Christ is the Saviour of the world, and the Holy Spirit is the active agent in the experience of salvation.

#### **3. While the act of baptism is performed by the pastor, Who is the One who actually baptizes us into the body of Christ?**

1 Corinthians 12:13 \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** We are baptized into the body of Christ (verse 27) by the Holy Spirit. The expression “made to drink into one Spirit” means we have experienced the new birth and are now born from above. When the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in us, because of our obedience to the gospel, we have been baptized into the body of Christ. We receive the life of Christ and have become one with Him.

**4. What does the Bible say to those who have joined the Church but do not have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them?**

Romans 8:9 \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Only when we have experienced the new birth and have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us are we truly Christians and have experienced salvation.

**5. Instead of living the old life of sin, what kind of life should we live when we experience the new birth?**

Romans 8:10 \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Before conversion we had only one life, the life of sin and that is all we could do; we were dead spiritually. But now we have received a new life, through the new birth experience. This life is the righteous life of Christ. We must now allow this righteous life to dominate us.

**6. What happens to us when we have been baptized into Christ?**

Galatians 3:27 \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** True baptism says, “Not I, but Christ.” Every Christian must confess with Paul: “I am crucified with Christ, but I am still living; however, it is not I who lives but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

**7. What does it really mean to be baptized into Christ?**

Romans 6:3 \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** When the phrase “baptized into Jesus Christ” is used in the Bible, it is not referring to the act of baptism but to its experience. When we are baptized into Christ we are also baptized into His death. His death becomes our death.

**8. As Jesus was raised up from the dead, what does Paul say happens to the believer who has been baptized into Christ?**

Romans 8:4 \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** In this world we begin life by birth and end it by death. In the gospel plan we experience the very opposite. We begin our Christian experience by our death to the old life and in exchange end up with the eternal life of Christ. What a bargain!

**9. What is the result of being planted in the likeness of Christ's death?**

Romans 6:5 \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** The word Paul used in the Greek is “grafted,” which is a joining of two branches together so that they become one. By baptism we have surrendered or identified ourselves with Christ's death and His resurrection and we become one with Him.

**10. What are the consequences of being crucified with Christ?**

Romans 6:6 \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** The Greek actually says: “the body of sin might be deprived of its power.” Through the new birth experience we receive a life that is able to subdue the old life of sin.

**11. What is our condition if we are dead in Christ?**

Romans 6:7 \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** The actual word Paul used is “justified” which means freed or acquitted. The law of God condemns sinners to death. The moment we die in Christ through our baptism experience, the law can no longer condemn us because we have met the justice of the law in Christ. We are set free and now have peace with God (see Romans 5:1).

**12. What is the final result of this whole baptism experience?**

Romans 6:8 \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Christ did not come to change the death sentence that we all deserve but to fulfil it. The choice the gospel confronts us with is either choosing to die in Christ or choosing to die outside of Christ. If we choose to die out of Christ there is no resurrection. But if we choose to die with Christ we have the hope of resurrection. Christ has conquered the grave and His resurrection now becomes the blessed hope of the believer.

**13. When we are buried with Christ in baptism how are we risen with Him?**

Colossians 2:12 \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Our part is faith; God does the operation. The moment we believe in Christ, God sends the Holy Spirit to dwell in us and we become spiritually alive.

**14. When we have been quickened or made alive by the presence of the Holy Spirit, what does God do for us?**

Colossians 2:13 \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** God is just in forgiving all our sins because we died in Christ. He has a legal right to say “Yes, all your sins are forgiven.”

**15. We have seen that baptism is more than an act. It's above all an experience. How does this experience of baptism affect our outlook on life and our Christian living? Note what the exodus of the Jews from Egypt to Canaan teaches us.**

Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-5.

**Note:** Paul uses the Exodus of the Jews as a type of salvation. Crossing the Red sea is a type of baptism. Moses symbolized Christ, therefore Egypt symbolized the world, Pharaoh symbolized Satan, and Canaan symbolized the kingdom of heaven. Even though the Jews had crossed the Red Sea, their hearts were still in Egypt. When a person is baptized only in the act and the heart is still in the world, the act of baptism is a sham and it cannot save that person. It is the experience of baptism that saves us in Christ.

**16. Another example of Scripture's use of the Exodus as a type of baptism is found in the story of Joshua.**

Read Joshua 4:1-9.

**Note:** When the Jews came to the Jordan river in the Exodus, God said to Joshua, "Take twelve stones from the wilderness, and place them in middle of the river Jordan and take twelve stones from the river to the promised land and build an altar." Those twelve stones represented the church. The sinful life of Egypt, which the Jews had brought with them, could not be taken into Canaan, it must be buried in the Jordan. Only the new resurrected life which God offers us in Christ can enter heaven.

**17. At the time of the flood what were Noah and his family saved by?**

1 Peter 3:20, 21 \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** The ark Noah built represented Christ. Only Noah and his family, with all the animals on board, were saved. In the same way, only those who enter into Christ by baptism will be saved when this world is destroyed by fire. Baptism, therefore, is rightly defined as the door through which we make our exit from this present world and enter the church of Christ which is destined for heaven.

**18. With Paul, what must we glory in?**

Galatians 6:14 \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** When we have experienced baptism we have the hope of salvation and a new outlook on life. We can say, "I have been crucified with Christ. I have said good-bye to the world and now I live; yet it is not I but Christ who lives in me." The fruit of this experience is holiness of living. When we have been baptized into Christ we have dedicated ourselves not to live for self but for Christ. When the Bible says to be holy as God is holy it simply means to let Christ live in us.

Baptism by immersion becomes important and of value only because of what it signifies. It is not the act of baptism itself but it is our union by faith to Christ crucified, buried, and resurrected, symbolized by baptism that saves us.

**19. What did the Ethiopian eunuch request of Philip when he heard the good news of the gospel?**

Acts 8:36 \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** This Ethiopian was probably the finance minister of Ethiopia who had come to celebrate the Passover feast in Jerusalem. On his way back, he was reading from the 53rd chapter of the book of Isaiah when Philip approached him. The Ethiopian requested Philip to join him and explain who the prophet Isaiah was talking about. Philip took this opportunity to preach Christ and Him crucified. The Ethiopian's heart was convicted and, as a result, the first Gentile was baptized into the Christian church.

**20. Wouldn't you like to make the same request that this Ethiopian did?** \_\_\_\_\_