

"Baptism"

Acts 2:36-43

Introduction: Today we shall step away from our study in the book of Revelation and we shall look at a message on the subject of BAPTISM. On Friday evening at the Bedford Bible Church we are going to have a baptismal service and I just felt led to bring a message so that all those involved as well as all of you would understand what BAPTISM is all about.

Today we do not hear about many people being baptized. It seems that many churches have pushed aside the practice and there could be many reasons for this but probably the number 1 reason is that baptism has not been taught from the pulpit and so there is much ignorance concerning baptism. So it is my desire today to help you to understand we practice baptism.

1. Why do we practice baptism?

There many churches and believers who have no concern for baptism. There are some who teach that baptism is not for the church but it only pertained to those before the church age. But that is wrong for the COMMAND to be baptized is clearly given to the church.

Let me show you a few verses.

Acts 2:36-38, 41-42, 46-47

³⁶ *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.*

³⁷ *Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*

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.*

⁴¹ *Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*

⁴² *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

⁴⁶ *And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,*

⁴⁷ *Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

Here we see that Peter gave a COMMAND to those who heard his sermon and these people were added to the CHURCH. So therefore the COMMAND to be baptized is directly from the Word of God for you and me.

When Jesus gave the GREAT COMMISSION to His disciples He spoke of baptism.

Mark 16:15-16

¹⁵ *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

¹⁶ *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

Let me show you what the Bible says in Acts 10. This is Peter speaking:

Acts 10:42-44, 47-48

⁴² *And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.*

⁴³ *To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*

⁴⁴ *While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.*

⁴⁷ *Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?*

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

Peter gave a COMMAND to those who were saved that they should be baptized.

Now let me get back to the question which we started with:

WHY DO WE PRACTICE BAPTISM? The answer is because it is clearly COMMANDED by the Word of God.

Baptism is the very first step in obedience. This tells us why many churches have cast it aside. The reason is because Satan does not want the believer to be baptized because it is obedience to the Word of God. He does not desire for us to live in obedience and it would be Satan's desire to skip the very first step of obedience.

2. Is baptism required for salvation?

The answer to this question is, "NO!!" We are not saved by BAPTISM.

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Romans 10:9-10

⁹ That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

¹⁰ For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Titus 3:5

⁵ Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

We are not saved by baptism but we are saved by GRACE through FAITH.

A perfect example of this is the thief on the cross.

Luke 23:42-43

⁴² And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

⁴³ And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

This man was never baptized but yet Jesus said that he was saved.

Now some people want to point to the words which Peter spoke in Acts 2.

Acts 2:38

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.

Then we read the words which Paul tells us Ananias spoke to him shortly after his conversion.

Acts 22:12-16

¹² And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there,

¹³ Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him.

¹⁴ *And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth.*

¹⁵ *For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.*

¹⁶ *And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*

From these 2 passages there are many who believe that BAPTISM is a requirement for salvation. But that is NOT what is being taught here.

In those days it was costly to be a follower of Jesus Christ. Jesus and His followers were all hated. So to be BAPTIZED was certain proof that a person was saved. Baptism identified you as a follower of Jesus Christ and that caused a bullseye to be placed upon you. So when someone stood up to be BAPTIZED you could be sure they were saved because no pretender would expose themselves to the persecution of being a CHRISTIAN.

3. What is the importance of baptism?

So, baptism is commanded but it is not a requirement for salvation. Then what is the importance of baptism?

Let me start this answer by explaining the meaning of the word BAPTISM.

Vines Expository Diction defines the word BAPTISM this way:

To dip, to immerse, to submerge.

The word never means TO SPRINKLE. In the Bible when anyone was baptized they were always placed INTO the water. The water was never brought to them but they were always taken to the water.

Acts 8:36-39

³⁶ *And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?*

³⁷ *And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*

³⁸ *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.*

³⁹ *And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.*

John 3:23

²³ *And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.*

So we can see that when someone was baptized in the Bible it was always by emersion. Now let me show you what BAPTISM is all about.

When we were saved we were baptized into Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:12-14

¹² *For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.*

¹³ *For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*

¹⁴ *For the body is not one member, but many.*

Just like our humans bodies are made up of many members but we are one body so it is with Jesus Christ. We who are saved are all members of the body of Christ because we have been BAPTIZED into His body which means we have been PLACED INTO His body.

Now let me take this further.

Romans 6:3-6

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 by 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.*

⁵ *For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:*

⁶ *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

Here the Apostle Paul tells us what happened when we trusted Jesus Christ as our Savior. We were BAPTIZED into HIS DEATH. Because we are in CHRIST we have been crucified with Him and buried with Him and resurrected with Him.

Galatians 2:20

²⁰ *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

Paul tells us he was crucified with Christ and now Christ lives within him. This happened when he was saved.

The same thing has happened to us who have accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior.

Now this is where baptism comes in. When we baptize we place the person backwards into the water and then we raise them back out; this is a picture of what has happened to us when we were saved. We were crucified with Christ, buried and raised again to live a new life in the resurrection power.

So to be BAPTIZED is to publicly identify with Jesus Christ. It is not to be taken lightly. It is very serious. You are making the statement that you have within you the resurrection power and you have been crucified with Him.

1 Corinthians 10:1-2

Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

² And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

Here we are told that Israel was BAPTIZED into Moses which means they identified with Moses.

This is exactly what we do when we are baptized. We are identifying with Christ.

Conclusion:

There are some who baptize infants and some who baptize the dead. Neither of these is Biblical. Baptism is ONLY for those who know Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Now let me show you how important this step of obedience is.

Matthew 3:13-16

¹³ Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

¹⁴ But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

¹⁵ And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

¹⁶ And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

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AM Service

Jesus was baptized by John because He was a man and He submitted to every ordinance which God gave to man. So if Jesus was baptized should not we also be obedient to God's command?