

WATER BAPTISM INFORMATION BOOKLET

**Prepared by
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BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS ABOUT WATER BAPTISM

1. Why are people baptized when they become Christians?
 - a) Matthew 3:13 – 15; Matthew 28:19 – 20; John 1 – 3; Acts 2:38 – 41
2. Describe the usual sequence of events leading up to water baptism in the New Testament.
 - a) Acts 2:38; Acts 8:12; Acts 2:36 – 38; Acts 16:32 – 34
3. In what fashion were people baptized in the New Testament?
 - a) Mark 1:5, 10; Acts 8:36 – 38
4. Study the following verses in order to discover at least two main things that God purposed to accomplish by sending Christ to die on the cross.
 - a) Matthew 26:26 – 28; Romans 5:6 – 9, 8:1 - 4; Ephesians 1:7;
 - b) Titus 2:13 – 14; 1 Peter 2:24
5. What must happen first in a person's life if their baptism is to mean anything?
 - a) Acts 2:38, 18:8
6. What does baptism symbolically portray about the person who is being baptized?
 - a) Romans 6:4, 11; Galatians 3:26 – 27; Colossians 2:12
7. Why do you think baptism in the New Testament seems often to have been done in public?
8. As you probably know, many churches baptize infants. Do you think that this practice is biblically correct? Why or why not.
9. Study Romans 6:1 – 11 very carefully and then summarize what it tells us about the meaning and purpose of water baptism.
10. Study Romans 6:12 – 23 in order to answer the following:
 - a) What does this passage tell us that as Christians we should no longer be doing and for what reason? Vs 12, 16
 - b) What does this passage tell us that as Christians we should now be doing and what will be the result? Vs. 13, 14, 19, 22
 - c) Why is it possible for we, as Christians, to obey what this passage tells us to do and not to do? Vs. 14, 17 – 18, 22
 - d) In the light of your answers to the previous three questions, what does the symbolic act of being baptized in water tell us about ourselves? Why?

I. THE BIBLICAL BASIS OF BAPTISM

Matthew 3:13 – 15

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented.

Hebrews 4:15

For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Matthew 28:19 – 20

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.

John 4:1 – 3

Now when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only His disciples), he left Judea and departed again to Galilee.

Acts 2:38 – 41

And Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to him." And he testified with many other words and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousands souls.

Acts 8:12

But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Acts 16:14 – 15

One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to give heed to what was said by Paul, and when she was baptized, with her household, she besought us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevails upon us.

There are four reasons why we as followers of Christ should be baptized in water:

A. Christ's Example

Matt. 3:13 – 15

Even though Christ was Himself the Son of God, He chose to be baptized in water in order to set His seal of approval upon the ministry of John the Baptist. John's ministry called the people to "*repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.*" (Matt. 3:2)

The people were baptized as a public demonstration of their repentance and return to serving God. (Matt 3:6) Because Christ was sinless (Heb. 4:15; 2 Cor. 5:21) His baptism did not mean repentance from sin, but rather it served to set an example for the people since Christ knew John's message was from God. The first reason why we are baptized then is to follow Christ's example.

B. Christ's Commandment

Matt. 28:19 – 20

In giving the Church its great commission to "*make disciples of all nations*" Christ made it clear that He expected new disciples to be baptized in water.

C. The Practice of the Disciples

As we read John 4:1 – 3 it becomes obvious that Christ's disciples were baptizing those who had become His followers; i.e. "*. . . Jesus was making and baptizing . . . disciples . . .*" (John 4:1) This was done obviously with His permission because John says "*Jesus was baptizing*" and then points out that it was His disciples who did the actual baptizing. (John 4:2) This shows us then that while Jesus was still on earth people who decided to follow Him were baptized in water.

D. The Practice of the Early Church

The record of the Early Church found in the book of Acts (2:38 – 41; 8:12; 16:14 – 15 etc.) makes it clear that water baptism for new disciples was both taught and practiced.

II. THE BIBLICAL TERMINOLOGY OF BAPTISM

<p>Luke 16:24 And he called out, "Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame."</p> <p>John 13:26 Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I shall give this morsel when I have dipped it." So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.</p> <p>Revelation 19:13 He is clad in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God.</p>	<p>Our English word 'baptize' comes from the Greek word 'baptizo' which means to immerse or dip something in a liquid. This meaning is seen in three passages which make no reference to Christian baptism but use the very 'bapto' from which 'baptizo' comes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Luke 16:24 – Where the rich man requested that Lazarus be sent to dip the end of his finger in water to cool his tongue. 2. John 13:26 – Where Jesus, at the Last Supper, dipped the morsel of bread in the wine before giving it to Judas. 3. Revelation 19:13 – Where Jesus is said to be wearing a garment dipped in blood. <p>This last reference carries with it the thought of a change caused by liquid in which the object was dipped (i.e. Jesus' garment would come out red after being dipped in blood.) In water baptism, the dipping in water does not cause a change in the spiritual state of the believer, but it symbolizes a change that has already taken place.</p>
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III. THE BIBLICAL METHOD OF BAPTISM

<p>Mark 1:5, 10 And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon him like a dove .. "</p> <p>Acts 8:35 – 38 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this scripture he told him the good news of Jesus. And as they went along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What is to prevent you being baptized?" And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.</p> <p>Acts 2:37 – 41 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"</p>	<p>A. In the New Testament, people were baptized by being completely immersed in water. John baptized people by immersing them right in the Jordan River. (Mk. 1:5, 10) When Philip baptized the eunuch, "they both went down into the water . . ." (Acts 8:35 – 38)</p> <p>B. In the New Testament the pattern was for people to . . . (Acts 2:37)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hear the gospel
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And Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise to you and to your children and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to him." And he testified with many other words and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

Acts 8:12

But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Acts 9:18

And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized.

Acts 10:46 – 48

For they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, "Can any one forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.

Acts 16:14 – 15

One who heard us was a woman name Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshipper of God. The Lord opened her heart to give heed to what was said by Paul. And when she was baptized, with her household, she besought us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.

Acts 16:33

And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he was baptized at once, with all his family.

Acts 18:8

Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with all his household; and many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.

Acts 19:4 – 5

And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

2. Repent and believe
3. Be baptized in water

C. Water Baptism took place usually immediately upon conversion as these examples show:

1. Philip at Samaria (Acts 8:12)
2. The Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 9:18)
3. The Apostle Paul (Acts 9:18)
4. Cornelius' House (Acts 10:46 – 48)
(Their believing is implied by 17:7 – 9)
5. Lydia & her house at Philippi (Acts 16:14 – 15)
6. The Philippian Jailor & his house (Acts 16:33)
7. The Converts at Corinth (Acts 18:8)
8. The Converts at Ephesus (Acts 19:4 – 5)

IV THE BIBLICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF BAPTISM

Romans 3:21 – 26

But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the

A. The Purpose of the Cross

righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction; since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins; it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies him who has faith in Jesus.

Romans 5:6 – 9

While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Why, one will hardly die for a righteous man – though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die. But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

1 Peter 1:18 – 19

You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Romans 8:3 – 4

For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do; sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 5:21

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

1 Peter 2:24

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

Romans 6:22

But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life.

Philippians 1:1

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons . . .

Colossians 1:2

To saints and faithful brethren in Christ at Colosse; Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

If we are going to understand the biblical significance of water baptism we must first see the two things God accomplished by sending Christ to die on the cross.

1. Jesus died as our substitute, in our place, to pay the death penalty for our sins so that we could experience forgiveness and reconciliation with God through faith in Him. Rom. 3:21 – 26; 5:6 – 9; 1 Peter 1:18 – 19
2. Jesus also died in our place on the cross to put to death the power of sin in our lives so that we could experience righteousness in our living. This is done through uniting ourselves to Him by faith and thus dying to the power of sin over us in our lives. Rom. 8:3 – 4; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24
3. This death to sin's power in our lives is not automatic. You can still be tempted and still sin even though you are now a Christian. The difference is, that now, by faith, you can ". . . *consider yourselves dead to sin . . .*" (Rom. 6:11) and ". . . *now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification* (a life of righteousness) . . ." (Rom. 6:22)

B. Union With Christ

When a person repents of sin and believes in Christ, inviting Him to become their Lord and Saviour, they are united to Christ. They become a member of the Church, the Body of Christ and now have a spiritual position described in the New Testament as being "*in Christ*". (Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:2)

C. Identifying with Christ

1. Water baptism is a public symbolic way (the way God has chosen) for us to identify with Jesus Christ in His death, burial and

	<p>resurrection. In this way we are telling the world that we have been united to Jesus Christ, and because of that fact, we are new people on the inside who have died to the ways of sin and come alive to God and His ways of righteousness.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. It should be remembered that water baptism is an outward symbolic ceremony that points to an inward change of heart. If that inward change is not there (that is, if we have not accepted Christ as our personal Saviour and Lord) then the outward ceremony has no more spiritual meaning than taking a bath. 3. Water baptism pictures or symbolizes our entrance into the Church of Jesus Christ by physically illustrating (through immersion in water) what happened spiritually in our lives when we received Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour. 4. Baptism is, in a sense, very much like a marriage ceremony. This ceremony is a public declaration before witnesses of our death to all other potential lovers and the establishment of a new and permanent union with our spouse. In the same way baptism is a public declaration before witnesses to the fact of our death to our love affair with sin and the establishment of a new and permanent union with the Lord Jesus Christ.
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VI SUMMATION

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Christians are baptized in water because of Christ's example, Christ's commandment, and the teaching & practice of the early Church. 2. The word "baptize" means to immerse something
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	<p>in a liquid. Therefore, in the New Testament, people were baptized by immersion after hearing the Gospel and repenting and believing in Christ.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Jesus died on the cross to free us from both the penalty of sin and the power of sin in our lives.4. When we are united with Christ by faith we too die to sin's power in our lives and are free to live for God.5. Water baptism symbolizes our union with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection and thus it portrays the fact that we are dead to sin and alive to God through Christ.6. Water baptism is an outward symbolic ceremony, which is only meaningful if we have already experienced the new birth through repentance and faith in Christ.
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Bethel Gospel Tabernacle
APPLICATION FOR WATER BAPTISM

I have accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour and believe that I am born again by the power of God. I desire to be obedient to the command of the Lord to be baptized in water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).

I believe that immersion is the correct method of baptism, as this ordinance represents burial and resurrection with our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Romans 6:4.

I understand that this baptism is not equivalent to joining this church, and does not obligate me to become a member but is, rather, the answer of a good conscience toward God (I Peter 2:21).

**INFORMATION NEEDED
FOR CHURCH RECORDS**
(Please print clearly)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY & POSTAL CODE: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

BIRTHDATE: _____ (The Senior Pastor recommends that
(Month, Day, Year) candidates be at least 12 years of age.)

BIRTHPLACE (City & Province): _____

I HAVE ATTENDED BETHEL FOR _____ MONTHS / YEARS.

DATE OF SALVATION: _____

TESTIMONY (Please use reverse side to give a short testimony of your salvation (when, where, with whom, etc.)

Having understood the meaning and implications of this scriptural act of testimony and obedience, I desire to be baptized in water.

Please return this application to the Church Office when you have completed the Bible Study. Upon receipt of this application, we will contact you with information regarding the date of the next water baptism service.