

Water Baptism

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

Baptism defined:

- Bible: *baptizo* means "to make fully whelmed (wet); to cover wholly."
- Dictionary: *baptize* means "to immerse in water; to cleanse spiritually; initiate o dedicate by purifying."

The purpose of baptism is to cleanse the body and soul through washing.

Types and shadows

Hebrews 10:1 "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect."

In looking back to the Old Testament we can find types and shadows that were directing us to the dispensation of grace in which we now live.

- A type and shadow is something that reflects upon what is to come. At the time, it was not revealed what the purpose was; but now we see it.
- It was in place for a specific purpose then, but was leading to something greater in future generations.

We can go all the way back to the time of Noah when man's sin had corrupted the whole earth and God wanted to cleanse it.

- Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord and was spared the price that had to be paid.
- The earth was then baptized by being completely covered in water and sin was drowned in its current.
- Noah was saved by grace through faith and was the first type and shadow of salvation through baptism.
- 1 Peter 3:20-21 "...when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us..."

Then we look at the children of Israel. When they returned from Egypt (which is a type of sin in the Bible), they crossed through the Jordan river, which was again a type of baptism.

When the Tabernacle was in place, the priest has to wash in the brazen laver before he could enter the holy of holies. This again is type and shadow of baptism.

So, we can see just from these few illustrations that God had a plan for baptism long before the New Testament was ever conceived.

John the Baptist

Luke 3:2-3 "...the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;"

Mark 1:2-4

2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

John was a messenger and a preparer for Jesus Christ. He was the first messenger heard in over 400 years of silence. From the time of Malachi until John began his ministry, the voice of the Lord was silent to man. Now comes the voice of "one crying in the wilderness."

His message is simple: 'Repent of your sins and be baptized.' The baptism of John was "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Up until now there had been no "remission of sins" under the law. So this new doctrine piqued their curiosity and many were baptized and some became disciples of John ministry.

But consistently throughout his ministry, John taught that this baptism was just a forerunner of One who is to come.

- Matthew 3:11 "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:"
- The baptism of John was not intended to be the final authority.
- He was preparing the way for Jesus Christ.

The necessity of baptism

To establish the necessity of baptism, let us first look at the ultimate example of Jesus Christ. We know that Jesus had no sin and therefore was NOT in need of baptism for remission of sins.

However we find in all four of the Gospels that Jesus was baptized of John. Since this was not a sin issue for Jesus, then we understand it was for an example for all people to follow.

- If Jesus was baptized, then who am I (that does contain sin) to say that I do not need baptism.

We find Nicodemus (a chief ruler among the Jews) coming to Jesus and inquiring about salvation.

- John 3:1-2 "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a

teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."

- Jesus then answered something that confused Nicodemus.
- John 3:3-4 "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?"
- Jesus then explained it so that a child may understand it.
- John 3:5 "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."
- If a person wants to enter the kingdom of God, he must be born again of the WATER and SPIRIT.
- We will talk about the dual nature of baptism in another lesson.

The purpose of baptism

Since repentance is a dying out to sin, then there must be a burial of that dead portion of our life. If a dead dog is not buried, then it will begin to stink after a while.

Jesus' crucifixion was a type of the plan to be revealed. He died (repentance), was buried (baptism), and rose again (Holy Spirit filled).

Those sins you died out to have to be buried in baptism.

- Acts 22:16 "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
- Ephesians 5:26-27 "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."
- Baptism is the washing of sins so that you can be holy and without blemish.

The application of the blood

If you will remember in an earlier lesson we spoke of the sacrificial blood that needed to be applied before it could atone for sins.

Just the spilling of blood could not atone for sins; it had to be applied.

In the same sense, for baptism to be effective, we must be baptized into Christ.

- Romans 6:3 "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"
- Galatians 3:27 "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

Jesus Christ was the One who shed His blood on Calvary for our sins. This was holy blood that would atone for our sins forever.

Therefore the mode of baptism is important for us to examine. In order for the blood to be applied, the name of the one shedding the blood is to be spoken (or claimed) during baptism. Jesus taught His disciples for 3-1/2 years and at the end began to open their understanding to all He had taught them.

In Matthew 28:19, Jesus gave them the Great Commission.

- Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:
- I want you to notice that Jesus told them to baptize "in the name of."
- Acts 4:12 "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name (Jesus) under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
- Again we see a necessity here, "whereby we MUST be saved."
- There is only one name given for salvation.

In Acts 2:38 we find Peter standing up and interpreting Matthew 28:19.

- 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.
- If you will notice here that Peter says in the name of "Jesus" and NOT the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
 - Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are descriptive titles and are not considered names.
 - A man can be a father and a son and a carpenter, but his name is John, or Jack, or James, etc.
- To understand why there is two scriptures we must look at.

Matthew 16:18-19 "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

- Peter had understood the revelation of Jesus as the Christ and therefore received the keys of opening the Gospel to the world.
- He was the only one qualified of the twelve to open the door of salvation to the world.
- He had the keys of loosening and binding.

Luke 24:44-47

44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

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

- Now it was time to open their minds to receive the fullness of the knowledge of what He had taught them.

- He even emphasized again that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in "His name among all nations."
- Baptism is to be administered in His name (Jesus).

This is the only scriptural mode of baptism.

Man's Compromise

The Apostles only baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. There was no other mode of baptism. Let's look at a few scriptures to prove this.

- Acts 8:12 "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."
- Acts 8:15-17 "Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."
- Acts 10:47-48 "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."
- Acts 19:5 "When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."
- Acts 22:16 "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

The argument is that all these scriptures are in Acts and that is only one book in the Bible. But we must keep in mind, that this book is the acts of the Apostles in the beginning of the church.

- The first four books are the recollections of the disciples of Jesus' ministry.
- The books beginning with Romans and ending with Jude are letters to the churches that have already been established. Some are letters to other Apostles like Timothy.
- Revelation is a book of future happenings.
- The churches were established through the doctrine of the Apostles, so therefore would have been baptized the same way they did in the beginning of the church in Acts.

Then as mankind began to see the growth of the church, other doctrines began to creep in unawares.

- Galatians 2:4 "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:"
- As the doctrines changed, so did man's viewpoint of the need of baptism and the mode of baptism.
- Churches began to sprinkle or dip the body instead of submerge it.
- They also began to use the titles of Father, Son and Holy Spirit instead of the name that Jesus instructed us to use.

All of this led up to the council of Nicea being called in 325 A.D. for the purpose of uniting the doctrine of Christianity. The outcome of that council totally changed the Apostles' doctrine that they had taught and practiced.

- First of all, the Apostles never taught anything other than Jesus being God robed in flesh. There was never any mention of trinitarianism. The council decided that Jesus was co-equal and co-eternal and co-existent with the Father.
- Secondly, the Apostles never taught anything other than Jesus name baptism. The council decided that baptism in the titles Father, Son and the Holy Spirit was an acceptable mode.

From that council, the church began to ease into a period known as the Dark Ages where there was strong persecution against heretics that taught anything else other than what the Christian church taught.

A Return to Truth

Slowly, there began a return to truth. In 1901, the baptism of the Holy Ghost was once again poured out like it was in the book of Acts. There was a group of Bible School students in Topeka, Kansas who had been seeking God to see if there was still an experience like they had at Pentecost. God answered and revival fires began to burn.

After the Holy Ghost was again poured out, the subject of baptism became the main focus. There were many who believed that the name of Jesus was the only Biblical mode found; while others were hanging on to the traditional method of Father, Son and Holy Spirit that was endorsed by nearly all religions.

Of course this became a major controversy and eventually led to different organizations being formed to accommodate the dissension. What is now known as the United Pentecostal Church, Int'l., became the entity holding on to the name of Jesus in baptism as the scripture teaches.

The truth had prevailed throughout all the dark ages and all the persecution; and is now being taught to you. There is only one baptismal mode that will wash away your sins, cover them in blood and make you clean and holy before God- and that is in the name of Jesus.