

"The Doctrine of Believer's Baptism"

Matt. 28:18-20
1-17-16 Sun PM

Baptism is a part of the great commission to the church. We are to teach the Gospel and win people to Christ. As soon as they believe and are saved, we are to baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Then we are to teach them how to follow Christ. Baptism is a very important step that is to immediately follow salvation. It is a distinctive of the local New Testament Baptist Church.

TT- This distinctive actually involves five characteristics that differ from what many other churches practice concerning water baptism.

I. Baptism is for Believers Only. *Only believers are to be baptized, which excludes unbelievers and infants, who neither believe nor disbelieve.*

Acts 2:41, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

Acts 8:36-37, "And as they went on their way, they came unto certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 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."

This is taught by Christ's example (Matt. 3:13-17). He certainly had no sin to wash away. He was already the Son of God and did not need the new birth.

Baptism is for believers only. Infants cannot believe and should not be baptized. Unbelievers should not be baptized.

2. Baptism is by Immersion. *Immersion is the only acceptable mode of baptism. Sprinkling or pouring is not baptism.*

The word "baptize" teaches immersion. Baptize is a transliteration of the Greek word meaning to dip or immerse.

Matthew 3:16, "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water..."

Acts 8:38-39, "...and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch and he baptized him"

The proper mode of baptism requires a complete burial in water. This cannot be done by sprinkling or pouring. This can only be done by being immersed in water deep enough for you to be buried.

The symbolic meaning teaches immersion. It identifies us with Christ. He died, was buried, and rose again.

3. Baptism is a Testimony. *Baptism is not a step in receiving Christ but rather a testimony that one already has received Christ.*

It is not a step to salvation. It is a step of obedience, which identifies us with the Lord Jesus and our faith in him.

Ephesians 4:3-6, "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

There is only one faith that is acceptable. Believer's baptism is a picture of Spirit baptism.

4. Baptism is a Requirement for Church Membership.

Believer's baptism by immersion is a requirement to church membership.

The first requirement for church membership is salvation and the second is church membership that unites us with the local church where we are baptized.

Acts 2:38, 41, 47, "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 they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.... And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

When you obey the Lord in baptism, you are united with the local church that authorizes it, and able to serve under the authority of that church.

5. Baptism is a Picture of Being in Christ.

Rom. 6:3-6, 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:

Close with four powerful verses:

Eph. 2:8-9, For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: (9) Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Mar 16:15-16, 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.

Acts 2:38-39, 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.

I Peter 3:21, "The like figure where unto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ"

As Noah was saved from the wrath of God by the water which brought the wrath, we are saved from a guilty conscience by our union with Christ. Water baptism does not wash away the filthy sins of the flesh but symbolizes or prefigures that they have already been washed away by the blood of Jesus Christ and our faith in Him.

The local New Testament church is to require and practice baptism by immersion of believers only. This is a local New Testament Church and we seek to carry out that command tonight as we baptize Ethan Lane.