

Foundations Lesson #4

Water Baptism

As Peter was closing his sermon on the day of Pentecost he instructed his listeners, who were under conviction but had not yet been converted, to do three things: "Repent [get saved]... be baptized... and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). It is still God's desire and provision for everyone to come to him by doing these three things, thus starting their walk with him. This lesson is devoted to the second of these three experiences.

Q#1. What does it mean to be water baptized?

A. According to the Bible, baptism is an immersion into water.

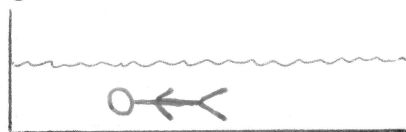
- From the original Greek, baptism has to do with immersing (by submersion and emergence), or dipping (as in the dyeing of a garment or the drawing of water by dipping one vessel into another); it can even refer to plunging, sinking, or drenching
- going down into the water – Acts 8:38
- coming up out of the water – Matthew 3:16 / Mark 1:9-10 / Acts 8:39
- baptism referred to as a burial – Romans 6:4 / Colossians 2:12
- plenty of water needed to baptize – John 3:23

Q#2. What is the main significance of baptism?

A. The new believer is identifying with Jesus Christ in his death/burial and resurrection.

see Romans 6:1-7

historical identification:
spiritual identification:



death/burial of Jesus Christ
death/burial to sin and self



resurrection of Jesus Christ
risen to new life in Christ

Q#3. Is there additional significance to baptism?

A. Yes. Although Scripture doesn't give details, a lot more takes place.

- "clothed yourselves with Christ" – Galatians 3:26-27
- gaining "the pledge of a good conscience toward God" – I Peter 3:21
- compared to Old Testament circumcision – Colossians 2:11-13

Q#4. Into what name are Christians to be baptized?

A. In Scripture, three phrases are used.

- "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" – Matthew 28:18-20
- "in the name of Jesus Christ" – Acts 2:38 / Acts 10:48
- "into the name of the Lord Jesus" – Acts 8:16 / Acts 19:5
- our practice: "On the basis of your confession of the Lord Jesus Christ, I now baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Q#5. When should a person be water baptized?

A. As soon as possible after dedicating their life to Christ.

- Acts 2:38-41
- Acts 8:12-13 "when they believed... they were baptized"
- Acts 8:35-38
- Acts 10:47-48 and Acts 11:15-18
- Acts 16:14-15
- Acts 16:32-33
- Acts 18:8

Q#6. Is water baptism optional for the believer?

A. Water baptism is commanded, thus for believers it is an act of obedience.

- Baptism is commanded. – Acts 2:38 / Acts 10:48 / Acts 22:16
- Jesus commanded the Eleven to baptize the disciples they would make. – Matthew 28:19
- Even Jesus submitted to baptism as an act of obedience. – Matthew 3:13-16
He is the example for us to follow. – I Peter 2:21

Q#7. Which comes first, water baptism or the baptism in the Holy Spirit?

A. Either one may come first, but salvation is a prerequisite for both.

- examples of water baptism coming first – Acts 2:38-41 / Acts 8:12-17
- examples of Holy Spirit baptism coming first – Acts 9:17-19 / Acts 10:44-48
- an example of water baptism and Holy Spirit baptism coming at the same time – Acts 19:5-6

Q#8. Is it ever proper to be re-baptized?

A. Yes, but only under certain conditions.

- in the case of infant "baptism"
- in the case of pouring or sprinkling
- In the event of backsliding and subsequent reconciliation with God, it is recommended that the question of re-baptism be resolved by the believer as he walks in light of God's word.

Q#9. What are some practical matters concerning water baptism?

- Bring a towel and a complete change of clothes.
- It works best for women not to wear wide skirts. Pants are practical.
- Opportunity will be given for a brief testimony. Testifying is optional.
- You will be asked to hold your nose closed before going under the water.
- Be aware that the Holy Spirit may come upon you.
- If you are wet or standing in the water, it's best not to touch the microphone.