

BAPTISM: THE BASICS

(16 June 2018)

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Baptism is a commandment from Jesus (Matt 28:18-20) and a proclamation of one's faith in Him. It is a beautiful picture of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection (Rom 6:3-4) and for believers it represents the spiritual union with Christ in death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Rom 6:1-11; Gal 3:27). Baptism is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the body of Christ – the church (Acts 2:41-42; 1 Cor 12:12-13).

WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

In the Bible, baptism is commanded of believers and is the response for people who trust in Jesus. When people accepted Christ as Savior in New Testament times, they believed in Him (Acts 16:31), repented of their sins (Acts 2:38), confessed Christ as Lord (Matt 16:16-18, Rom 10:9-10) and were baptized (Matt 28:19-20, Acts 2:38-41, 8:36-38). Our role as Christians is to teach others to do the same things the Apostles taught to the early church.

DOES BAPTISM SAVE A PERSON AND IS IT IMPORTANT?

The Bible teaches that Christ alone saves (Acts 4:10-12). Like believing, repenting, and confessing, baptism is a believer's obedient response to salvation offered, not an effort to earn salvation. Receiving Christ demands an obedient response.

HOW MUCH DO I NEED TO KNOW TO BE BAPTIZED?

You only need to realize that you are a sinner in need of saving and that Jesus is your Savior. As you grow in Christ, you'll begin to understand the meaning of baptism and other teachings of the Bible.

WHAT AM I COMMITTING TO IF I AM BAPTIZED?

You are committing to following Jesus with your life. That doesn't mean you'll never mess up... we all do. But when you do, you will confess it and repent as you continue following Jesus. Committing also means obeying the Great Commandment and the Great Commission! The Great Commandment (Matthew 22:34-40) says we are to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind as well as love your neighbor as yourself. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) tells

us to give the Gospel to the lost, baptize them, and teach them to obey God's commands.

WHY DOES ANTIOCH BAPTIZE BY IMMERSION?

Let's look how the word baptism is used in the Bible. The original language of the New Testament was Greek. When Paul and other authors wrote of baptism, they always used the Greek word ("*baptizo*") that means "to dip or immerse." There are other Greek words that meant "to sprinkle or pour," and the authors would have used those words if they had intended to include other modes of baptism. Immersion was the commonly accepted form of baptism in the church for hundreds of years. Only in the later centuries did men begin to substitute different modes of baptism. Since Antioch strives to be obedient to Scripture, we teach those who were sprinkled on or were poured over should be baptized by immersion. However, we do not judge those who are wrestling with this.

SHOULD INFANTS AND CHILDREN BE BAPTIZED?

When someone is old enough to recognize their sinful nature and understand Christ's work on the cross, we encourage them to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior and be baptized. Therefore, we do not baptize infants. Each child's request to be baptized is reviewed and discussed with an Elder and with the parents to ensure the child understands what baptism is and means.

DOES IT MATTER WHERE I WAS BAPTIZED?

Not necessarily, if you were baptized in another Christ-centered church, church camp or in the lake at a family reunion, it doesn't matter. What is important is that you knew that you were a sinner and you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior.

CAN I BE A MEMBER OF ANTIOCH AND NOT BE BAPTIZED?

The Elders of Antioch are responsible to God for the doctrine we teach. We desire to lovingly shepherd and lead people to live a life of godliness and growth in Christ. Antioch believes baptism was an ordinance of the New Testament church. Scripture indicates that everyone who accepted Christ was baptized. As a modern-day Church following biblical standards, our elders believe we should "do what they did" and "teach what they taught" in Scripture. Baptism is too important to be compromised. We realize that not everyone agrees regarding its importance, but we are called to shepherd

biblically. We believe that members of Antioch should hold a Scriptural view of baptism and be baptized by immersion.

FURTHER STUDY

WHAT BIBLE PASSAGES CAN I STUDY?

In Acts, which records the history of the early church, everyone who accepted Christ was baptized. Here are some Scriptures to study:

Acts 2:14-41, Pentecost; Acts 8:9-25, The Samaritans; Acts 8:26-39, The Ethiopian; Acts 10:44-48, Cornelius; Acts 16:11-15, Lydia; Acts 16:25-34, The Philippian Jailer; Acts 22:6-16, Paul.

OTHER SCRIPTURE TO STUDY:

- Baptism

1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:11-12; Romans 6:1-4; John 3:16-23; Matthew 28:18-20; Matthew 3:13-17.

- Obedience

John 14:15; Romans 6:17; Hebrews 13:17; 1 John 2:4-6