

TOTAL COMMITMENT - BAPTISM

In our latest group of lessons, we have studied the three angels messages of Revelation 14:6-12, and the remnant or last day church that Christ has on earth whose business it is to be "in Christ" each day, obedient to Him by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, blessed with the guidance of a messenger chosen by God, and with the clear mission of proclaiming the message of salvation and truth as taught by the three angels to the world.

If we have invited Christ into our lives, love Him, and then find that He has a church that exhibits His love and His truths, it seems that our next step would be to desire to join that group, wouldn't it? We ask, "How?" One term then comes to most minds--baptism. And that is the Biblical answer. Is baptism then only a door through which people join a church? Or is it more than that? What does it really mean? Why must we go that one route? Let us study and see.

1. There are several important purposes for baptism. Can you pinpoint some of these in the following texts?

(a) Acts 2:37,38: _____

(b) Galatians 3:27: _____

(We have opened the door of Revelation 3:20; we have received Christ as in John 1:12.)

(c) 1 Corinthians 12:12,13: _____

2. When we are baptized, what three-phase, personal experience are we confessing to God and to the audience, according to Romans 6:3-5?

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(As Christ was buried, the waters of baptism serve as our public confession that our past lives of sin have been buried by virtue of our repentance and Christ's forgiveness, and that we intend, by the indwelling power of the grace of God, to continue to keep the old nature buried (Romans 13:14) in the future. As Christ came out of the grave to a resurrected life, we are dedicated to a new life each day in Christ. Truly, such people today are God's last day, remnant people.)

3. What does the Bible teach about the form of baptism?

(a) Why did John baptize where he did in John 3:23? _____

(b) Where was Jesus baptized, and why, in Mark 1:9-11? _____

(c) Where did Philip baptize the eunuch in Acts 8:(26-35),36-39? _____

(The only form of baptism in the Bible is the complete immersion as pictured in these texts. The New Testament Greek word from which we get the English "baptize" means to immerse, to cover over completely. This fits the symbolism of Romans 6:3-5 in question 2.)

4. A critical point before consenting to baptism is that we must examine our faith in and acceptance of Christ, our confidence in God's love, our certainty that we are going the right way--in the footsteps of Bible truth; in short, that we have taken time for adequate instruction from the Bible, so that we intelligently enter into such an important rite. Review the important content of these texts.

(a) 2 Timothy 3:15-17 (John 17:17): _____

(b) Philippians 4:6 (1 Thessalonians 5:17): _____

(c) John 14:4 (Psalm 139:23,24): _____

(We will always continue to learn and grow in Christlikeness. But baptism is a time when we must know what we are doing.)

5. Baptism signifies total commitment as God has opened, and will continue to open His way--His truths to us. He can never accept anything less than total commitment.

(a) In Gethsemane, on the night of His betrayal, how did Christ demonstrate total commitment in Matthew 26:39? _____

(b) What about us, in Matthew 6:24? _____

(See also Romans 6:16,22.)

6. In baptism, we thus share Christ's example. He did not need to be baptized for Himself for He knew no sin. How did God accept His Son following His wonderful example of baptism in Matthew 3:13-15, 16,17?

7. Following our baptism, what command of God are we then able to participate in, as we witness by life and word what Christ has done for us?

Summarize Matthew 28:16-20: _____

Jesus never meant that the act of baptism would save us. But He knew that unless we are willing to openly confess our new experience with Him, there could be something wrong with that experience. And so Jesus calls warmly, "Follow Me."

<u>PURPOSE OF BAPTISM:</u>		<u>HOW DO WE PREPARE?</u>	
ALL HAVE SINNED --	1a. _____	4a. _____	
	1b. _____	4b. _____	
	1c. _____	4c. _____	
	_____	4d. _____	
Thus, ALL are separated from God		3. _____	
		<u>Baptism parallels Jesus'</u>	
		<u>Experience:</u>	
		2a. We both " _____ "	
		2b. We both are " _____ "	
		2c. We both " _____ "	
		<u>OUR COMMISSION</u>	
		<u>AFTER BAPTISM:</u>	
		7. _____	
