

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>OUR COMMISSION</u>
	<u>Experience:</u>	<u>AFTER BAPTISM:</u>
	2a. We both " _____ "	7. _____
	2b. We both are " _____ "	_____
	2c. We both " _____ "	

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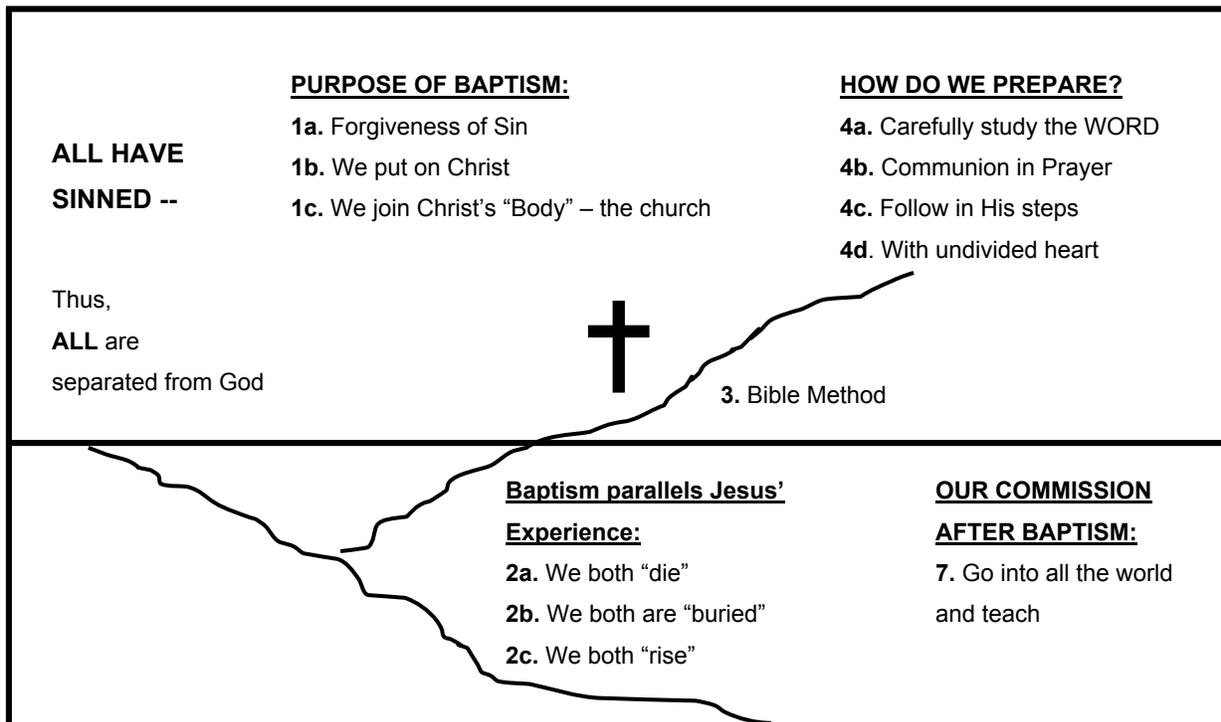
Notes for the Instructor

Purpose of lesson 32: After lessons 26-31, in which the purpose was to reveal that God does have a church on earth that is identifiable--raised up at a specific time, to proclaim a specific message, guided by a specific messenger, we come in this lesson to the point where the student can intelligently make a decision in regards to his church home. The future faithfulness of your student to Christ, truth, and Christ's church certainly has greater guarantee. And he is better able to relate to future deceptive movements that will come. Post-baptismal nurture and fellowship are also critically important.

During the lesson itself: The Scriptures of this lesson are not as demanding of exposition as in some other lessons. Make them clear and inviting. In connection with question 2, it would be important to review the depth of meaning in the larger passage, Romans 6:1-11. See 6BC 536-540. It is a meaningful passage on the subject of this lesson.

Appeal: The appeal here is quite easily made if the student has already committed himself to Christ, to the commandments and Sabbath-keeping, and has attended church for some time. Use the technique expressed in this question: "Do you believe that the time has come when you should be baptized?" If he is not quite ready, he answers in terms of need for time, and is not forced to say "no" to baptism itself.

Illustration: The visual aid is an attempt to again clarify the pre-baptismal period, the significance of baptism, and the rewards of the baptized Christian.



Introduction**Revelation 14:6-12**

⁶Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—⁷saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”

⁸And another angel followed, saying, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”

⁹Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *his* mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”

¹²Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

1a. Acts 2:37, 38

³⁷Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?”

³⁸Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Answer: Baptism is an act that signifies that one has made a change in how one lives, no longer living as a sinner, but as one who follows God’s leading.

1b. Galations 3:27

²⁷For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Answer: Baptism signifies that one is a follower of Christ and He is leading in one’s life.

Revelation 3:20

²⁰Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

John 1:12

¹²But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

1c. 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13

¹²For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also *is* Christ. ¹³For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

Answer: Through baptism a believer becomes a part of the “body” of Christ, which is the church.

2. Romans 6:3-5

³Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

⁴Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

⁵For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of *His* resurrection,

Answer: (a) The death of Christ on the cross.

(b) The burial of Christ as his death.

(c) The resurrection of Christ from the tomb.

Romans 13:14

¹⁴But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts.

3a. John 3:23

²³Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized.

Answer: Because there was "much water there".

3b. Mark 1:9-11

⁹It came to pass in those days *that* Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. ¹¹Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Answer: Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan by John the Baptist.

3c. Acts 8:(26-35), 36-39

²⁶Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert. ²⁷So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot."

³⁰So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

³¹And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him.

³²The place in the Scripture which he read was this:

*"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;
And as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
So He opened not His mouth.*

³³ *In His humiliation His justice was taken away,
And who will declare His generation?
For His life is taken from the earth."*

³⁴So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?" ³⁵Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. ³⁶Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, *here is* water. What hinders me from being baptized?"

³⁷ Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may."

And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

³⁸So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. ³⁹Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.

Answer: "Down" into the water.

Romans 6:3-5

³Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

⁴Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

⁵For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of His resurrection,

4a. 2 Timothy 3:15-17

¹⁵and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

¹⁶All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

John 17:17

⁷Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

Answer: Understanding God's truth is the only way there can be a saving change in one's life.

4b. Philippians 4:6

⁶Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

1 Thessalonians 5:17

¹⁷pray without ceasing,

Answers: The believer must first know about and trust in God's righteousness before he will be moved to ask God for leading and blessings.

4c. John 14:4

⁴And where I go you know, and the way you know."

Psalms 139:23, 24

- ²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me, and know my anxieties;
²⁴ And see if *there is any* wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.

Answer: As the believer comes to know and trust God, he desires to do what God wants him to do.

5a. Matthew 26:39

- ²⁹ But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

Answer: Jesus would not drink grape juice until when he could drink it with his followers in heaven.

5b. Matthew 6:24

- ²⁴ "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Romans 6:16, 22

- ¹⁶ Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness?
²² But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

Answers: The believer needs to be committed to only God and follow where God leads in his life.

6. Matthew 3:13-17

- ¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ And John *tried to* prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?"
¹⁵ But Jesus answered and said to him, "*Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.*" Then he allowed Him.
¹⁶ When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. ¹⁷ And suddenly a voice *came* from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Answers: Jesus did as the Father led Him and God publicly acknowledged that He was pleased.

7. Matthew 28:16-20

- ¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them.
¹⁷ When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.
¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "*All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.*
¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ *teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*" Amen.

