



Basic Bible Course

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The FIVE “Ws” and “H” about BAPTISM



Lesson Twenty-Two

INTRODUCTION: Any study of the **FACTS** concerning any matter is limited to six elements: **WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY** and **HOW**. The first five of these factual elements begin with “**W**”; the last with **H**.” When you know the “**FIVE ‘WS’ (AND ‘H’)**” about a matter, you know **ALL**.

Much **CONFUSION** reigns in the minds of many people concerning **BAPTISM**. Part of it is caused through **LACK** of information; part by **MISinformation DELIBERATELY SOWN**.

For the past several lessons, as we broke down and analyzed not only the **GREAT COMMISSION** but also the **11 CASES OF CONVERSION**, time after time we have noted the place that **BAPTISM** occupies in one’s becoming **OBEDIENT TO CHRIST, CONVERTED, a DISCIPLE, a CHILD OF GOD—A CHRISTIAN**. After such a study, that God **HAS** made **BAPTISM** a **PART** of His **PLAN OF SALVATION FOR ALL MANKIND**, no one can reasonably deny. But before we can fully grasp the **WHOLE** plan of salvation, as revealed in the New Testament, it is imperative, first of all, that we clear away all this confusion, wrong teaching and floundering about **BAPTISM**. In order to do this, let us apply the “**five Ws and H**”:

- I. TO BEGIN WITH, **WHO**, ACCORDING TO GOD’S WORD, MAY BE BAPTIZED?
 - A. Nowhere, in the Scriptures, is an **AGE** requirement given for baptism.
 - B. However, certain limiting factors **ARE** set forth, which must be obeyed to qualify one for baptism.
 1. When Philip and the eunuch “came unto a certain water,” in Acts 8:36, the eunuch asked a question: “See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?”
 - a. What was the answer? “And Philip said, if thou **BELIEVEST**...thou mayest.”
 - b. Note carefully that it was not until **after** the eunuch confessed “I **BELIEVE**” that Philip baptized him.
 - c. This harmonizes with Mark 16:16, wherein Jesus said, “He that **BELIEVETH** and is **BAPTIZED**.”
 2. When those on Pentecost who believed (i.e., were “pricked in their hearts”) asked, “What shall we do?” what was Peter’s reply? (Acts 2:37-38).
 - a. “**Repent, and be baptized** every one of you.”
 3. It follows, from the foregoing, that to **qualify** for baptism, one must not only be **able** but also **do** three things. Before he **can** (or **may**) be baptized, he must—
 - a. **BELIEVE** in Christ Jesus
 - b. **CONFESS** this believe
 - c. **REPENT**.

CONCLUSION: ANY REPENTANT BELIEVER, UPON CONFESSION OF HIS FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, MAY BE BAPTIZED.

QUESTION: **Can** a baby BELIEVE in Christ?

Can a baby CONFESS faith?

Can a baby REPENT of sins?

Even to ASK such questions is nonsense. Babies can do none of these three things; babies, therefore, cannot be baptized according to the Scriptures. After all, why SHOULD they be? Never having SINNED, they are not LOST; not being LOST, they have no need to be SAVED. In fact, they are SAFE! “Of such,” Jesus said, “is the kingdom of heaven!” (Matthew 19:14)

QUESTION: If a baby cannot be baptized according to the Scriptures, then how old must one be in order to be baptized? The answer to this question is not given in so many words in the Word of the Lord. The pre-requisites are given: belief, repentance and confession. It follows, therefore, that when one is old enough to fulfill these qualifications, he is old enough to be baptized. Not before.

II. **WHAT** IS BAPTISM?

Note: We have observed in previous lessons that, during the Jewish dispensation, there were at least three different baptisms mentioned: 1) the baptism of the children of Israel UNTO MOSES “in the cloud and in the sea,” referring to their escape from Egypt; 2) the baptism of JOHN; and 3) the baptism of SUFFERING which Jesus Christ experienced in His death on Calvary. All three of these baptisms inhered within the JEWISH dispensation; and, as we have seen already, none of them carried over into the CHRISTIAN dispensation.

Turning to the CHRISTIAN dispensation, only TWO baptisms may be found therein by careful reading of the New Testament. And, since Ephesians 4:5, says “There is...ONE baptism,” it must be concluded that ONE of the TWO mentioned had finished its purpose and disappeared by the time the book of Ephesians was written (i.e., about A.D. 62-63). Earlier, as we have studied heretofore, the 12 apostles (in Acts 2) received a “baptism of the Holy Spirit,” as Jesus had promised them (in Acts 1:5). After that Cornelius and his household received “the like precious gift” (in Acts 10). These are the only two instances of HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM” in the entire Bible.

The fifth, last, and only baptism remaining, when the Ephesians were baptized, however, was none of the foregoing, Only GOD could administer Holy Spirit baptism. Yet, there was ONE baptism left, which was supposed to be administered by HUMAN agency, which was to last until the end of the world. It was the baptism commanded in the GREAT COMMISSION. After Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection, Jesus commanded His APOSTLES (human) to “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, BAPTIZING them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 28:19). Those thus baptized were to be taught to observe the same things (which would include baptizing) as the apostles themselves were commanded; and this was to continue “always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (verse 20).

Whereas “HOLY SPIRIT” BAPTISM was NOT one which could be OBEYED, the baptism of the GREAT COMMISSION was a COMMAND SUBJECT OF HUMAN OBEDIENCE. Thus, when (some 10 days after Jesus first announced it, prior to His ascension) the baptism thus commanded was subsequently made of force, Peter bound it on those who heard the first gospel sermon of the Christian dispensation, preached on Pentecost. Those who had just listened to it asked “what shall we do?” Peter said unto them, “REPENT, and BE BAPTIZED every one of you” (Acts 2:38). “Then they that GLADLY RECEIVED his word WERE BAPTIZED” (verse 41). The same was true in succeeding cases of conversion—of the Samaritans, Simon the sorcerer and the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8), of Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9 & 22), of Cornelius and his house (Acts 10), of Lydia and her house and the Philippian jailer and his house (Acts 16), of the Corinthians (Acts 18), and of the Ephesians (Acts 19), to whom it was then declared “there is...ONE BAPTISM” (Ephesians 4:5).

With all this in mind, thus, let us ask ourselves again “WHAT is BAPTISM?”—this baptism of Ephesians 4:5—this baptism of the Great Commission?

- A. First of all, by simple definition, BAPTISM is a BURIAL.
1. We are not left to speculate on this:
 - a. Romans 6:4 says in so many words, “Therefore we are **BURIED** with him by **baptism**.”
 - b. Colossians 2:12: “**BURIED** with him **in baptism**.”
 2. As to **why** baptism involves our being BURIED, it is because **baptism** concerns Christ’s **death**. Note carefully—

- a. Romans 6:3-5: “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his **death**? 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. For if we have been **planted** together in the **likeness of his death**, we shall be also *in the likeness of his resurrection*.”

QUESTION: Well, what if we are **not** PLANTED or BURIED “in the LIKENESS OF HIS DEATH?” Shall we “be also in the LIKENESS OF HIS RESURRECTION?” Consider again—

- b. Colossians 2:12: “**Buried** with him in **baptism**, wherein also ye are **risen** with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath **raised** him from the **dead**.”

NOTE: Inasmuch as the Word of God clearly states we are BURIED and PLANTED (re: baptism) in the likeness of Jesus’ death, why do some supposed “followers” of Christ not follow Him in being baptized? Baptism HAS to be IMMERSION; for only in IMMERSION are we either BURIED or PLANTED; and only from IMMERSION is a RAISING possible in the LIKENESS of Jesus’ RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD. In the “SPRINKLING” and “POURING” which some have SUBSTITUTED for BAPTISM, not only is the “likeness” of Jesus’ DEATH destroyed; but so also is the “likeness” of His RESURRECTION. In NEITHER sprinkling NOR pouring does a BURIAL of any kind or sort take place; thus, sprinkling or pouring, having no suggestion of BURIAL, are NOT in the “LIKENESS” of JESUS’ DEATH. No burial; no resurrection! So sprinkling or pouring are not in the “LIKENESS” of Jesus’ RESURRECTION either! In baptism we are BURIED (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12). But we are NOT buried in sprinkling or pouring. Therefore, it follows that NEITHER SPRINKLING NOR POURING is BAPTISM. In BAPTISM we are BURIED. In IMMERSION we are BURIED. Therefore BAPTISM is IMMERSION.

All this is so evident and clear, it just HAS to be TRUE. Since SPRINKLING and POURING clearly are NOT BAPTISM, then how were they ever introduced AS SUCH? They were NOT introduced as such IN THE WORD OF GOD. The EARLIEST RECORD of EITHER sprinkling OR pouring appears to be in the SECOND CENTURY by which time the Bible already had been completed and the church Jesus built was approximately 100 years old (with only IMMERSION for baptism ever having been used!). Someone in the second century seems to have had the bright idea that sprinkling or pouring, AS A SUBSTITUTE for baptism might be “just as good” in case one was terribly sick or dying. Neither sprinkling nor pouring at first, was mistaken for TRUE BAPTISM; for the New Testament Scriptures were written in GREEK, and the Greek terms for “baptism” and “baptize” (*baptismus* and *baptizo*) could NOT be CORRECTLY TRANSLATED so as to mean either sprinkle or pour. (From the ORIGINAL GREEK, they cannot be translated even today!) Rather these terms correctly translated into such ideas as “DIP,” “IMMERGE,” “SUBMERGE,” “TO CLEANSE BY DIPPING,” “SUBMERGING,” “TO WASH,” to “MAKE CLEAN WITH WATER,” “IMMERSION,” “SUBMERSION,” “OVERWHELM,” to “DYE.” Look through this list carefully. Do you see any words there that carry the idea of SPRINKLE or POUR? There is not an authoritative Greek lexicon on earth that translates the Greek terms for baptism or baptize as either sprinkle or pour! There is not a Greek scholar in any university in the world, who values his scholarship, who will define these terms from the ORIGINAL NEW TESTAMENT GREEK as sprinkle

or pour! Then why be content with sprinkling or pouring for baptism, when the Bible words for baptism do not (and never did) mean sprinkle or pour? God did not command us to be “sprinkled” in Jesus’ name, or to be “poured” in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He commanded BAPTISM in this name! If SOMETHING ELSE is “JUST AS GOOD,” why does not the Bible say so? SPRINKLING AND POURING NEVER WERE IN THE DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE OF THE CHURCH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. Sprinkling or pouring, neither one, was “officially” recognized as “baptism” by ANYBODY until the ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH so ordained at the COUNCIL OF RAVENNA (A.D. 1311) almost 13 CENTURIES after Jesus established HIS church on Pentecost in A.D. 33. Those who follow after “sprinkling” and “pouring” for baptism, thus clearly are following after the APOSTASY OF ROMAN CATHOLICISM RATHER THAN THE WORD OF GOD. The truth is: BAPTISM is IMMERSION—and ALWAYS WAS!

III. **WHEN** BE BAPTIZED?

Note: the way people PUT OFF being baptized—and even some modern-day preachers try to “SAVE UP” converts so as to BAPTIZE THEM ALL AT ONCE ON SOME SPECIAL OCCASION—one might suppose it makes little difference at all as to WHEN he is baptized. However, a careful study of God’s Word will show that in New Testament times baptism was accounted to be of the utmost URGENCY.

- A. Converts DID NOT WAIT to be baptized on Pentecost.
 1. The multitude heard Peter preach the first gospel sermon in the Christian dispensation on that day (Acts 2:14-36).
 2. Being “pricked in their hearts,” they asked, “What shall we do?” (verse 37).
 3. Peter told them what to do (verse 38).
 - a. He explained why they should “repent and be baptized” (verses 38-39).
 - b. He testified with many words and exhorted (i.e., urged) them to “**Save yourselves**” (verse 40).
 4. **Then** they that “gladly received his word” **were baptized**.
 - a. “Then” WHEN?
 - b. “THE SAME DAY” (verse 41).
- B. The **Samaritans** DID NOT WAIT!
 1. Philip preached CHRIST unto them (Acts 8:5).
 2. The people with one accord GAVE HEED (verse 6).
 3. WHEN they BELIEVED Philip’s preaching...they were BAPTIZED both men and women (verse 12).
- C. **Simon the sorcerer** DID NOT WAIT!
 1. “Then Simon himself believed...and...was baptized” (verse 13).
- D. **The Ethiopian eunuch** DID NOT WAIT!
 1. Philip preached unto him Jesus (verse 35).
 2. Coming to “a certain water,” the eunuch asked for baptism (verse 36).
 3. Philip said he could if he believed (verse 37).
 4. The eunuch confessed he believed (verse 37).
 5. He commanded the chariot to stand still and he was baptized before going on his way (verses 38-39).

NOTE: How different from the general practice nowadays!
- E. **Saul of Tarsus** DID NOT WAIT!
 1. The preacher (Ananias), being sent by the Lord, entered into the house (Acts 9:17).
 2. The preacher told Saul about Jesus Christ (9:17; 22:14-16).
 3. **Immediately** three things happened to Saul.
 - a. There fell from his eyes as it had been scales (9:18).

- b. He received his sight forthwith (9:18).
- c. When Ananias asked, “And now why **tarriest** (i.e., wait) thou?” and commanded Saul to “Arise, and be baptized” (Acts 22:16), he “arose, and was baptized” (9:18).

NOTE: WHEN did all this take place? It was even BEFORE SAUL PAUSED TO EAT. For, although he had not eaten for three days (verse 9), it was not until after he was baptized (verse 18) that the Scripture mentions he “received meat and was strengthened” (verse 19).

F. The Philippian Jailer DID NOT WAIT!

- 1. Paul and Silas preached the Word of the Lord unto him and to all that were in his house (Acts 16:32).
- 2. The Jailer took Paul and Silas “the **same hour** of the night.”
 - a. He washed their stripes (verse 33).
 - b. He was BAPTIZED (verse 33).
 - c. All his house was also baptized—not later, but **straightway** (verse 33).

G. The Ephesians DID NOT WAIT!

- 1. Paul came to Ephesus (Acts 19:1)
- 2. He found “certain disciples” there (verse 1).
- 3. Since they did not understand about the Holy Spirit, he inquired concerning their baptism.
- 4. Learning they had the WRONG BAPTISM, Paul taught them about Jesus Christ (verses 3-4).
- 5. “WHEN THEY HEARD THIS,” did they wait? No, “they were BAPTIZED in the name of the Lord Jesus” (verse 5).

NOTE: When people were made believers, in the New Testament, THEY DID NOT WAIT to eat, sleep or procrastinate; they were baptized at ONCE.

IV. WHERE BE BAPTIZED?

NOTE: Baptism, by its very nature of a BURIAL, requires a PLACE in which to be performed.

- A. New Testament baptism requires a place where there is WATER.
 - 1. At Cornelius’ house, Peter asked, “Can any man forbid **WATER**, that these should not be baptized?” (Acts 10:47).
- B. New Testament baptism requires a COMING UNTO WATER.
 - 1. Philip preached Jesus unto the eunuch, “And as they went on *their* way, they CAME UNTO A CERTAIN **WATER**” (Acts 8:36).
 - 2. It was **literal, physical WATER**, for the eunuch said, “**SEE, here is WATER**; what doth hinder me to be baptized?” (Acts 8:36).
- C. New Testament baptism requires a GOING DOWN INTO WATER.
 - 1. “And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they WENT DOWN BOTH INTO THE WATER, both Philip and the eunuch” (verse 38).
- D. New Testament baptism requires a BURIAL in water.
 - 1. “went down both into the water, both Phillip and the eunuch; and he **baptized him**” (verse 38).
 - a. “Therefore we are BURIED with him **by baptism**” (Romans 6:4).
 - b. “BURIED with him **in baptism**” (Colossians 2:12).
- E. New Testament baptism requires a RESURRECTION.
 - 1. “For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness of his* RESURRECTION” (Romans 6:5).
 - 2. “Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are RISEN with *him*” (Colossians 2:12).
- F. New Testament baptism requires a COMING UP OUT OF WATER.
 - 1. “And when they were COME UP OUT OF THE WATER” (Acts 8:39).

NOTE: How foreign to the New Testament description of baptism are SPRINKLING and POURING! The only similarity between them and baptism is the element—water. At least to that extent, they are right. But whereas New Testament baptism requires a COMING UNTO WATER, in sprinkling and pouring the WATER IS BROUGHT TO THE PERSON (i.e., just the opposite!) Whereas New Testament baptism requires a GOING DOWN INTO WATER, sprinkling and pouring permit one to STAY UP OUT OF THE WATER (i.e., just the opposite!) Whereas New Testament baptism requires BOTH A BURIAL AND A RESURRECTION in the likeness of Jesus’ death and resurrection, in sprinkling and pouring there is NO BURIAL, NO RESURRECTION and NO LIKENESS. Lastly, whereas New Testament baptism requires a COMING UP OUT OF WATER, in sprinkling and pouring one never gets INTO water, hence CANNOT COME UP OUT OF water. How can ANYONE say SPRINKLING, POURING and NEW TESTAMENT BAPTISM are the SAME?!

V. **WHY** BE BAPTIZED?

- A. Be baptized TO BE SAVED (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38-41; 1 Peter 3:21).
- B. Be baptized (i.e., “born of WATER and of the spirit”) for ENTRY INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD (John 3:3-5).
- C. Be baptized FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS (Acts 2:38).
- D. Be baptized TO RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT (Acts 2:38).
- E. Be baptized TO GO ON YOUR WAY REJOICING (Acts 8:38-39; 16:34).
- F. Be baptized TO WASH AWAY YOUR SINS (Acts 22:16).
- G. Be baptized TO GET INTO CHRIST (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:26-27).

VI. **HOW** BE BAPTIZED?

The New Testament is a book of PRINCIPLES. **What** God wants done is clearly taught in all things; however in no instance is an EXCLUSIVE METHOD set forth for doing anything God has required. As long as we observe WHAT God has commanded, He leaves us FREE as to the methods we choose, just so they are decent and orderly (1 Corinthians 14:40). **WHO** may be baptized? ANY PENITENT BELIEVER, upon the confession of his faith in Christ. **WHAT** is baptism? It is the IMMERSION OF A REPENTANT BELIEVER IN CHRIST IN WATER—followed by a resurrection therefrom “to walk in newness of life.” **WHEN** be baptized? The **same day** one “gladly receives” the Word of the Lord, believes it, repents, confesses his faith, IMMEDIATELY, STRAIGHTWAY. **WHERE?** In WATER, **WHY?** To be SAVED, to GET INTO GOD’S KINGDOM, for the REMISSION OF SINS, to RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT, to GO ON OUR WAY REJOICING, to WASH AWAY OUR SINS and to GET INTO CHRIST. **HOW?** DECENTLY AND IN ORDER.