

Bible Doctrines

1. Baptism a Christian Ordinance.

Baptism is the sacred ordinance which guards the entrance to the church of God.

Matthew 28: 19, 20, Baptism is inseparably connected with the gospel (margin) commission.

Mark 16: 15, 16. Baptism is a positive requirement of the gospel.

Matthew 3: 13-17. Jesus was baptized, not as a confession of sins, but for an example to His followers.

2. The Manner of Baptism.

The only method of baptism revealed in the Bible is baptism by immersion.

Matthew 3: 5-16. John the Baptist baptized by immersion.

John 3: 23. It required "much water" to baptize.

Note-The New Testament writers always used the word baptizo when referring to baptism, and this word means to plunge, to dip, to immerse. Two entirely different words are used for sprinkling and pouring: rantizo (to sprinkle) and ekcheo (to pour).

Acts 8: 29-39. Philip baptized by immersion.

Ephesians 4: 5. There is only one baptism in the Christian faith.

3. What Baptism Signifies.

Baptism signifies a complete change of character, a death to the old nature, and the acceptance of a new life.

Romans 6: 3, 4. Baptism signifies the death and burial of the past life of sin, and a resurrection to newness of life in Christ.

Romans 6: 6. The old nature must die.

Romans 6: 8-11. In baptism the believer signifies that through union with Christ he dies to sin to live a new life.

4. The Prerequisites for Baptism.

Acts 2: 38. Repentance is the first step towards baptism.

Acts 8: 37. Faith in Christ as a personal Savior.

Matthew 3:7,8. Obedience to God's requirements.

Acts 16: 25-33. Definite instruction concerning the Christian life [Acts 8:35-37] should precede baptism.

5. The Gift of the Spirit.

The gift of the Holy Spirit is promised to those who enter into the full significance of this sacred rite.

Acts 2: 38. The promise to those who are baptized.

Mark. 1: 9-11. Christ received a special baptism of the Spirit at His baptism.

Mark 1: 8. John baptized only with water; Christ is to baptize with the Spirit.

Matthew 3: 11. John's baptism signified repentance only; Christian baptism bestows the Spirit.

Acts 10:44-48. Although the Spirit is given before baptism, baptism should not be omitted.

Acts 19: 1-5. Rebaptism is permissible if believers have not understood the ordinance.

The distinguishing feature of gospel baptism is that one is being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48.) This signifies identification with Christ in life and conduct. It is putting on the Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 13:14.) John had baptized as a sign of repentance, but did not baptize men and women into the name of Christ. The believers at Ephesus therefore had not received Christian baptism.

Through the gift of the Spirit the believer is enabled to live the Christian life.

Ephesians 3: 16, 17. The Spirit strengthens us.

Galatians 3: 27. The believer has "put on" Christ.

Romans 8: 14-16. As the children of God, believers are led by God's Spirit.

Colossians 3: 1-3. The baptized Christian lives for heavenly things.

Bible Doctrines

MEMORIZE: Romans 6:4.

Questions on the Lesson

1. What ordinance stands At the entrance to the church?
How is it connected with the gospel commission? Is it essential?
2. Prove that Bible baptism is baptism by immersion.
3. What is the significance of baptism?
4. Give the necessary prerequisites to baptism.
5. What promise is given those who are baptized?
6. Describe the baptism of Jesus.
7. How did the baptism of John differ from that administered in Christ?
8. Does the reception of the Spirit exempt one from the necessity of baptism?
9. Give an example of re-baptism.
10. What is emphasized as necessary after baptism?

For Further Study

1. Should infants be baptized? Deuteronomy 1: 39.
2. Why could God never accept sprinkling as a substitute for baptism by immersion?
3. Which denominations practice baptism by immersion?
4. Read "Testimonies," Volume 6, pages 91-99.

57. THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH - II

There are two important ordinances within the church: The ordinance of humility and the Lord's supper.

The Ordinance of Humility.

John 13: 1-5. Christ's example of humility and service.

John 13: 6-11. Peter's objection. Note the importance which Jesus attached to the washing (verse 8). He used the service of washing Peter's feet to emphasize the washing from sin, which is essential for fellowship with Himself and with one another.

Titus 3:5. The washing of feet was a symbol of a higher cleansing.

John 15: 3. The washing of feet was a symbol of a higher cleansing.

John 13: 12-17. The Savior's example of humility and service to His followers should be emulated in their attitude to one another.

Note-In Kitto's Biblical Encyclopedia, third edition, under the article "Washing of Feet" we find the following statement. "Feet washing (pedilavium) became, as might be expected, a part of the observance practiced in the early Christian church. The real signification, however, was soon forgotten, or overloaded by superstitious feelings and mere outward practices. Traces of the practice abound in ecclesiastical history, and remnants of the abuse are still to be found, at least in the Roman church."

Luke 22: 24. The condition of heart which the Savior sought to correct in washing the disciples' feet was pride and self-seeking.

Luke 22: 25, 26. Christ's estimate of true greatness.

"This ordinance is Christ's appointed preparation for the sacramental service. While pride, variance, and strife for supremacy are cherished, the heart cannot enter into fellowship with Christ. We are not prepared to receive the communion of His body and His blood. Therefore it was that Jesus appointed the memorial of His humiliation to be first observed." - "Desire of Ages," page 650.

The Lord's Supper.

1 Corinthians 15: 2-4. Our salvation depends upon a knowledge of two fundamental historic facts