

Doctrines Of The Faith - A Study in Truth



What The Bible Says About...

BAPTISM

An Ordinance of the Church

PASTOR ART KOHL



Baptism

An Ordinance of the Church
by Pastor Art Kohl

Scripture verses in this booklet are
from the King James Holy Bible.

Doctrine of the Faith - A Study in Truth

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Baptism

An Ordinance of the Church

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I. Definitions

The words Baptism, Baptisms, Baptize, Baptized, Baptizest and Baptizeth come from three root words. Following are their definitions, taken from the Strongs Concordance and Vine's Dictionary of Greek Words:

A. *Baptisma*

Noun: baptism, consisting of the processes of immersion, submersion and emergence (bapto = to dip), is used (a) of John's baptism, (b) of Christian baptism, (c) of the overwhelming afflictions and judgments to which the Lord voluntarily submitted on the Cross, Luke 12:50; (d) of the sufferings His followers would experience, not of a vicarious character, but in fellowship with the sufferings of their Master, Matthew 20:22-23; and in Mark 10:38-39.

B. *Baptismos*

Noun: as distinct from baptisma (the ordinance), is used of the ceremonial washing of articles, Mark 7:4,8; Hebrews 9:10. Note: As dishes are submerged completely under the water.

C. *Baptizo*

Verb: to baptize, primarily a frequentative form of bapto, to dip, was used among the Greeks to signify the dyeing of a garment, or the drawing of water by dipping a vessel into another, etc. Plutarchus uses it of the drawing of wine by dipping the cup into the bowl (Alexis, 67) and Plato, metaphorically, of being overwhelmed with questions (Euthydemus, 277 D).

It is used in the New Testament in Luke 11:38 of washing oneself (as in II Kings 5:14, "dipped himself").

In the early chapters of the four Gospels and in Acts 1:5; 11:16; 19:4, it is used of the rite performed by John the Baptist who called upon the people to repent that they might receive remission of sins. Those who obeyed came "confessing their sins," thus acknowledging their unfitness to be in the Messiah's coming kingdom.

Distinct from this is the baptism enjoined by Christ, Matthew 28:19, a baptism to be undergone by believers, thus witnessing to their identification with Him in death, burial, and resurrection, Acts 19:5; Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 1:13-17; 12:13; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12. The phrase in Matthew 28:19, "baptizing them in the Name" (cp. Acts 8:16), would indicate that the baptized person was closely bound to, or became the property of, the one into whose Name he was baptized.

In Acts 22:16 it is used in the Middle Voice, in the command given to Saul of Tarsus, "arise and be baptized," the significance of the Middle Voice from being "get thyself baptized."

The experience of those who were in the ark at the time of the Flood was a figure or type of the facts of spiritual death, burial and

resurrection, Christian baptism being an antitypos, “a corresponding type,” a “like figure,” 1 Peter 3:21. Likewise the nation of Israel was figuratively baptized when made to pass through the Red Sea under the cloud, 1 Corinthians 10:2.

The verb is used metaphorically also in two distinct senses: firstly, of baptism with the Holy Spirit, which took place on the day of Pentecost; secondly, of the calamity which would come upon the nation of the Jews, a baptism of the fire of Divine judgment for rejection of the will and word of God, Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16.

Strong adds to the definition of baptizo as “being whelmed, fully wet.”

The words for baptism are never translated into the English words “pour” or “sprinkle.” These are popular modes of so-called baptisms in Catholic and Protestant churches alike, but are not scriptural. They are spurious. Those who have been sprinkled or had water poured on them have never been baptized because the Word baptize means “to dip, submerge or immerse.”

The word pour is translated from the Greek word “ekchuno.” It never means baptize.

The word sprinkle comes from the Greek “rhantizo.” This word is only found three times in the New Testament and is never translated “baptize.”

This is more than semantics or splitting hairs. As we will see, only immersion can picture the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

II. The Nine Baptisms in the New Testament.

Note that the word “baptize” never appears in the Old Testament. This is a New Testament practice. There are 9 baptisms in the New Testament. They are:

- A. The baptism of John (the baptism of repentance).
- B. The baptism of Jesus
- C. Christian baptism
- D. Baptism of Christ’s sufferings
- E. Baptism of our sufferings
- F. The baptism with the Holy Ghost
- G. The baptism into Moses (an Old Testament type of baptism)
- H. The baptism with fire
- I. The baptism for the dead (a false doctrine)

Let us look at each of these.

A. The Baptism of John (the baptism of repentance)

The baptism of John and the baptism of repentance are synonymous. They are mentioned in 5 books of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts.

Jesus asked in Matthew 21:25, *“The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?”* The question is also asked in Mark 11:30 and Luke 20:3-4. He never answered the question, but everyone knew what He meant.

Other scriptures answer the question specifically. Yes, the baptism of John was of God. Consider these verses that establish this answer:

Luke 7:30, *“But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.”* John’s baptism was the counsel of God, not the idea of John or men.

John 1:33, *“And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.”* John said he was sent by God to baptize with water. It was not something he decided to do in his mind. Remember, John was filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother’s womb (Luke 1:15).

What then was God’s purpose for the baptism of repentance?

1. To justify God.

Luke 7:29, *“And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.”*

It was a way for people to say, “God is right and we are wrong. We are sinners.”

The baptism of John did not justify man, but God.

2. To prepare the way for people to believe on Christ.

Acts 19:4, *“Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.”*

Repentance and faith are still necessary ingredients to true salvation. Acts 20:21 describes Paul’s preaching of the gospel as “Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Another verse that verifies this truth is John 1:31, *“And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.”*

We have seen that baptism was a new, God-given ordinance in John’s ministry to get people’s minds to turn to the Lord and to prepare them to receive the Saviour. That is why it is called the “Baptism of Repentance.” Repentance means “to have a change of mind, or reverse a decision.”

John got people to repent and then pointed them to Christ.

John 1:26-30 puts it, *“John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe’s latchet I am not worthy to unloose. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.”*

Thus the baptism of John became closely related to the start of Christianity:

Acts 10:37, *“That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;”*

Acts 1:22, *“Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.”* Apostles had to be followers of Christ from the baptism of John.

John’s baptism never saved a soul. It was to be preparatory for people to receive Christ just as repentance today does the same thing. 2 Corinthians 7:10 says, *“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.”*

Today we do not repent in water, back then they did. Strange, but true, baptism preceded faith in Christ for John’s followers,

whereas in Christian baptism it follows our faith in Jesus Christ. The similarity taught of both is that repentance precedes faith in Christ.

John's baptism was a preparatory repentance and confessing of sins. John was very strict about his baptism of repentance. Those who came insincerely, looking on it as a religious ritual were rebuked as snakes. Matthew 3:7, "*But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?*" Baptismal candidates were expected to:

First—prove by their life that there had been repentance. Matthew 3:8, "*Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.*"

Second—confess their sins. Matthew 3:5-6, "*Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.*"

John's baptism, the baptism of repentance was said to be "for the remission of sins" (Mark 1:4). This was preceded by his pointing people to Christ (Mark 1:3).

Again, it should be noted that the baptism of John never saved a soul. Two examples of followers of John, who had been baptized by him but needed to be saved are Apollos (Acts 18:24-28) and the 12 men at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7).

3. Other notes about John's baptism.

- i. He baptized first in Bethabara beyond Jordan (John 1:28).
- ii. He also baptized in Aenon and Salim because there was much water there (John 3:23).
- iii. He baptized by immersion, because that is the only type of baptism there is (Matthew 3:16, Mark 1:10).

B. The Baptism of Jesus Christ

This historical event is mentioned in all four gospels.

1. Matthew

Matthew 3:13-17, "*Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*"

2. From Mark's Gospel.

Mark 1:9-11, *“And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”*

3. From Luke's Gospel.

Luke 3:21-22, *“Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.”*

4. From John's Gospel.

John 1:29-34, *“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.”*

From these accounts we learn that Jesus came to the Jordan River to be baptized of John. Jesus came from his hometown, Nazareth of Galilee. Jesus needed to be baptized of John, not to repent, but because the baptism of John was of God, and Jesus obeyed God in everything.

John tried to forbid the Lord from baptism on account that he (John) was not worthy to baptize the Lord. John knew that Jesus was the Lamb of God, without spot and without blemish, who came to take away the sin of the world. John knew that he was unworthy to loosen the latchet of Jesus' shoes (Mark 1:7), let alone baptize Him. John knew that Jesus the incarnate Son of God. John knew he needed to be baptized of the Lord.

Jesus answered John to “suffer it to be so now.” He gave John permission to baptize Him. The reason Jesus gave John is all important: “for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.”

Jesus did not say it “made” us righteous, but it is necessary to “fulfill all righteousness.” It is a step of obedience in the believer's life (not the unbeliever). The Bible does not teach “baptismal regeneration” but “belief regeneration” (John 1:12-13). Jesus needed to be baptized, but did not need to be saved. He did not need salvation, He is the Saviour. He did not need

redemption, He is the Redeemer. But He needed baptism to do all that God commanded Him, to “fulfill all righteousness.” So do we. We will never do all that the Lord wants us to do (fulfill all righteousness) until we are baptized.

Baptism was not John’s idea, but God’s (John 1:33). John said he was sent by God to baptize with water. Because it was of God, Jesus partook in it to fulfill all righteousness.

When Jesus was baptized, it was by immersion. The accounts of Matthew and Mark say that when Jesus was baptized He came up straightway out of the water. There are no other modes of baptism except immersion.

Jesus was about thirty years of age when He was baptized (Luke 3:21-23).

After His baptism, still in the water, Jesus prayed. When He prayed, the heaven was opened and the Spirit of God descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him. The Spirit abode upon Him. An audible voice from Heaven was heard, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.”

These signs were recognized by John, for the Lord had told him before that upon whom he saw the Spirit descending, the same is He who would baptize people with the Holy Ghost. Thus there are similarities and differences in Christ’s baptism and ours.

C. Christian Baptism.

Every believer in Jesus Christ is to follow the example of His Lord and be baptized. It was commanded in the great commission. Matthew 28:19-20, *“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”*

Peter took this very seriously, on one occasion commanding new believers to be baptized. Acts 10:48, *“And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.”*

We have already studied the baptism of John (his ministry) and the baptism of Jesus (His experience), now let us look at the other eleven historical examples of baptism.

1. The Disciples.

John 4:1-2, *“When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.)”*

Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John. Jesus did not baptize any of them but committed it to his disciples. Christ’s ministry was immediately characterized by the making of disciples and baptizing them. This is the earliest thing we know of Christ’s ministry.

2. The Day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:37-41, *“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”*

Upon receiving the word that Peter preached, 3000 converts repented and were baptized. This happened in the same day. Baptism is not a decision to make, but a command to keep!

3. The Samaritans.

The Samaritans, a mix of Jews and Syrians, were saved and baptized under the ministry of Philip the Evangelist. Acts 8:5,12, *“Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”*

They believed first the preaching of Philip, then were baptized. For the first time women are mentioned as being baptized after believing.

4. An Ethiopian.

Acts 8:35-39, *“Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”*

Note: How sad that the New International Version of the Bible deletes Acts 8:37 from its text. This replaces the doctrine of “belief regeneration” with “baptismal regeneration.”

The first completely Gentile baptism was a black man from Ethiopia. The immersion of the Ethiopian is obvious in the story, as well as the immediacy of his baptism after his belief, with no waiting period.

5. The Apostle Paul.

Acts 9:17-18, *“And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.”*

Acts 22:12-16, *“And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”*

Paul was actually saved at his baptism, but not because of his baptism. He was saved “calling on the name of the Lord” (see Romans 10:13).

Paul was not saved on the Damascus road. He was saved after Ananias came to him to help him. Ananias is a good picture of a soulwinner crossing paths with someone God is dealing with. Ananias was a disciple of Christ (Acts 9:10). This is the only case we are unsure of ordination. All other baptisms were performed by ordained ministers of the church.

6. Gentiles.

Acts 10:44-48, *“While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.”*

Note: The “Church of Christ” teaches that the Holy Ghost indwells you at baptism. This story teaches we are to be baptized after the Holy Ghost indwells us. Yes, the fullness of the Holy Ghost often comes after water baptism; but do not confuse “indwelling” with “filling”.

These Gentiles are baptized in “the name of the Lord.” Others were baptized in “the name of Jesus” (Acts 19:5). We are commanded to baptize in the “name (singular) of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,” (Matthew 28:19).

There are believers who “split hairs” over what name to baptize in. Why? They are all the same God. There is only one Lord. Rather than splitting hairs or confusing people, just baptize in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost as we are commanded. If someone baptizes in the name of the “Lord” or in the name of “Jesus,” they are not wrong.

7. Lydia and Her Household.

Acts 16:14-15, “And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.”

Lydia was the first European convert. She worshipped God, but was not saved. The Lord opened her heart to Paul’s preaching and she and her household was baptized.

Note: False teachers have used this story and the story in Acts 16:33 to open the flood gates of false doctrine about baptism.

False prophets mention Lydia’s household, the Philippian jailor’s household and Cornelius’ household (Acts 10:44-48, 11:14) as “proof” that the Bible teaches “infant baptism.” They say, “Surely there must have been babies in the households.”

How do they know? They have invent a spurious doctrine based on suppositions and assumptions. These stories (and all other scriptures!) say you must be a believer before you can be baptized. Baptism does not save, but believing on Christ does. Consider this tract printed by the Concordia Tract Mission of St. Louis, Missouri:

WARNING: THE FOLLOWING WORDS ARE FALSE DOCTRINE!

Title: Congratulations On God’s New Child By: Ray Wessler

As parents of a new baby, you receive congratulations on the new child in your home. You welcome these expressions; they deepen your joy.

But your greatest joy comes when you appreciate the privilege that God chose you to be the vessels through which He created a new child. Your baby is God’s child first of all. He has given you His child as a trust to love and train for a godly life.

“Congratulations on God’s new child!”- this is a proper greeting for every parent of a new baby. From the beginning God intended the earth and all creatures on it to serve Him. God created our first parents, Adam and Eve, in a state of holiness and perfect harmony with Himself. He also gave them the ability to have children.

From the time of Adam and Eve to our day, every human life comes into existence by divine design. Your baby was not

born by chance. You did not become its parents by an accident of circumstance. You have seen God's plan at work. Your baby is one of God's priceless treasures. He selected you to bring your child into the world. As parents you have total responsibility under God for the physical, mental, and spiritual welfare of your child.

Your baby will not be able to know God as a loving Father automatically. Sin is a problem even for your baby. But God's love is great for all His children. He so loved the world that He gave His Son Jesus Christ into death on the cross for the sins of all, also for the sins of your child. All who believe in Jesus are forgiven and restored to Him.

For your child God has provided Baptism. In Baptism the Holy Spirit works faith in the heart and gives a new birth to your baby. As your child grows, you have the Word of God to use for teaching the message of His love through Christ for all people.

Congratulations on the new child God created through your parenthood, the new child He redeemed through Jesus Christ.

Notice, not one verse of Scripture! The same tract uses the stories of Lydia, Cornelius and the Philippian jailor to justify "baby" baptism, though no babies are mentioned. In his tract entitled, "Baptism A Must," Eugene F. Klug justifies baptism for all, including infants by saying,

AGAIN, THIS IS FALSE DOCTRINE USED FOR ILLUSTRATION ONLY!

"To whom? All nations! (Matthew 28:19). Not men only, or women, or children alone—in fact Scripture never mentions either men, or women, or children specifically in connection with the command to baptize—but all nations! Everyone in the households of Lydia, Cornelius, and the jailor at Philippi! All were baptized! The promise after all, as Peter stated with eloquence in his first sermon, 'is unto you and your children,' (Acts 2:39)."

Watch out for those who add or assume things in regards to the Scriptures. Stick with what the Bible clearly says about baptism, not what religions have invented.

8. A Father and His Household.

Acts 16:30-34, "And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."

This father and all his household heard the preaching of Paul and Silas and believed on the Lord. They were baptized that day, that time and place.

9. Crispus, His Household, and Many Corinthians.

Acts 18:8, *“And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.”*

Is there a pattern to all these stories? Yes! Hearing—Believing—Baptizing. Baptism is for believers. It is “believer’s baptism,” not baby baptism!

10. John the Baptist’s Followers.

Acts 19:1-5, *“And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John’s baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”*

These had followed John the Baptist’s baptism but not his preaching. John said they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, Jesus Christ—they did not. Now Paul preaches to them and they believe. Now they are re-baptized.

If you were “baptized” before your salvation, you should be baptized again. If you were “baptized” wrong the first time, you should be baptized again, the right way.

11. Some Corinthian Converts

1 Corinthians 1:13-18, *“Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”*

Paul thought his main ministry was preaching the gospel, not baptizing. He sometimes left the baptizing to his associates. Paul would not have made such statements if baptism saves. Paul never said, “Woe unto me if I do not baptize,” but he did say, “Woe unto me if I preach not the gospel!” (1 Corinthians 9:16).

Baptism is an act of obedience to God. Water baptism is a figure

of salvation (1 Peter 3:21) representing the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. It is a way to outwardly confess our inward faith in the gospel which saves us (See 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

Modes like pouring or sprinkling cannot possibly picture Salvation and should be rejected.

This concludes every historical example of Christian baptism in the Bible. By all these scriptures, baptism is important and should be done as soon as possible for the believer in Christ.

D. The Baptism of Christ's Suffering.

This is a symbolic baptism. It simply means that Jesus would be completely immersed in sufferings around and during the time of His death. The following Scriptures mention this baptism:

Matthew 20:22-23, *"But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father."*

At the time of this word from the Lord, He was not talking about His water baptism, but His baptism of suffering and death—something He would be immersed into and endure for all of us.

Mark also records similar words in Mark 10:38-39, *"But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized."*

In Luke 12:50 He stated, *"But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"*

E. The Baptism of Our Sufferings.

By the same texts under Point 4 (Matthew 20:21-23 and Mark 10:38-39), the believer is also pictured to have to endure a life immersed in persecution and hardship.

Of the twelve original apostles, ten were martyred. John was boiled in a caldron of oil but lived and was exiled to the isle of Patmos with other common criminals. (Judas Iscariot, who was of the devil, killed himself.)

The believer should not think it strange that his or her life is immersed in hardship, difficulties, and extreme trials (1 Peter 4:12). Untold millions have been martyred for Jesus Christ and will be in the future. A baptism of suffering.

F. The Baptism With the Holy Ghost.

This is the most important of all the baptisms in the Bible. If you do not have this one baptism there is no sense in being water baptized. There is no sense in enduring the baptism of suffering. If you do not have this one, you are not saved.

This is probably why Paul wrote to the Ephesians in Ephesians 4:5, “One Lord, one faith, one baptism,”

It was prophesied that Christ would do this baptism. Consider:

Matthew 3:11, *“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.”*

Mark 1:8, *“I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.”*

Luke 3:16, *“John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”*

John 1:33, *“And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.”*

Christ did not baptize any with water (John 4:2) but baptizes all believers with the Holy Ghost. This is the “one baptism” that Jesus performs.

When was this fulfilled? Ten days before Pentecost, Jesus said, *“For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”* (Acts 1:5).

Much light is shed on this subject in the story of the Gentile Cornelius’ conversion.

Acts 11:12-18, *“And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man’s house: And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved. And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.”*

Notice how as Peter told them words whereby Cornelius and all his house could be saved, the Holy Ghost fell on them. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord that “ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.”

The baptism with the Holy Spirit happens when someone is saved. This is why it is the “one baptism” that is above all others.

1 Corinthians 12:13 says, *“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”*

We are baptized with the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ when we believe on the Lord. The baptism with the Holy Spirit places us into the body of Christ. This is what the following verses are talking about:

Romans 6:3-4, *“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.”*

Galatians 3:27, *“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”*

Colossians 2:11-13, *“In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: 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. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.”*

When we trust in Christ we are baptized (overwhelmed) with the Holy Spirit as He is given to us by Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is sent upon us and in us. Romans 8:9-11, *“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”*

Note: There is no such thing in the Bible as the baptism **of** the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost does not baptize anyone in any way, shape or form. Jesus baptizes us with the Holy Spirit. Beware of many that are teaching a “baptism of the Holy Ghost.” The phrase “baptism of the Holy Ghost” never appears in the Bible.

G. The Baptism unto Moses (an Old Testament type).

1 Corinthians 10:1-4, *“Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.”*

This is the only mention of this baptism. Metaphorically it is an Old Testament picture of Israel being baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. There is some speculation as to what this exactly means. Most would humbly admit that they are not sure. As so many types (pictures) in the Old Testament point forward to Christ, this would seem to fit into the teaching of Christian baptism.

You can read this story in Exodus 11-14. The Israelites had been delivered by the shedding of the blood of the passover lamb, the application of that blood and the partaking of the lamb. After their deliverance, they were baptized in the sea.

Christ is our passover (1 Corinthians 5:7). We are delivered through Him and then baptized.

H. The Baptism with Fire.

John the Baptist did mention that Jesus would baptize some with fire. This is another type (illustration) of baptism. We find this mentioned and explained in:

Matthew 3:11-12, *“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”*

Luke 3:16-17, *“John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.”*

This is a baptism of all lost souls in an eternal Lake of Fire for their sins.

I. The Baptism For the Dead—a false doctrine.

Before ending our study on the “Doctrine of Baptisms” there is a perversion of baptism mentioned in the Bible. It is called being “baptized for the dead” in 1 Corinthians 15:29. Let’s read the verse: *“Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?”*

This doctrine was already skewed In Paul’s day. A false baptism had been introduced where people could get baptized for their dead relatives.

In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul is arguing with some of these people regarding the resurrection. Some in his day denied that there was a resurrection. In his argument for the resurrection of the dead he said to these unbelievers, “Why then do you baptize for the dead if the dead rise not.” Paul was not teaching the baptism for the dead, he was just using one of their false doctrines against them.

Unfortunately, false religions like the Mormons and others have lifted I Corinthians 15:29 out of context and now teach the baptism for the dead as a doctrine. They get many to join their religion with the promise of getting relatives into Heaven. Who wouldn’t want to do something for departed loved ones if they could? But they cannot!

Beware of false doctrine regarding baptism: baptism for the dead, pouring, sprinkling, infant baptism, etc.

III. Conclusion

Baptism does not save from hell and sin. That is only accomplished by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. Romans 10:13, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." If you have never accepted Christ, why not do so now?

Baptism is a command to keep. Acts 10:48, "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." If you have been saved, but never baptized, you need to do so immediately! It is the first step of obedience in the believer's walk.

“Study to shew thyself approved
unto God, a workman that
needeth not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing the word of truth.”

2 Timothy 2:15
