

Bible Study and Notes

LIMITED ONLY BY IMAGINATION

(LESSON 19)

Bible Study

1. What will “saved people” do when they believe? **Mark 16:15-16**
2. How many ways are acceptable? **Ephesians 4:4-5**
3. What does the act reenact? **Romans 6:3-6**
4. Why was John the Baptist in a river? **John 3:23**
5. What religious practice should be performed on infants? **Luke 2:22, 27-28**
6. When people are physically unable to be baptized, whose baptism takes their place? **Matthew 3:13-17**
7. What are we commanded to do? **1 John 2:29**
8. After Philip taught the Eunuch, what did they both go down into? **Acts 8:35-38**
9. What human relationship does God compare the commitment of coming to Christ? **2 Corinthians 11:2**
10. When people are baptized, what are they to bring forth? **Matthew 3:6-9**

What Positive Message Does the Third Angel Pronounce?

Revelation 14:12 states, “*Here is the patience of the saints: here [are] they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.*” The positive message is the fact that God still has saints living up to and

including the time of the second coming (Revelation 14:14).

What is the reaction of a saint when they come to the gospel? Matthew 28:18-20 tells us, "*And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 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.*" Jesus' departing words were a command to go forth and teach all nations. And just as we will read in Mark, if they believe they are to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Is baptism a required reaction of the saints? Mark 16:15-16 says, "*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*" They not only believe but are baptized. But did you also notice that to be saved there are two requirements. First, one must believe the gospel, that is, the teachings of Jesus Christ, which is salvation by grace and obedience to His Word. Second, one must be baptized to be saved.

How Many Ways Are Acceptable?

In today's Christian world, there are many different methods of being baptized. And the way to be baptized is limited only by the

imagination. There is: sprinkling, single immersion, triple immersion, rose pedals, snow, a glass of water, group baptism, just being willing, fire, proxy, etc. This should raise a red flag.

Is any form of baptism acceptable or is a specific method a reenactment of something important? Ephesians 4:4-5 states, "*[There is] one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism.*" Clearly God says there is only one acceptable method. As usual, what God has, Satan has a counterfeit. In this case, Satan has many.

What Is the Correct Method of Baptism?

Romans 6:3-6 says, "*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: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with [him], that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*" Jesus died once, was buried once, and rose from the dead once. That means the method of baptism is that of single immersion. No other method reenacts the death, burial, and resurrection as does single immersion. Further, by following in Jesus'

footsteps we see the seriousness in dying to sin and being born again. It is more than just an emotional thing or just another ceremony. It is a serious commitment to serve God and not sin.

According to *Webster's Dictionary*, BAPTIZE means to *immerse (an individual) in water, to dip under, to cleanse or wash away*. Since our whole body has at one point or another sinned, our whole body needs to be cleansed.

In the Greek, BAPTIZO means *all of it is dipped*. In fact, this is where we get the word BAPTIZE from. When the Greeks made garments, it came out dull and dingy looking, so they dipped them in dyes and made them brighter. Years later, when people saw John dipping people under the water, they called it BAPTIZO.

Paul affirms the words recorded in Romans by saying in 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.*" Again, to be buried with Jesus in baptism is that of single immersion. Since Jesus was buried once and rose once, we too are immersed only once.

The understanding of being buried in the water is best illustrated in the following example. A father and son had a debate. When the son came home one day from a Baptist school after learning about the Biblical method of baptism, he proceeded to tell his father who believed in sprinkling, said that sprinkling was not good enough, and that he needed to be buried in the water. The father, as most

conversations go, said, "You were sprinkled as a baby. That's good enough. Subject closed." They then went to do the family chores. Living on a farm and raising chickens, a practical lesson was soon to be revealed. They went to feed the chickens when the father noticed one had died. He turned to his son and asked him to go bury it behind the barn. Being a good boy, he said, "Sure. I'll do that," and went on his way. He put the shovel into the ground and got a scoop of dirt and then thought for a moment. He then proceeded to sprinkle a little dirt over the chicken and returned to his other chores. The father seeing him back at his chores so quickly went and checked on his son's handy work when he found the chicken lying on the ground with some dirt sprinkled on it. The father immediately went to his son and said, "Son, I thought I told you to bury that chicken?" The son looked up at his dad in all honesty and said, "I did Dad. I did it your way."

Why was John baptizing in the river? John 3:23 says, "*And John also was baptizing in AEnon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.*" The Bible method of baptism requires much water.

The understanding of needing much water is illustrated in the following example. A minister who stumbled across a tribal group began to teach them English and then eventually the Bible. Shortly thereafter, the minister was called home for a couple months and placed the chief in charge of the studies. When the minister returned, the chief said that they were

studying baptism and he would like to be baptized and then the whole tribe. The minister was so excited so he told the chief that the ceremony would be that night. They gathered together at their usual spot. The minister opened the Bible and placed a cup of holy water on the podium. Of course, this minister did not believe in the method taught in the Bible. As the minister continued with his sermon, he noticed the appearance of the chief began to change. The chief looked at the minister and then at the cup of water and started to frown. He looked at the minister and then at the water again and frowned some more. The minister thought, I better cut the sermon short and get this guy baptized before he changes his mind. So, the minister stated, "It's now time for the baptism." The chief immediately stood up and said, "No! No baptism." The minister asked, "Why? What's the matter?" The chief replied, "Chief too big! Cup too small!" The chief had his theology straight. Amen?

Again, the reason for total submersion is that our whole body needs cleansed from sin. This is brought out in Acts 22:16, which says, "*And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*"

Another reason for total submersion is revealed in Galatians 3:27, "*For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*" Christians want Christ throughout their whole body.

How Did the Other Methods Come About?

Baptism by immersion was practiced until 1311 when the Catholic Council known as Revanna changed it from immersion to sprinkling. The reason is because the clothing that the priests and cardinals were wearing was becoming so elaborate that it was too cumbersome to remove them for the ceremony.

During a live presentation, a photograph of a Catholic Church is usually shown. The church is located at the base of the tower of Pisa. Inside this church is a baptistery showing that at one time, the Catholic Church did practice proper baptism.

Related to this, another false teaching that arose in the 1200's. A plague was killing people by the hundreds including children. The church then proclaimed that if an infant were to die without being baptized, they would end up in limbo for eternity. Without the scriptures, since they were banned in 1229, people simply feared for their children's future life. Since immersion of a baby was not practical, other methods were introduced.

At What Age Should One Be Baptized?

Matthew 28:18-20 tells us, "*And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 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 alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.” At an age when a person can be taught.

Acts 2:37-38 states, “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.” At an age when one can repent, and a person can only repent if they know what sin is, which “is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4).

Acts 8:12 tells us, “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.” One must be at an age when they can make up their own mind on what they believe.

Acts 18:8 says, “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.” Again, one must be able to believe.

James 4:17 tells us, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth [it] not, to him it is sin.” A person must be able to clearly distinguish between good and evil.

What can be done for infants? Luke 2:22, 27-28 states, “And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they

brought him to Jerusalem, to present [him] to the Lord; And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God.” Just as Jesus was dedicated when He was an infant, so we should dedicate our children as well.

Can one be rebaptized? According to Acts 19:1-5, we are told, “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.” Just as we have people that like to restate their marriage vows because they have grown so much more in the marriage relationship, so it is with Jesus. When we accept Christ and become born again, we still have a lot of growing to do. And when we reach a point in our lives where we feel we have just grown so much and God has revealed an overwhelming amount of light, we may want to seal it by being baptized again. God permits this rededication of our lives. This does not make our first baptism any less

important.

Further, if we have had a baptismal experience contrary to the one and only one method God specifies then we should seriously consider being re-committed to Him properly. It is similar to those that run off to the Justice of the Peace. It may satisfy the legal requirements, but what about the spiritual one?

Why Was Jesus Baptized?

Matthew 3:13-17 says, “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.” First, He showed the right way to be baptized, and are we to do what is right? 1 John 2:29 says, “If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.” The answer is “Yes”, we are. Further, are we suppose to walk like Christ? Colossians 2:6 says, “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, [so] walk ye in him.” Again, yes, we are.

The second reason why Jesus was baptized was because He

was to be the fulfillment. What does that mean? Luke 23:39-43 states, *“And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee To day, shalt thou be with me in paradise.”* Now how could the thief be saved as Jesus stated here when one also must be baptized? That is because Jesus’ baptism covered the lack of baptism for the thief. Likewise, when a person accepts Jesus and is unable to be baptized for reasons beyond their control, Jesus’ baptism will cover their lack of baptism. However, His baptism does not remove everyone’s obligation to be baptized.

Did the Early Church Continue Baptism By Immersion?

Acts 8:26 says, *“And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.”* How many of us would just follow the command of God without question? That is total faith. How many of us would have asked, why the desert? How many of us today ask questions when God commands us to do something? Their lives are in perfect order

as far as they can see. So, they cheat a little on their income tax. What is the big deal? They have not gotten caught, in fact, they think it is fool proof. Why not continue with this small offense? Just because God said not to, is that a reason to stop? God commands that we do not commit adultery, which includes pre-marital activity? But what do people do? They ask why. Why, when the other is consenting to a one-night stand? Why, when they have not gotten a disease? Why, when they are not pregnant or have not gotten someone pregnant? God commands us to keep Holy the seventh day Sabbath. Why, when the rest of the Christian world goes to church on Sunday? Why, do I need to rest from my work and not have others work for me? It should simply be enough that “God said so.” Amen?

Acts 8:27-28 says, *“And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.”* There is Philip wondering why God sent him out here in the first place, and for entertainment, he thought he would just watch this chariot. But notice what happens next. Acts 8:29 says, *“Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.”* God hits Philip with the Spirit, like getting a jab. Philip is probably putting two and two together and thinking that this was the reason for coming to the desert. This illustrates that the primary purpose of being filled

with the Spirit is to be used by the Spirit to reach others. Now, Acts 8:30 tells us, *“And Philip ran thither to [him], and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?”* Notice that Philip does not ask why once again. He just does it. Acts 8:31-34 goes on to say, *“And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?”* Now, I just love how God works. A Christian does not believe in coincidences. The timeliness for Philip to arrive is remarkable. There are 66 chapters in the book of Isaiah. The possibility of receiving a lead-in verse to explain the Saviour is not by chance. Just like for yourself, it is not just by chance that you attended a seminar or studied these notes that contain hundreds and hundreds of verses on any given Bible subject. God has purposed it for one reason. His words are never to be dismissed rather proven.

1 Thessalonians 5:21 states, *“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”* To not prove what is read is to reject God’s light. He provides the information to strengthen our faith. When the material is proved to be in error using the

Bible and the Bible alone, then it can be rejected, and we have grown in intelligence. But if it cannot be proven wrong, then He invites us to believe and follow.

Acts 8:35-38 continues on with stating, *“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.”* Clearly in the early church when one believed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who, in the flesh, died for us, then baptism by immersion was practiced.

What Is Significant About Baptism?

Matthew 3:6-9 says, *“And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. 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? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to [our] father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.”* Baptism is not

just a required act. The act is worthless unless there is a heart conversion – even if you were born into a Christian home. And remember, sin is defined by the Bible as *“the transgression of the law”* (1 John 3:4). So, when a person is baptized, that person is declaring that He wants to be a commandment keeping person and by the grace of God, he can be.

Jesus brings this out in John 3:1-7, which says, *“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and [of] the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”*

It is like a husband and wife. To be able to morally spend the rest of their lives together, one must go through a wedding ceremony, that is, to become married. So, it is with Jesus. To live together through all eternity with Him, one must become married. The marriage ceremony is that of baptism, which is an outward sign to the

whole world, that you publicly want to spend the rest of your life espoused to Jesus. Prior to being married, a single person only needs to take care of themselves. They are free to come and go as they please and eat whatever and whenever they feel like it. Now however, a married person needs to be considerate of the spouse. In fact, in marriage, one usually tries to do their best to please the other, not to stay married but because they are married. So, it is with Jesus. When we become married to Him through baptism, there should be a noticeable difference. We should no longer be walking after our own desires, rather after those things that please God, not to be saved but because we are saved.

How close of a relationship with Christ is developed through baptism? Galatians 3:27 says, *“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”* We will want to walk, talk, and act as Jesus.

How does God view the relationship? 2 Corinthians 11:2 says, *“For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present [you as] a chaste virgin to Christ.”* When we do not act as Jesus would have us, we are then putting on Satan and actually committing spiritual adultery against God.

By the way, is one perfect in a marriage relationship? People make mistakes and spouses make mistakes. Further, the person that wants to get married was making mistakes before they got married. They spouse was making mistakes as well. People do not wait until both are perfect before getting married. In

fact, if people did, people would remain single. The great thing about marriage is that the mistakes occur less and less often. So, it is with Jesus. Do not wait to become perfect before you decide to be married in baptism. After you are baptized, you will continue to grow in

Christ and grow away from the mistakes. But there needs to be a commitment. Just as people have to stop dating others outside of their spouse, so people must stop willfully serving sin.

Will you make that decision?
Will you say, "Yes Jesus. I want

to be married to You and be espoused to You and You alone"?

May God show forth His love upon your heart that you cannot stop thinking about being with Him throughout all eternity. May you choose to marry Him and live eternally.