



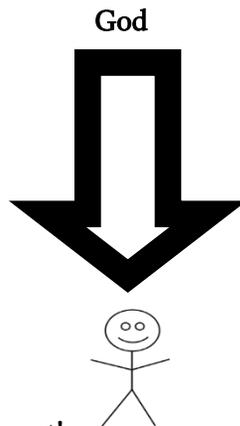
Lesson Five:

God Washes...We are Cleansed

Christian baptism is _____. Jesus ties baptism into salvation. Most Christians today would agree that it is important. Many Christians, however do not agree on what it is.

What is it?

Human work?
Divine washing?



It is a divine _____ and _____ act!

Note: A sacrament is not the same as a _____. The word “sacrament” was used by early church leaders to describe the sacred acts instituted by Christ, connected with an earthly element, taught by the Apostles, and proclaimed by the early church that offer people forgiveness of sins, new life, and salvation in Christ. The two sacred acts are _____ and the Lord’s _____.

The Argument from the Human Work Side:

Those who define it as a human work try to use Scripture and reason.

Examples?

The Divine Washing Side:

Those who see it as a divine washing use _____ alone as proof.

So, what does the Bible say?

Βαπτίζω (Baptizo): to wash or cleanse with water

Λουτρόν ὕδωρ (Lootron hydro): washing with water

Note: there are a variety of ways to wash with water. The Bible doesn’t favor one over the other.

Βαπτίζω

¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20, NIV)

Βαπτίζω (To baptize) is used in Scripture in both the **active voice** and **passive voice**.

Jesus uses His church (us) in evangelizing (bringing the Gospel to) the _____ (all nations) and thus furthering His Kingdom. We are to reach the lost by means of God’s Word (teaching) and Christian Baptism (a cleansing with water in the name of God the _____, _____, and _____).

“Baptism is not just plain water, but it is water used by God’s command and connected with God’s Word.” (Martin Luther in the Small Catechism)

Passive Voice: The Bible uses the passive voice for the _____ of Christian Baptism.

³⁸ Peter replied, “Repent and **be baptized**, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” (Acts 2:38)

Λουτρόν ὕδωρ

*“Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, **cleansing** her by the **washing with water through the word.**”* Ephesians 5:25,26

→ Jesus cleanses his church through “the washing with water through the word” or _____.

Further Biblical Points:

God associates Christian Baptism with salvation and Jesus _____ and resurrection.

Titus 3:5 He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 3:20-21 God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, 21 and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ

Romans 6:3-4 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Conclusion: We are not saved by our works (human works) but by God's work. Baptism saves because it is God's work (not ours) and because God uses it to connect us to Jesus's death and resurrection.

For whom is Christian Baptism?

Jesus said, "Go and make disciples of all nations..." (Matthew 28:19)

Is anyone excluded?

Baptism is for all _____.

Psalm 51:5 "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."

Psalm 58:3 "Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies."

John 3:3-6 ³Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.^[a]"

⁴ “How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!”

⁵ Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit^[b] gives birth to spirit.

Baptism is for _____ who need a second birth which includes children

What about the objection that there are no examples of children being baptized in Scripture?

Answer:

What about the objection that baptism is only for those who are old enough to believe?

Answer:

Matthew 18:5-6 *And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.*

Luke 18:15-17 *People were also bringing babies to Jesus to have him touch them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. ¹⁶ But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁷ I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."*

Luke 1:39-44 *At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, ⁴⁰ where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² In a loud voice she exclaimed: "...As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.*

Extra- Biblical proofs

- Catacomb graveyards

➤ Early Church Fathers

"The Church received from the apostles the tradition of giving baptism even to infants. The apostles, to whom were committed the secrets of the divine sacraments, knew there are in everyone innate strains of [original] sin, which must be washed away through water and the Spirit"

– Origen (*Commentaries on Romans* [A.D. 248]).

"Baptize first the children, and if they can speak for themselves let them do so. Otherwise, let their parents or other relatives speak for them"

– Hippolytus (*The Apostolic Tradition* 21:16 [A.D. 215]).

"As to what pertains to the case of infants: You [Fidus] said that they ought not to be baptized within the second or third day after their birth, that the old law of circumcision must be taken into consideration, and that you did not think that one should be baptized and sanctified within the eighth day after his birth. In our council it seemed to us far otherwise. No one agreed to the course which you thought should be taken. Rather, we all judge that the mercy and grace of God ought to be denied to no man born"

– Cyprian of Carthage (*Letters* 64:2 [A.D. 253]).

"Do you have an infant child? Allow sin no opportunity; rather, let the infant be sanctified from childhood. From his most tender age let him be consecrated by the Spirit."

- Gregory of Nazianzus (*Oration on Holy Baptism* 40:7 [A.D. 388]).

"You see how many are the benefits of baptism, and some think its heavenly grace consists only in the remission of sins, but we have enumerated ten honors [it bestows]! For this reason we baptize even infants, though they are not defiled by [personal] sins, so that there may be given to them holiness, righteousness, adoption, inheritance, brotherhood with Christ, and that they may be his [Christ's] members"

– John Chrysostom (*Baptismal Catechesis* [A.D. 388]).

"The custom of Mother Church in baptizing infants is certainly not to be scorned, nor is it to be regarded in any way as superfluous, nor is it to be believed that its tradition is anything except apostolic"

– St. Augustine (*The Literal Interpretation of Genesis*[A.D. 408]).

Related Topics

A. Is Baptism necessary for salvation?

Mark 16:16 *“Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”*

- A Christian does not have to be baptized to go to heaven, but a Christian will _____ to be baptized if they haven't been already.

B. Can or should I be re-baptized?

Answer: Re-baptism is not necessary as long as the original baptism was a valid one.

C. Who can baptize others and isn't a Baptism done in a church by a pastor or priest more special and official than otherwise?

Answer: Any Christian can baptize, no and no! The “special” part of Baptism comes from the Holy Spirit and his promises.

D. Is baptism basically a "Get out of Hell Free" card?

Answer: No. A person can neglect their gift of faith and fall away back into unbelief.

1 Corinthians 10:12 *So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!*

E. Godparents/Sponsors/Witnesses

Answer: The practice of having “Godparents” or “Sponsors” at a child’s baptism is a church custom. It is nowhere commanded in Scripture

F. “I was Baptized Roman Catholic.” What does that mean?

Answer: No one Christian church has a monopoly on God’s family. People are never baptized into a denomination but rather, into God’s saved family

***Ephesians 4:4-6** “There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to one hope when you were called – one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”*
