

Series: Baptism – What Does the Bible Really Teach?

Tonight’s Lesson: “What is the Meaning and Purpose of Baptism for Today?”

Water baptism is an _____ identification.

1. As we study the Scriptures, we see the issue of identification constantly associated with baptism. Here are a few examples:
 - 1 Corinthians 10:2 – When Israel was baptized unto _____, they were identifying themselves with Moses and his message of deliverance.
 - Mark 1:4-5 – When Israel was baptized by John, they were identifying themselves with John and his message of _____.
 - Luke 3:21 – When Christ was baptized, He was identifying Himself with the _____ remnant of Israel and separating Himself from unbelieving and apostate Israel.
 - Acts 2:38-41 – When Israel was baptized, they were identifying themselves with Peter’s message that Christ was the _____ Messiah and they needed to repent.
 - Acts 18:8 – When Jewish and Gentile Corinthians were baptized, they were identifying themselves with Paul’s gospel of _____ and separating from their previous belief system (whether it was Judaism or paganism).
2. The believer must understand that today it is _____ baptism that identifies the believer eternally with Christ and His body. Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 4:4-5.

Water baptism is an external _____ to others.

1. Matthew 3:6-7 – When these Jews were baptized by John, it was a testimony that they no longer aligned themselves with the religious _____ of Israel.
2. Luke 7:29-30 – The publicans were baptized as a testimony that they believed the message of John and Jesus.

3. Acts 8:36-38 – The Ethiopian man’s baptism was a testimony to _____ that he believed Philip’s message concerning Christ.
4. Acts 10:44-48 – Baptism was a testimony that Cornelius and those with him had received the Holy Spirit.
5. Acts 16:14-15 – Lydia’s baptism was a testimony that she believed _____ message.
6. Baptism is simply an external testimony of your _____ in Christ and your separation from any previous _____ system you might have held.

Baptism is a matter of personal _____.

1. Baptism was an absolute requirement under Israel’s program, but we do _____ see Paul teaching or exercising baptism as a legalistic requirement for Gentiles.
2. Paul does not _____ it, nor does he _____ it.
3. Paul makes it clear that there is only _____ baptism that can place you in the body of Christ and that is Holy Spirit baptism (Ephesians 4:4-6). But Paul never establishes a legalistic command forbidding _____ baptism.

In Conclusion:

1. If you desire water baptism, here are some questions to ask:
 - Am I doing this in an effort to please God and get Him to bless me?
_____ reason.
 - Am I doing this as a religious ritual, as a means of attaining God’s grace?
_____ reason.
 - Am I doing this to please and appease other believers?
_____ reason.
 - Am I doing this to identify myself externally with Christ (realizing I am already identified eternally with Christ) and thereby open up doors to share the gospel and my new faith with others? The _____ reason!
2. The first three motives result in nothing but a _____ religious work. The last motive results in a demonstration of God’s _____ to others.