



All Christians' Fellowship International

P.O. Box 1193 * Frederick, MD 21702 USA * Phone (301) 695-4328 * Fax (301) 591-4013

Water Baptism Preparatory Lessons – (From age 12 to 100+)

Dear brethren,

In response to your recent commitment to follow our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by fellowshipping in our midst, we encourage you to join us in a study and overview of the Bible taught at All Christians Fellowship. Our desire for you is that which was written by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Colossians which reads "...And now just as you trusted Christ to save you, trust Him, too, for each day's problems; live in vital union with Him. Let your roots grow down into Him and draw up nourishment from Him. See that you go on growing in the Lord and become strong and vigorous in the truth you were taught. Let your lives overflow with joy and thanksgiving for all He has done."

To further your growth in the Lord, we would like to invite you to follow this "foundation class" with the supervision of an appointed teacher. The Foundation class is structured around a 15-week format covering topics including the following:

- What is Christianity?
- Sin
- Repentance
- Forgiveness
- Regeneration or Being Born Again
- Temptation
- Denying Ungodliness
- Quiet Time
- Fasting
- Water baptism
- Spiritual Maturity

We have chosen to use this 'teacher-student' setting to maximize learning and to provide opportunities for those "pressing" questions to be asked and answered. However, you are expected to read through each one of the lessons prior to meeting with your teacher.

May God richly bless you and keep you as you grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Note: To ensure that each topic is well understood, you may not need to complete the entire study in just one meeting. However, the teachers should make effort to take their students through all the recommended topics and scriptures therein in about three months.

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LESSON 1 What is Christianity?

TEXT: I John 3:1-10

INTRODUCTION: The word "Christian" was first used in the book of Acts 11:26. The truth is that there is only one kind of Christian "the born again" those who have witnessed a transformation of life, not facial Christianity but the renewal of the inner man.

In another word, a Christian is a follower/believer of Jesus Christ, a life of victory over sin which comes as a result of the forgiveness of sin and regeneration of the heart through the blood of Jesus Christ. Christianity is: -

1. It is practical - I Peter 2:12; Mark 16:17-20.
2. It is discipline - I Corinthians 6:12-13; 9:26-27.
3. Personal, individualized, and unique - Rev. 22:12; Ezekiel 18:20-24.
4. Confession of faith - Luke 12:8; Jeremiah 17:10.
5. Transition and adoption - II Cor. 5:17; John 1:12; Romans 8:16-17.
6. Humility - I Peter 5:5-6; Isaiah 57:15.
7. Heavenly controlled life - Romans 8:8-9, 14.
8. Step to perfection - Philippians 3:12-14.
9. Complete trust and dependability upon God - Psalm 125:1; Matt. 27:43.
10. Understanding of the past, present, and the future - I Cor. 2:9-12, 14; Deut. 29:29.
11. It is authority over demons and circumstances - Mk 16:17-20; Rom 8:15-16.
12. Post Pentecostal experience - Zechariah 4:6; Romans 8:9.
13. Continuous Spiritual growth and progress based on witnessing - I Pt. 2:2; Hb. 5:12.
14. It is compassion - I Peter 3:8.
15. It is planting and reaping - II Corinthians 9:6-8; Galatians 6:7.

Conclusion:

If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left (Hebrews 10:26).

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LESSON 2: Sin

TEXT: Genesis 3:1-24; I John 1:8-10

MEMORY VERSE: For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous (Romans 5:19).

INTRODUCTION: Sin is called by different names today - a mistake, human weaknesses, shortcomings, etc., no matter what names you call it, it does not change what God calls it.

QUESTIONS

- A. What is sin?
 - i. Transgression - is the breaking of the law of God, so if you break or have broken any of the laws of God, you are a sinner - (I John 3:4-6; Rm 2:23; James 2:10-12).
 - ii. Iniquity - is an act that is inherently wrong though the law of a land may legalize it.
e.g., homosexuality, abortion, etc. (Romans 1:21-23; Ephesians 4:17-20).
 - iii. Trespasses - is doing your will instead of the will of God - (Eph 2:1; Mat 6:10, 14).
 - iv. Faithlessness - Doubting the word of God is sin; appearing to obey the word of God openly and breaking it secretly is sin - (Romans 14:23; I John 3:20-21).
 - v. Knowing the right thing but doing the wrong thing is a sin - the good e. g. evangelism, love for brethren, paying your tithe and offering, punctuality to Church etc. (James 4:17; I John 3:17-18).

B. LISTS OF SIN AND THE PUNISHMENT - (I Corinthians 6:9-10; Romans 1:28-31; I Timothy 1:9-11; Colossians 3:5-8; Galatians 5:19-21; Mark 7:20-23). Are you delivered from this sin?

HOW TO BE FREE FROM SIN

- i. Confession and Repentance - (Romans 10:9-11, Acts 17:30).
- ii. Being washed in the blood of Jesus (Matthew 26:28; I John 1:7).

Conclusion - If Jesus shall make you free from sin you shall be free indeed. Meditate on Proverbs 14:9; Jeremiah 5:25.

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LESSON 3: Repentance

TEXT: Jonah 3:1-10; Matthew 21:28-32

MEMORY VERSE: In the past, God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. (Acts 17:30).

INTRODUCTION: Last week we studied sin, it is not enough to know what sin is but there must be a total turning away from it and an inward hatred developed towards it. This attitude will bring a new life and a new relationship with God.

Discuss the following

WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

A change of mind toward sin (Ezekiel 18:31; Acts 3:19). Turning away totally from sin means Repentance. Turning to God whole-heartedly (Hosea 14:2; Joel 2:12). If the heart must be free from sin, it must be totally turned to God for habitation and control. A turning from doing your will to doing the will of God (Isaiah 55:7; Ezekiel 18:31). As we turn to the Lord, we must give ourselves to doing His will.

STEPS IN REPENTANCE: - Hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:14, 17; Psalm 119:130) - God's word throws light into the past and present life of sin; creates faith in the heart. Being convicted of evil doing (Jonah 3:6-9; II Corinthians 7:10). A confession and forsaking of the sins (Proverbs 28:13). Childlike faith in the Word (Acts 2:41-42).

C. THE RESULTS OF REPENTANCE: - Forgiveness of sins (II Chronicles 7:14; Isaiah 55:7).

A new relationship establishes with God (II Corinthians. 6:17-18). Entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 5:3; John 3:3).

NECESSITY OF REPENTANCE

For salvation - Luke 13:3. / The Kingdom of God is at hand - Matt.4:17; Matt.3:2. In order to be baptized - Acts 2:38. / In order to receive God's blessing - Jr. 5:25; 18:8-10.

WHAT DOES GOD WANT US TO REPENT FROM?

The sinful nature (Romans 8:5-8; Isaiah 55:7-8). Disobedience to Word of God - Jeremiah 26:4-5

DIMENSIONS OF REPENTANCE - The inward change. Eve's thought was translated into disobedience - Genesis 3:1-6. Every imagination of man's heart was evil, and it led to wickedness and violence - Gen. 6:9, 11-12. The heart brings forth evil thoughts that lead to murder, adultery, thefts etc. - Matt 10:19; Mark 7:21-23. Every imagination must be cast down - Acts 8:14-23; II Cor 10:5-6
Outward manifestations: - Brings forth fruits - Matthew 3:8; Acts 19:18.

BEWARE OF FALSE REPENTANCE.

Pharaoh of Egypt - Exodus 9:27-28 was Pharaoh's repentance genuine?

King Ahab (I Kgs 21:21-28). What was his reaction, and did he bring forth fruit into repentance? I Kgs 22:27, 37.

QUESTIONS

- i. What fruits meet for repentance have we borne?
- ii. Do we still harbour any thought contrary to God's word?



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LESSON 4: Forgiveness

TEXT: Luke 15:17-24; I John 1:5-9

M.VERSE: If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (I John 1:9).

INTRODUCTION: Last week we learned about repentance, this week we want to learn about forgiveness which is the outcome of genuine repentance.

DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING

WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

Remission of sin - (Hebrew 9:22; Matthew 26:28).

Forgiveness or remission of sin means deliverance from sin and penalty of sin. It also involves the removal of the cause of offense (Colossians 2:13-14; Ephesians 2:15-16).

Overlooking the time of ignorance (Psalm 103:12-13) - forgiveness involves God overlooking the past life of a sinner, casting all his/her sins into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19), and as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us (Psalm 103:12). He forgives all sins (103:3).

GROUND FOR FORGIVENESS: - (Matthew 26:28; Ephesians 1:7).

i. The blood of Jesus Christ - is God's ground for forgiving sinners all their sins.

Divine justice demands the shedding of blood before sin can be forgiven (Hebrew 9:22). Jesus shed His blood to meet this divine demand (Matthew 26:8).

All can freely come to God through Him for forgiveness
(Acts 5:31).

THE JOY OF FORGIVENESS

i. Salvation from the wrath to come (Romans 5:9; John 3:36).

ii. Old things pass away, all things become new (II Corinthians 5:17-21; Colossians 2:13-14).

iii. Full reconciliation with God and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (Colossians 1:20; Ephesians 1:3).

QUESTIONS

i. How can we stay away completely from sin?

ii. If God can overlook all our past doings, can we do the same to our friends/neighbours?

iii. What is the significance of Psalm 32:1.

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LESSON 5: Regeneration or Being Born Again
TEXT: John 3:1-8; II Corinthians 5:17-21

INTRODUCTION: This is a very vital issue in Christianity, but ironically very few Churches emphasize it.

To be a Christian is to be Christ-like in conduct and this could be possible only and only if one is born again.

DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING

WHAT IS THE REGENERATION OR BEING BORN AGAIN?

It is a divine act that imparts to the penitent believer the new and higher life in personal union with Christ (John 1:13; 3:6; II Corinthians 5:17-16).

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF REGENERATION

i. A Birth: born of God (I John 5:1, 4-5), born of the Spirit (John 3:6-8), born of a new heart and a new spirit (Ezekiel 36:26-27).

ii. A Cleansing (Titus 3:5-6; Ezekiel 36:25; Ephesians 5:25-26) - God regenerates us by washing (literal bath of regeneration).

The soul is completely bathed from the defilement of the old life and made to live in the newness of life.

iii. A Quickening - (Titus 3:5; John 5:21; 6:63; Ephesians 2:1, 5) - Regeneration is the impartation of new life by God the Father, mediated through God the Son and by the operation of the Holy Spirit.

iv. A New Creation (II Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:10; Genesis 2:7). He who created man in the beginning and breathed into his nostril the breath of life regenerates him by His Holy Spirit.

THE EFFECT OF REGENERATION:

i. Positional effect (Adoption) - (John 1:12-13; Galatians 4:5-7; Romans 8:15).

When a person has undergone the spiritual change known as regeneration, he becomes a child of God and beneficiary of all the privileges of that sonship.

ii. Spiritual effect (Union with God) - (II Corinthians 6:16-18; Galatians 2:20; 4:5-6; I John 3:24). Because of its very nature re-generation involves spiritual union with God and with Christ through the Holy Spirit, and this union involves a divine indwelling. The union results in a new type of life and character, described in various ways - Newness of life (Romans 6:4); A New Heart (Ezekiel 36:26); A New Spirit (Ezekiel 11:19); The New Man (Ephesians 4:24); Partaker of the Divine Nature (II Peter 1:4).

iii. Practical effect (Righteous Living). The person born of God will demonstrate that fact by his/her hatred of sin (I John 3:9; 5:18); Righteous Deeds (I John 2:29); Brotherly Love (I John 4:7) and Victory over the world (I John 5:4).

WHY REGENERATION? (John 3:6; II Corinthians 5:17).

Flesh and spirit belong to different realms, and one cannot produce the other. Human nature can generate human nature but only the Holy Spirit can generate the spiritual nature. To live the life of God, one must be born of God through regeneration of the Spirit (Romans 8:5-9).

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LESSON 6: Temptation

TEXT: Hebrew 11:36-39; II Corinthians 1:7-10

M. VERSE: (II Timothy 2:18).

INTRODUCTION:

Temptation is an act of being tried to do certain things which can cause you to regret. It may even lead to misery in life. Abraham's faith was tried in Genesis 22:2 and that is why we want to study temptation in the light of "Suffering for Faith".

SUFFERING FOR FAITH

A Christian should suffer for the name of the Lord and not for sin (I Peter 2:20; Matthew 5:11) or busy body in other people's matter (II Thess. 3:11; I Timothy 5:13). Suffering therefore is not always because of sinful life.

- i. The Lord Jesus suffered for righteousness' sake (Hebrew 2:10; 13:12).
- ii. The Prophets suffered (James 5:10).
- iii. Other believers also suffered and even refused deliverance (Hebrew 11:36-39): Moses willingly chose "to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season (11:24-25).

It is part of our calling (Philippians 1:29).

WHAT SHOULD BE THE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS SUFFERING?

- i. Rejoicing that they are counted worthy to suffer shame for His name (Acts 5:41; Matthew 5:11-12).
- ii. Take it patiently (I Peter 2:20; James 5:7-8).
- iii. Sanctify (PRAISE) the Lord in your heart (I Peter 3:14-18).

THE REWARD OF SUFFERING FOR CHRIST: -

Christian suffering is called "light affliction" when compared with the great reward of enduring it.

- i. It leads to the formation of the life of Christ in believers (II Corinthians 4:11; 12:10).
- ii. It leads to perfection, establishment, strength, and settlement in the Lord (I Pt 5:10).
- iii. Eternal Glory (I Peter 5:10; Romans 8:18; II Corinthians 4:17).

Whatever persecution you may be going through for the TRUTH'S sake, remember that they are just "light affliction", endure them to the end, the rewards are sure and great (Revelation 22:12).

SOURCES OF TEMPTATION (Lust manifests itself in various ways):

DESIRES OF THE FLESH

- i. Pleasure - (Luke 8:14; 12:15-19. The pleasure of this life is a deadly evil that prevents the Word of God from growing in the heart of believers. It is focused only on "eat", "drink" and being "merry" no time for fasting, praying, and meditation on the Word of God (Matthew 4:3-4). He that lives on pleasure is dead while he lives (I Timothy 5:6; II Timothy 3:4). Beware of the pleasure of this world, it takes Demas back into the world (II Timothy 4:10).
- ii. Love of money: - Having money or being rich is not evil (Deuteronomy. 8:18; I Chronicles 29:12). He gives power to His people to get wealth and to enjoy it. He delighted in the prosperity of His people (III John 2). But lustful desire to be rich by all means draws men into temptation (I Timothy 6:6-9) and results in the love of money which is the source of all evil (6:10; Ecclesiastes 5:10; Jeremiah 17:11; James 5:3).
- iii. Love of strange women: - (I Thessalonians 4:3-7). Beware of strange women. Remember King Solomon - "he loved strange women together with the daughter of Pharaoh. Solomon clave unto these in love and his wives turned away his heart" (I Kings 11:1-8). Also, Samson (Judges 14:1-3; 16:1, 4, 20-21). The lust of the flesh worketh death (Romans 8:13).

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LESSON 7: Denying Ungodliness

TEXT: Genesis 39:7-14

M. VERSE: James 4:7

INTRODUCTION: The devil, since his fall, has continued to battle hard to drag as many as he can along with him and his angels into the pit. This is his life program to which he is faithfully committed. Those that have been delivered from his enclave are the main subjects of this battle. It, therefore, behoves the Christian man to be committed to retaining the victory that has been won for him by the Lord Jesus Christ all his life to ensure his eternal salvation; lest he falls. (This study is meant to be discussed extensively).

A. The persistence of the devil (consider the following cases) ...

- i. Joseph and Potiphar's wife (Genesis 39:7-14).
- ii. Job versus Lucifer (Job 1:12-19).
- iii. Samson and Delilah (Judges 16:6-17).

Discuss the above case analysis: -

- i. the various strategies employed by the devil against them
- ii. their responses and (iii) the results

Discuss how the following schemes result in a fall due to persistent attacks.

- (i) want (lack) (ii) bribery (iii) late engagement

Most of the strategies employed by the devil have the following underlying principles: -

- i. Appeal to your senses/intellect and emotions.
- ii. Wearying (iii) Threat (iv) Direct physical attacks

B. Resist the Devil (James 4:7).

What does it mean to resist the devil? (Proverbs 1:10). How to resist the devil: -

- i. Identify the loophole.
- ii. Have a clear understanding of scriptural texts (Titus 2:11-12).
- iii. Be sober and vigilant (I Peter 5:8).
- iv. Maintain a steady fellowship and prayer life (I Peter 2:17; Heb 10:25; Matt 26:41).
- v. Seek counsel, talk to a trusted believer about it immediately you notice any foul play before you get into trouble.

Seek restoration.

Conclusion: - Will God understand when we give in under a highly mounted pressure? In the course of resisting the devil, standing for truth and righteousness, you might have to pay dearly for it, but hold on still, for the crown is only for those who endure unto the end. Remember in your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted unto the shedding of your own blood. Blood was shed for you to give you enough power to say NO to every attack of the enemy (I Corinthians 10:3).

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LESSON 8: Quiet Time

DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING

TRYSTING TIME: It is a lonely time between you and God. It is a time for intimate discussion, a time of having a heart-to-heart talk with God. We need to have a trysting time with God because He is: -

- i. A Living Being has the same nature as us (Genesis 1:26-27; Revelation 1:8).
- ii. Our Lover (Jeremiah 31:3; John 3:16).
- iii. Our Father (Matthew 23:9).
- iv. Our Master (John 13:13).
- v. Our Friend (John 15:13-15).
- vi. We are Joint-Heirs with Jesus Christ who had trysting times with God and we are to follow in His steps (Romans 8:17; I Peter 2:21).

HOW TO HAVE A TRYSTING TIME WITH GOD

- i. Know that God is alive and set your mind on Him.
- ii. Select a time and place. But when you have developed that prayer habit, then you can begin to pray everywhere and every time.
- iii. Approach Him boldly (Hebrew 4:16).
- iv. Confess any sin (Psalm 66:18; I John 1:9).
- v. Ask for the help of the Spirit (Romans 8:26).

FIRST COMPONENT OF A TRYSTING TIME

Worship/Ministering to God: - When you worship Him, you show Him love, respect, and admiration. You also wonder at His majesty and greatness.

- i. Open your heart to Him (Psalm 62:8).
- ii. Give Him thanks (Philippians 4:6; I Thessalonians 5:18).
- iii. Call Him by His name (James 1:17; Nehemiah 1:4; Exodus 3:14).
- iv. Recall His deeds to you and others (Psalm 40:2; Daniel 6:19-22).
- v. Talk about His power of creation (Acts 4:24).
- vi. Mention His attributes and characters (I Timothy 4:17; Psalm 46:1).
- vii. Use Scriptures to worship Him (Psalm 103, 113, 136, etc).
- viii. Worship Him in the Spirit and in the understanding (I Cor 14:15; Eph 6:18; Jude 20).

SECOND COMPONENT OF A TRYSTING TIME

Prayer/Communing: - Having an intimate discussion with God. It is joining forces with Him. Also, it is returning His word to Him.

- i. In secret and straight to the point (Matthew 6:5-7).
- ii. In faith (Mark 11:24).
- iii. Through Christ (Ephesians 2:18; Hebrew 10:19).
- iv. In Jesus' name (John 16:24-26).
- v. In the Spirit and in the understanding (I Corinthians 14:15).
- vi. Constantly, always (I Thessalonians 5:17; Luke 18:1; Psalm 55:7).

WHO / WHAT TO PRAY FOR?

- i. Your nation, city, town, village (II Chronicles 7:14; I Timothy 2:1-4).
- ii. Unbelievers (Ezekiel 33:11).
- iii. Those who spitefully use you (Matthew 5:44).
- iv. Other Christians (Ephesians 6:18).
- v. Leader of your Church, Fellowship, etc.
- vi. Members of your family, your friends, etc.
- vii. Yourself (Luke 22:46).

THIRD COMPONENT OF A TRYSTING TIME

Bible Study: - When we study the Bible, we are allowing God to speak back to us. What then is the Bible?

- i. Word and Will / written instructions of God (I Timothy 3:16; I John 5:14).
- ii. Spiritual Food (I Peter 2:2; Romans 12:2).
- iii. The truth (John 17:17).
- iv. Lamp and Light (Psalm 119:105).
- v. Sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17).

WHAT TO DO WITH THE BIBLE

- i. Read and study it
- ii. Accept Bible, believe it, and obey what it says.
- iii. Depend on the Holy Spirit to explain it to you (John 16:12-13).
- iv. Meditate on it - think, ponder on, mutter it (Joshua 1:8).
- v. Confess it.
- vi. Apply it to your life and situations.

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LESSON 9: Fasting

TEXT: Ezra 8:21-23; 31-32

INTRODUCTION: - Fasting is a biblical practice that began in the Old Testament. It has been a means of entreating the Lord and seeking His face, employed by the children of God during situations that seem over burdensome.

QUESTIONS

- 1a. What is fasting?
 - b. Has fasting any place in the Church (New Testament)?
 - c. Examine Vis-à-vis the following slogans. Jesus fasted for me, so I fast not (Matthew 6:16; 9:15; Acts 13:2-3; 14:23; I Corinthians 7:5; II Corinthians 11:29; Matthew 17:19-21).
-
- 2a. Examine the following Scriptures and comment on when or why a Christian should fast: (II Samuel 12:16-23, II Corinthians 20:1-4; Ezra 8:21-23; I Kings 21:23-2c; Acts 13:2-3).
 - b. Mention some others.
-
- 3a. What should be the believers' attitude during fasting? (Isaiah 58:3-7; Matthew 6:16-18).
 - b. From both biblical and practical experiences, what are the benefits of fasting?
 - c. What is the concept of partial fasting in Christianity today? Have a critical look at the following in relation to the above (Daniel 10:2-3; Nehemiah 1:4).

Conclusion: - Fasting is painful to the body and so many are scared of undertaking it. But fasting remains a vital tool in actualizing victory in our warfare.

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LESSON 10: WATER BAPTISM

INTRODUCTION: Almost every church teaches that Christians should be baptized in water, but every church does not teach the same things about "Water Baptism." Is water baptism just a form Christians follow for church membership? - John. 3:5 / Matt. 28:19 / Acts 10:47-48. What is the meaning of water baptism? - Who should be baptized? When should a person be baptized? - Why do the Evangelical Churches have special requirements for water baptism and what are these? Should one be baptized by sprinkling, by having water poured on the head, or by being immersed?

Water baptism is not just a form - It is the outward sign of an inward work of grace - Mk 16:15-16 / Acts 2:38. The inward work is to believe that Christ died for our sins and rose from death to make us right with God and thus we too, have "died to sin" and are raised to "walk in newness of life." - Romans 6:2-4. The outward sign is to be baptized in water publicly, which shows that this work of grace is complete. - Rom. 6:3-5 / Gal. 3:27 / I Pet. 3:21 / Col. 2:12

All who have repented and believed - Mark 16:15-16 / Acts 2:38 & 8:36-37.

Note - Evangelicals do not baptize infants.

An infant has not of his will sinned and cannot repent and believe the Gospel. He, therefore, is neither 'in need of' nor 'eligible' for water baptism.

To be a candidate for water baptism one must:

Be over twelve years of age.

Be 'born again' and give a clear testimony of sincere faith in the Lord Jesus.

Be living a consistent Christian life and separated from Tradition, Culture, and Custom.

Note: the reasons for these regulations are easily understood. We believe that one must reach the 'age of accountability, an age when he knows right from wrong, in order to repent and be converted. We believe that one should be free from old practices and from bad habits (II Cor. 5:17) so that the public testimony of water baptism will be witnessed by a clean, consistent Christian life. Note that in Acts 8:9-24 Simon, a certain witch doctor, was baptized in water, but his heart was not right with God.' The consequence of such an attitude may be very severe, and we must understand that God cannot be mocked (Gal. 6:7-8) Read these scriptures: - Prov. 17:3; 20:27; 21:2-3; Rev 2:23; Rm. 8:16.

The word 'baptize' means 'to immerse' - not 'sprinkle' or 'to pour over.'

Jesus was baptized this way - Matthew 3:15-17

We are to follow Christ's example - I Peter 2:21

Philip and the Ethiopian 'went down into the water' - Acts 8:38.

If baptism represents death to sin and 'burial' - Romans 6:4-5, we should note that 'burial' is never done by 'sprinkling' a bit of earth.

"Buried in the likeness of His (Jesus') death and raised to walk in the newness of His (Jesus') life"

If we accept Jesus' death as our substitution, then our 'burial in baptism is a picture of our dying with Christ and it is a witness to others that we are dead to our old life (i.e. your old ways of living and your old sinful lifestyle) and now we are to walk in the new life provided for us by Jesus.



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LESSON 11: Spiritual Maturity
TEXT: Romans 15:1-6

INTRODUCTION: - Everybody needs a sense of significance.

Some tend to prove that I can make a difference and the people must know that I am here. This is true of our natural beings because we are social creatures.

We have emotions, we have a mind, we have gifts and talents, and the ability to relate to other human beings. However, on this note, leading people to the Lord in a group of people requires a great deal of spiritual maturity. God has given us His spirits that our spirits can be awakened and so operate jointly in the supernatural. The spirit of God helps us to rise above our differences and flow together in God. The spirit of God is that of unity and not a false unity that is based on compromise, but a true unity that seeks to exhort the Lord and see the purpose of God moved forward.

QUESTIONS

1. Spiritual Maturity is...
 - a. Christocentric (Romans 8:9, 14).
 - b. Life in the Godhead.
 - c. Constant consciousness of the new birth (Romans 12:1-2).
 - d. Desire to be in fellowship and communion of saints.
2. Spiritual Maturity is not...
 - a. Asceticism and excesses in Christianity.
 - b. Highly vocal and always have something to say on every issue.
 - c. Necessarily he or she who prays first, longest and loudest.
3. Marks of spiritually matured Christians...
 - a. Desire to be holy rather than happy from sinful acts.
 - b. Desire to die rather than to live wrong.
 - c. Desire to see others advancing at your expense. Habitually make eternal judgment instead of temporal
 - e. Readiness to carry his cross.

Conclusion: - Where do you stand? Examine yourself and do not delay in making amendments... (Titus 3:10-11).

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