

# Do You Need To Be Baptized?



Discovering God's Word  
Bible Study Series

# Do You Need To Be Baptized?

Learn about some who need to be baptized and consider whether you need to be baptized

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## Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series

**Study Number:** DGW130

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**About the author:** My name is Eric Krieg. I am a disciple of Jesus, a Bible student, a truth seeker, and an evangelist. My interest is in using the Bible as my only guide in my faith. My desire is to help others understand the message of the Bible and pursue true, New Testament Christianity.

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**My plea:** It is my hope and prayer that you are searching for the truth that is contained in God's word, the Bible. My desire is to help you understand and obey these truths God has revealed in the pages of His word. It is to that end that I write this material. Please observe all of the Scripture references and evaluate whether the conclusions I have drawn are in harmony with God's word. If they are, I ask that you make honest application of those truths to your life and obey God's instructions.

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# Do You Need To Be Baptized?

Do you need to be baptized? The Bible very clearly identifies baptism as a commandment from God. Recognizing this, many religious organizations will practice something that is called “baptism” (though it takes different forms). But, the Bible is clear that there is only “one baptism” (Ephesians 4:5). Therefore, right baptism (according to the Bible) is only accomplished through one action and for a single set of reasons.

Today, there are many people who have either never been baptized or have been baptized in a way that fails to fulfill God’s requirements for this “one baptism.” Some have failed to recognize the connection between baptism and their eternal salvations. Some have been “baptized” by having water sprinkled or poured over their heads. Some have been baptized (even by immersion) *after* they believed that they were already “Christians” (considering themselves to have been saved and forgiven of their sins *prior* to being baptized). Some have been baptized into a man-made church rather than being baptized into the one true church Jesus Christ established.

My hope is that you are only interested in the baptism that God has commanded concerning your salvation today. Matthew 28:18-20 says, “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.” The baptism with which you should desire to be

baptized is the one that has been commanded by the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, please lay aside all that hinders you from being baptized (i.e. whether fear, personal opinions, past beliefs, loyalty to a church, family, etc.) and honestly consider how the Bible answers the question: Do you need to be baptized?

## ***Yes, If You Have Sinned And Have Not Been Baptized***

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Some have never been baptized before. Some have just recently come to an age of personal accountability. Some have never been taught that they need to be baptized. Some have refused to be baptized. Some have considered themselves “Christians,” but have never seen the need to be baptized. Yet, the Bible teaches that every person who has committed sin must be baptized in order to be forgiven of that sin. Therefore, if you have sinned and have not been baptized, you need to be baptized today!

### **The sinless do not need to be baptized**

Before I address those who have sinned and have not been baptized, let me address those who have never sinned. You see, the baptism that God has commanded of people today is in direct correlation with sin being in a person’s life. Therefore, baptism is only necessary whenever an individual has committed sin. For instance, since baptism is commanded for the forgiveness of sin and is necessary to be saved from the consequences of sin (as we will discuss later), it is not necessary for someone who has no sin to be forgiven of or to be saved from!

The Bible teaches that there are some who have never committed sin. While it is true that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), the apostle Paul simply was not discussing those who were not morally responsible. Fortunately, other Bible passages directly address this situation and help us to conclude that some are

not morally accountable (i.e. infants, young children, some with severe mental impairments).

For instance, Deuteronomy 1:39 speaks of some of the Israelite children not being held accountable for the rebellious decision made by the Israelites because they had “no knowledge of good or evil.” Yes, the Bible is clear that every person is born sinless. Ezekiel 18:20 says, “The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.” In Matthew 18:1-4, Jesus taught that children are the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven and that we must be converted to become like them, implying that little children have no sin (otherwise Jesus would be telling us to be converted and become like little sinners). And, Romans 5:12 teaches that death entered the world through sin, “and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.” Notice that spiritual death spreads whenever people commit sin – not because we inherit sin from our parents.

So, if you have never reached an age of personal accountability, you do not need to be baptized. Now, I cannot tell you when an individual reaches this age. Some, due to mental impairments, will never mature in their minds enough to reach the point at which they are spiritually responsible for their actions – because they never know right from wrong in a moral and spiritual sense. Yet, the majority of children will mature to the point that they are capable of knowing right from wrong and begin to make decisions that cause them to commit sin. Some have looked to the example of Jesus in Luke 2:41-50 to suggest that by around the age of 12 there is a knowledge of right and wrong – because Jesus appeared to have that knowledge at such an age. Still, some may reach an accountable age earlier than 12 and, perhaps, some may reach an accountable age later than 12.

## **Baptism is an essential step in becoming a Christian**

Whenever you have reached an accountable age, you are responsible whenever you fail to obey God (thereby sinning against Him). James 1:14-15 teaches that an individual is tempted whenever

he/she is drawn away and enticed by his/her own physical desires. Then, whenever an individual acts to fulfill those physical desires in a way that violates the law of God, that desire has conceived and given birth to sin. And, sin brings forth spiritual death (separation from God). Ultimately, such a one is in danger of spending eternity in the fires of Hell (see Revelation 21:8).

In every detailed example of conversion in the New Testament, those who were lost in sin were commanded to be baptized in order to be right with God and be saved. Consider a list of these conversions briefly. (1) The Jews on the day of Pentecost were commanded to be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins (Acts 2:38). (2) The Samaritans (including Simon) were baptized after hearing the preaching of the gospel (Acts 8:12-13). (3) The man of Ethiopia recognized the need to be baptized immediately once he believed the gospel’s message (Acts 8:35-39). (4) Saul was baptized in order to have his sins washed away (Acts 9:18; Acts 22:16). (5) Cornelius and his household were commanded to be baptized (Acts 10:48). (6) Lydia and her household were baptized after listening to the gospel of Christ be preached to them (Acts 16:14-15). (7) The Philippian jailor and his household were all baptized with immediacy after they heard the gospel (Acts 16:31-34). (8) Some Corinthians, hearing the message of the gospel preached, believed, and were baptized (Acts 18:8). (9) Some Ephesians had not been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (though they had been baptized with John’s baptism) and were baptized whenever they heard Paul’s teaching (Acts 19:1-5).

As we will see throughout this study, baptism is necessary in order to be forgiven of the sins you have committed (Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16), to be saved from the spiritual consequences of your sins and to have everlasting life in Heaven (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21), and to be added to the church of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:26-27). So, if you have committed sin in your life and have never been baptized, you are not a follower of Jesus Christ (a Christian) and you are still lost in your sins. You need to be baptized! But, it is important for you to recognize that you are *not* earning your salvation by being baptized. After you have committed sin, it is

impossible for you to earn your salvation by any good work (see Ephesians 2:8-9). However, God does require works of obedience (see James 2:14-26). Therefore, when you are baptized according to the teachings of Scripture, you are *not* earning your salvation. Rather, you are simply obeying what God commands you to do. Still, you are unworthy of salvation and are entirely reliant on the grace and mercy of God for salvation (Luke 17:10).

### **What you must do before you are baptized**

If you have never been baptized previously, it is also essential that you understand what God requires of you in addition to being baptized. In fact, God requires you to do these things prior to being baptized. Consider each one of them briefly.

(1) You must hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation to everyone who believes (Romans 1:16). But, you cannot believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God without hearing this message (Romans 10:17). Therefore, those who are baptized must first hear the gospel preached to them (Acts 18:8).

(2) You must believe with all your heart. Jesus said that unless you believe that He is (the Son of God) “you will die in your sins” (John 8:24). Whenever the man of Ethiopia had been taught the gospel of Jesus Christ, he saw some water and asked, “See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?” (Acts 8:36). Then, Philip (the one who was preaching to him) said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may” (Acts 8:37). Therefore, those who are baptized must first believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God with all their hearts.

(3) You must repent of your sins. Since sin separates you from God (Isaiah 59:1-2), you must turn away from the sins you have committed in your past. Whenever some people Peter had preached to were convinced that they were guilty of sin, they wanted to know what they needed to do to be saved (Acts 2:37). Then, Peter told them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). To repent is to view your past sins with abhorrence and determine that you will live differently in the future.

Therefore, those who are baptized must first repent of their past sins.

(4) Confess Jesus Christ. After the man of Ethiopia was told that he could be baptized if he believed with all his heart, he responded, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:37). Upon that confession of Jesus Christ, Philip baptized him. Romans 10:9-10 also indicates that a confession of the Lord Jesus with the mouth must be made “unto salvation.” Therefore, those who are baptized must first confess the Lord Jesus Christ.

If you have not been baptized, you must do these things before being baptized. Please also note that if you have been baptized previously, but find that you failed to do one of these things that God commands you to do prior to being baptized, you should be baptized after meeting all of the “prerequisites” God has given to baptism.

## ***Yes, If You Were Not Immersed In Water***

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Some believe they have been baptized. But, the “baptism” with which they were baptized was accomplished by having water sprinkled or poured over their heads (either as babies or as adults). While they have always considered themselves to have been baptized, they need to consider what the Bible teaches about the action involved in Bible baptism. The Bible only approves of the action of immersion in water to accomplish what Bible baptism does (i.e. the forgiveness of sins, salvation, etc.). Therefore, if you have not been immersed in water, you need to be baptized today!

### **The action of Bible baptism**

Please recognize that whenever God commands baptism, it is up to Him to tell us what the appropriate action of baptism is. So, let’s consider whether He has given us any information about what the action of Bible baptism is. In reality, as we search the Scriptures, we only find one action that is approved for the “one baptism” we are under today: Immersion in water (entirely put under the water).

First, consider the Greek word for baptism. Whenever the translators of the *King James Version* were translating the New Testament, they chose *not* to translate the Greek word “baptizo” (and other variations of this word). Instead, they took the Greek word and made an English word out of it (compare the similarity between “baptizo” and “baptize”). Now, just consider that if this practice was done throughout the New Testament, you would not be able to understand it without learning a different language. Instead, almost every other time, translators would give a Greek word an appropriate English word that conveys the meaning of the Greek word properly.

Whenever the Holy Spirit of God inspired the authors of the New Testament to instruct people to be baptized, He was commanding immersion. As you study authoritative sources knowledgeable in the Greek language, they all will define the Greek word for baptism as meaning immersion, overwhelming, submersion, or similar. Not one of them will say that sprinkling or pouring were appropriate actions of the Greek word. The Greek word simply does not indicate either of these actions. Therefore, if the Greek word “baptizo” was actually translated into the English language, it would be translated “immerse” (or a similar variation). For instance, a proper translation of Acts 2:38 would have Peter commanding the people, “Repent, and let everyone of you be immersed in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.”

Second, consider how the Bible shows baptism being practiced. Not only did God inspire the New Testament writers to use a Greek word that meant immersion, but the Bible also presents a couple of pictures of how baptism was practiced. So, we are not left to guess at the action involved in Bible baptism nor do we need to know anything about the Greek language.

Look first at how John the Baptist baptized people. Although we are not under John’s baptism today, it does demonstrate how the word is used in the New Testament. And, we should recognize that the action involved in John’s baptism was the same as the action involved in the baptism that is commanded today. For instance, on one occasion, John was said to baptize people in Aenon near Salim

“because there was much water there” (John 3:23). Now, only a small amount of water would be necessary for people to have water sprinkled or poured over their heads. Much water would be needed for immersion. Then, recognize what we are taught about when Jesus was baptized of John. Mark 1:9 says that He was “baptized by John in the Jordan.” He was not baptized *with* water *from* the Jordan River. Rather, He was baptized *in* the Jordan. And, Matthew 3:16 says that when Jesus “had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water.” The implication is that Jesus was down in the water for the baptism. Now, is this a picture of sprinkling, pouring, or immersion? Certainly, this was an immersion – as there would be no reason for Jesus to have been down in the water just to have a little water sprinkled or poured over Him.

Also consider the picture that is given of when the man of Ethiopia was baptized. After he confessed his belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, “he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing” (Acts 8:38-39). So, both Philip (the one doing the baptizing) and the man of Ethiopia (the one being baptized) went down into the water for the baptism. Then, after the baptism, they both came up out of the water. Now, is this a picture of sprinkling, pouring, or immersion? Certainly, this also was an immersion – as there would be no reason for both of these men to go into the water to sprinkle or pour a little water over the Ethiopian.

Third, consider how the Bible describes baptism. Whenever the Bible speaks about baptism, it also uses the figure of a burial. Listen to Romans 6:3-4. “Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Just as God requires you to put the old man of sin to death and rise to walk in newness of life, God requires that you bury the old man. And, notice that the old man is to be buried with Christ through “baptism”

(remember that this word means immersion). Similarly, Colossians 2:12 says that we are “buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”

Now, what is the action of a burial? There are different things people do with a dead body. For instance, some cremate a dead body and sprinkle the ashes over the ground – and some bury the dead body under the ground. Certainly, these two actions are not the same and they both do not accomplish a burial. Only a full immersion under the ground is a burial. Nothing less accomplishes this action. In the same way, we cannot be buried with Christ in immersion without being fully put under the water. No other action is sufficient to accomplishing what God has commanded.

### **Sprinkling and pouring do not accomplish what Bible baptism requires**

In the Greek language, there are entirely different words for the actions of sprinkling and pouring. Therefore, the Holy Spirit could have easily chosen to use those words whenever God instructed people to be baptized. Yet, He chose only to use a word that meant (and still means) immersion.

Therefore, those who have only had water sprinkled or poured over their heads have not been obedient to God’s command to be baptized. They simply have not done what God has commanded them to do. So, they have not received the promised result of being baptized. Namely, God has instructed baptism (immersion) as necessary for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16), for salvation (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21), and to be in Christ’s church (1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:26-27). But, if you have not been immersed, you should not expect to be forgiven of your sins, be saved, or be part of Christ’s church!

However, some will object to this conclusion. They may question, “Does it really matter to God whether you have been immersed if you have had water sprinkled or poured over your head?” “Since He is a loving, gracious, and merciful God, surely He will save someone who has had water sprinkled or poured over their heads.” Yet, the Bible says that

God will punish those who are not obedient to the gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9) and will save those who do obey Him (Hebrews 5:9). As we have seen, in order to obey God in this matter, you must be immersed. If you have not been immersed in water, you are gambling with your soul – hoping that God will overlook your disobedience to His command to be baptized on the Day of Judgment. Why not just listen to God and be immersed in water today so that you can know that you have obeyed Him?

## ***Yes, If You Were Not Baptized For The Right Reasons***

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Some have been immersed in water in the past. In fact, there are many religious organizations that agree with the Scriptures that baptism is an immersion in water – and baptize people accordingly. Yet, there are many people who have been taught the wrong purpose of baptism and have, consequently, been baptized for the wrong reasons. The overwhelming majority of these religious organizations teach that baptism is an important and good thing to do (even recognizing that it is a commandment from God), but say that it is not necessary for the forgiveness of sins and salvation. Yet, as we will see, the Bible does teach baptism as being necessary for these (as we will observe). Therefore, if you have not been baptized for the right reasons, you need to be baptized today!

### **Baptism is necessary for the forgiveness of sins**

If you have been baptized previously, please consider whether you were baptized in order to have your sins forgiven or whether you were baptized believing that you already had your sins forgiven (and were already living as a Christian). Most religious organizations that practice baptism teach that baptism is something that is done *after* you have your sins forgiven, rather than teaching that you must be baptized in order to have your sins forgiven. Therefore, let’s simply evaluate what the Scriptures

teach us about this question and be willing to truly evaluate the reason you have been baptized.

First, consider Acts 2:38. After Peter had preached the gospel to Jews who were gathered in Jerusalem for Pentecost, some of them wanted to know what they needed to do to be saved from their sins. In response, Peter said, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Every credible Bible translation has this verse translated with this same meaning. Now, ask yourself this question: Where does the Bible put the forgiveness of sins in Acts 2:38? Before or after baptism? Clearly, these individuals were told that they must be baptized in order to have their sins forgiven (not because they had already been forgiven of their sins prior to baptism). In fact, this verse indicates that both repentance and baptism are necessary in order to be forgiven of sins.

Second, consider Acts 22:16. Contrary to popular belief today, Saul (who later became known as the apostle Paul) was *not* saved on the road to Damascus. When Jesus appeared to him on the Damascus road, Saul asked, “Lord what do You want me to do” (Acts 9:6)? Jesus responded, “Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do” (Acts 9:6). He was not saved at this point. Instead, we must follow Saul into Damascus to learn what he was told that he “must” do. Whenever he came into Damascus, Saul spoke with Ananias and he was baptized (Acts 9:18). Now, it is essential to recognize that Paul recounts his conversion in Acts 22 and Acts 26. Particularly, we learn *why* Saul was baptized in Acts 22:16. He was told, “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” So, ask yourself this question: Where does the Bible put the forgiveness of sins in Acts 22:16? Before or after baptism? Clearly, Saul was told that he must be baptized in order to have his sins washed away (not because his sins had already been washed away prior to his baptism). So, he was still lost in his sins prior to his baptism.

## Baptism is necessary for salvation

Similarly, if you have been baptized previously, please consider whether you were baptized in order to be saved or whether you were baptized believing that you were already saved (and were already living as a Christian). Most religious organizations that practice baptism teach that baptism is something that is done *after* you become a Christian and are saved, rather than teaching that you must be baptized in order to be saved. Therefore, let’s simply evaluate what the Scriptures teach us about this question and be willing to truly evaluate the reason you have been baptized.

First, consider Mark 16:15-16. Jesus told His disciples, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” Whenever Jesus’ disciples would preach the gospel of Christ throughout the world, who did Jesus say would be saved? Those who believed *and* were baptized (immersed). Then, who did Jesus say would not be saved? Those who would not believe. So, if you desire to be saved, what did Jesus say that you must do? Believe *and* be baptized (not just believe, see Matthew 7:21-23). Now, ask yourself this question: Where does the Bible put salvation in Mark 16:15-16? Before or after baptism? Clearly, Jesus put baptism *before* the point of salvation (not as something that was to be done after believing a person was already saved). According to Jesus, an individual has not been saved prior to being baptized.

Second, consider 1 Peter 3:20-21. Peter wrote, “who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” Peter clearly states that Noah and his family (eight souls in total) were “saved through water.” Then, he said that there is “an antitype which now saves us.” An “antitype” simply points back to what he said about Noah and his family. In a corresponding way, Peter clearly said

that “baptism” now saves us. It does *not* do this through some physical cleansing. Instead, it is because we are obedient to the instruction of God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Now, ask yourself this question: Where does the Bible put salvation in 1 Peter 3:20-21? Before or after baptism? Clearly, Peter says that baptism now saves us (not that it is something people do after they are already saved). Therefore, baptism is a God-given condition for salvation, and salvation cannot be had until this condition is met.

### **You cannot be taught wrong and baptized right**

All four of these passages contradict the popular teachings of man in the religious world today. Today, people are commonly taught that they become Christians, are forgiven of their sins, and are saved the moment that they believe on Jesus (mentally) and ask Him into their hearts. Often, this is closely associated with the saying of a “Sinner’s Prayer.” Then, after being “saved,” those who have become “Christians” are told that they need to get baptized. Yet, not only does the Bible never teach this kind of “Sinner’s Prayer” that is commonly practiced, but this teaching does not put baptism where God puts it! So, if you had only been taught and believed these false teachings about baptism, you could not have possibly been baptized for the right reasons. For, it is impossible for you to be taught wrong and baptized right (if you believed what you were taught)!

Yet, I again want to address the question: “Does it matter *why* you were baptized – as long as you were baptized?” Many believe that a loving, gracious, and merciful God would not possibly condemn someone to Hell simply because he/she did not get baptized (perhaps such a one even had intentions to be baptized someday). But, just as we observed previously, God has promised to punish those who do not obey the gospel of Jesus Christ – and baptism is one of the things the gospel of Jesus Christ requires (see Acts 8:35-39 and 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9). He only promises to save those who are obedient to Him (Hebrews 5:9), not those who only profess faith in Him (Matthew 7:21-23). In fact, true faith in God will be obedient to His

command to be baptized for the forgiveness of sins whenever an individual learns the true teachings about baptism in the Bible! So, if you have been baptized thinking that you were already saved, already forgiven of your sins, and already a Christian, you need to be baptized according to the true purpose of Bible baptism! Why would you want to gamble with your soul, hoping that God will overlook your failure to be obedient to His instructions about baptism? Why not just listen to God and be immersed in water for the forgiveness of your sins and to be saved today so that you can know that you have obeyed Him?

## ***Yes, If You Were Not Baptized Into The Church Of Christ***

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Some have been baptized in the past by being immersed in water, but (building on the previous point), they were baptized into a man-made religious organization rather than being baptized into the one church Jesus Christ established. Some religious organizations teach that an individual is baptized *after* he/she is saved and forgiven of sins, but say that baptism is necessary in order to join a particular church. Yet, as we will see, not only is baptism necessary for salvation and the forgiveness of sins, it is also necessary in order to be added to the one church Jesus Christ established.

### **Jesus only established one church**

There are tens of thousands of religious organizations and churches in the world today that are all teaching and practicing different things as part of the “Christian” faith. And, they are all claiming to be (or be part of) Jesus’ church (the church of Christ). However, Jesus only built *one* church.

For instance, in Matthew 16:18, Jesus said to Peter, “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” Notice that only one church was promised – no more and no less. Jesus Christ shed His blood in order to build this one church (Acts 20:28), not thousands of different

churches. In Ephesians 4:4, the apostle Paul said that there is “one body.” But, what is the body? In Ephesians 1:22-23, Jesus said that it is “the church.” So, there is only one church – the church of Christ (since it belongs to Him)!

The church is the collection of those who are saved (both living and dead). The Scriptures are clear that salvation is in Christ Jesus (Romans 6:23; 2 Timothy 2:10). Furthermore, Acts 2:47 says that “the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.” So, the church is composed of those who are saved – and the saved are in Jesus’ one true church. There is salvation in none other (Acts 4:12) – not even in the churches of man!

### **The Bible teaches that you are baptized into this church**

So, the question becomes: “How do you get into Jesus’ church and be counted among the saved?” We have already seen that God requires individuals to hear God’s word, believe, repent of sin, confess Jesus Christ, and be baptized in order to be saved. Now, I want you to recognize that it is upon being baptized that an individual is added to Jesus’ one true church (the church of Christ).

We have seen that God was the one who was adding the people who were being saved to His church (Acts 2:47). But, you must also remember that these people had been instructed earlier to repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins (Acts 2:38). About 3,000 people were obedient to that message of salvation initially – and they were added to Jesus’ church (see Acts 2:41). Then, as more people obeyed the gospel’s plan of salvation, they also were added to His church.

Next, the Bible directly states that you are baptized into His body (His church). 1 Corinthians 12:13 says, “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free – and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.” Similarly, Galatians 3:26-27 says, “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

Both of these passages clearly teach that baptism puts you into Jesus Christ and His church.

Whenever you obey the teachings of the Holy Spirit (as revealed in the pages of the Bible) to be baptized, you are added by God to His church. And, notice that everyone who is part of Jesus’ church has come into His church in this same way. Therefore, it is a completely false notion to believe that an individual is saved prior to becoming part of Jesus’ one true church (the church of Christ). And, it is a man-made doctrine to claim that a person should be baptized into a church other than Jesus’. Instead, you are only in Christ if you are baptized into Christ and you are only part of His one true church if you have been baptized into His body!

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## ***Conclusion***

Do you need to be baptized – according to the teachings of the Scriptures? Maybe you have never been baptized before, yet you have sin in your life. If so, you need to be baptized today. Maybe you have only been “baptized” by having water sprinkled or poured over your head. If so, you need to be baptized today. Maybe you have been baptized previously, but you believed you were already a Christian, already forgiven of your sins, and already saved prior to being baptized. Or, maybe you were baptized for some other reason besides the reasons given in Scripture. If so, you need to be baptized today. Maybe you have been baptized into some church besides the one true church that belongs to Jesus Christ (the church of Christ). If so, you need to be baptized today.

Please recognize that God commands you to be baptized in order to have your sins forgiven, to be saved, and to be added to His church. If you have not obeyed the commands He has given, do not dismiss it as a “little” thing relative to your salvation! The Scriptures demonstrate that those who had never been baptized and wanted to be saved were baptized immediately upon learning and believing the truth of the gospel (see Acts 8:35-39; Acts 16:30-34). And, the Scriptures demonstrate that even those who had been baptized previously, but needed to be baptized according to the teachings of the gospel to be saved were also baptized immediately (see Acts 19:1-5). If,

for any reason, you think you might need to be baptized, do not delay to obey God! Be baptized today!

## ***Study Questions***

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Have you been baptized? If you have, explain why have you were baptized?

### **1. Yes, If You Have Sinned And Have Not Been Baptized**

Do the sinless need to be baptized? Who have committed no sin?

Is baptism an essential step in becoming a Christian?

What must you do before you are baptized?

### **2. Yes, If You Were Not Immersed In Water**

What is the action involved in Bible baptism?

Do the actions of sprinkling and pouring accomplish what Bible baptism accomplishes?

### **3. Yes, If You Were Not Baptized For The Right Reasons**

Does God put the forgiveness of sins before or after baptism? Consider both Acts 2:38 and Acts 22:16.

Does God put salvation before or after baptism? Consider both Mark 16:15-16 and 1 Peter 3:20-21.

Can you be taught wrong and baptized right? Explain why or why not.

### **4. Yes, If You Were Not Baptized Into The Church Of Christ**

How many churches did Jesus establish? What is the church?

How do you get into Jesus' church and be counted among the saved?

**\*Do you need to be baptized – according to the teachings of the Scriptures?**