

STUDY GUIDE ON BAPTISM (revised 1/2013)

1A. According to Matthew 28:19, why should a person be baptized? _____

2A. WHAT DOES WATER BAPTISM MEAN?

1B. What does washing with water signify (Titus 3:5) ? _____

2B. Who baptizes us into the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13) ? _____

3B. The title "Christ" is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word "Messiah" (John 1:41), which means "Anointed One." At His baptism, Jesus was "anointed" by the Holy Spirit in order to begin His Messianic ministry (Mark 1:9-11). What is the primary work He will do, according to Mark 1:8?

4B. Put together these concepts (washing, anointing, etc.), and what would you say that water baptism might mean ?

3A. WHICH MODE OF WATER BAPTISM BEST DESCRIBES THIS MEANING?

1B. Some insist that the Greek word "*baptizo*" always means "to dip in water," but notice how the word is used in Mark 7:8 and 1 Cor 10:2.

2B. In Hebrews 9:10, Old Testament cleansing rituals are called "*baptisms*." How do these verses show that these ceremonies were performed?

Exodus 24:8;

Leviticus 14:18;

Psalms 51:7;

Ezekiel 36:25-27;

Zechariah 12:10;

3B. How do these New Testament verses describe cleansing from sin?

Ephesians 5:25-26;

Hebrews 9:13-14, 10:22;

1 Peter 1:2

4B. How do these verses describe the coming of the Holy Spirit to bring this cleansing?

Isaiah 44:3;

Acts 2:17 & 33;

Acts 10:45;

Acts 11:15-16

5B. Which mode of water baptism best describes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit?

4A. WHO ARE THE PROPER CANDIDATES FOR WATER BAPTISM?

1B. According to Acts 2:41? _____ Have you? If so, when? _____

2B. What about infants, who cannot believe? Notice in Acts 2:38-39, Peter offers the promise of salvation not only to believers, but also "to your children." This idea roots in the biblical concept of the Covenant:

5A. THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION AS THE BACKGROUND FOR BAPTISM:

1B. The Hebrew word for Covenant (*berith*) occurs 286 times in the Old Testament, and the Greek word for covenant (*diatheke*) appears another 40 times in the New Testament. According to Hebrews 13:20, what underlies our salvation?

2B. According to these verses, what is the primary promise of the covenant?

Genesis 17:7;

Exodus 6:7;

Jeremiah 31:33;

2 Corinthians 6:16;

Revelation 21:3

3B. To whom are the covenant promises made (Gen 6:18, 17:7)?

4B. Who is this Seed (singular) of Abraham? (Gal 3:16) ? _____

5B. Who are the seed (plural) of Abraham (Gal 3:29) ? _____

6A. THE COVENANT IS SYMBOLIZED BY SIGNS:

1B. What was the sign of the Covenant given to Abraham (Gen 17:10-14)? _____

2B. Who should receive this sign? (Gen 17:11-12) _____

3B. What happens if parents failed to apply the sign? (Gen 17:14; this probably explains Exodus 4:24-26).

4B. What did the sign of circumcision mean according to these verses?

Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6;

Romans 2:19; 4:9-11

7A. WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO CIRCUMCISION NOW THAT THE NEW COVENANT HAS COME?

- 1B. In Acts 15:1 and 1 Cor 7:18–19, notice the conflict that arose over circumcision.
- 2B. What does Philippians 3:3 tell is the true nature of circumcision?

3B. According to Col 2:11, have Christians received circumcision? _____

4B. According to Col 2:12, when did this take place? _____

5B. So the Old Testament sign of circumcision has been changed in the New Testament to baptism, although the basic meaning remains the same!

8A. WHAT EVIDENCE IS THERE FOR BAPTISM OF INFANTS?

1B. Covenantal evidence: the Old Testament sign included infants by God's command, and there is no New Testament command to exclude infants from the New Testament sign.

2B. Theological evidence: what does the Lord say about children in Luke 18:15?

3B. Historical evidence: what do you make of "household baptisms" in these verses?

Acts 11:14

Acts 16:15

Acts 16:33–34

If there were infants in these households, would they receive baptism?

9A. WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT THE COVENANT SIGN IS GIVEN TO CHILDREN?

1B. What spiritual reality did circumcision point toward (Deut 30:6)? _____

2B. Did circumcision ever guarantee anyone's salvation (Matt 3:9)? _____

3B. How does 1 Cor 7:14 describe the children of believers? What does this mean?

4B. In Luke 18:15, why did parents publicly bring their infants to Jesus? _____

5B. What promise is offered to children of believers in Acts 16:31? _____

6B. When a covenant child is able to understand his/her need to trust Christ as Savior, what public act would show this profession of faith (1 Cor 11:28)? _____

10A. WHAT DOES THE COVENANT SIGN MEAN TO PARENTS?

1B. Notice how the Old Testament provides separate ceremonies for circumcision and dedication of children (see Luke 2:21–34). The New Testament pattern (Acts 16:31ff.) seems to combine these into one ceremony, since baptism is both a covenant sign as well as a public profession of faith.

2B. What are the obligations to the covenant taken by parents in Genesis 18:19 and Ephesians 6:4?

3B. In what ways should you fulfill these for your child(ren)?

11A. SUMMARY: WHY BELIEVERS SHOULD PRESENT THEIR CHILDREN FOR BAPTISM:

1B. God saves us today on the basis of His everlasting covenant: in Christ, which was revealed progressively in history through Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and finally, though the New Covenant in Jesus.

2B. God always included infants of believers in His covenant promises: this is stated in both the Old Testament (Gen 17:7) and the New Testament (Acts 2:39).

3B. Since God saves us on the basis of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gal 3:13–14), the command to place the covenant sign on the children of believers still remains.

4B. The Old Testament sign of circumcision and the New Testament sign of baptism both point to the same spiritual reality: that those born with a sinful nature need heart regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

5B. Jesus encourages parents to bring their infants to Him:

6B. Jesus states that the Kingdom of God belongs to little children.

7B. Jesus blesses the children whose parents bring them to Him.

8B. The New Testament gives God's accepted means of presenting children to God, and that is through household baptisms.

12A. SUGGESTED VOWS FOR BAPTISM

1B. "Do you acknowledge your child's need of the cleansing blood of Christ, and the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit?"

2B. "Do you claim God's covenant promises in (his/her) behalf, and do you look in faith to the Lord Jesus for (his/her) salvation, as you do for your own?"

3B. "Do you unreservedly dedicate your child to the Lord and promise, in humble reliance upon divine grace, that you will endeavor to set before (him/her) a godly example; that you will pray with and for him/her, that you will teach him/her the doctrine of our holy religion, and that you will strive, by all the means of God's appointment, to bring him/her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?"

13A. GOD'S PROMISE TO PARENTS FROM DEUTERONOMY 12:28

“Observe and obey all these words which I command you, that it may go well with you and your children after you forever, when you do *what is* good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.”