

Misunderstandings About Baptism

The subject of baptism is one of the most misunderstood and controversial topics in the Bible. In this lesson, I want to study with you four common misunderstandings about baptism.

- **Baptism is NOT important.**

- Many believe that baptism is not essential to a person's salvation. They believe that a person is saved by "faith alone" and being baptized is not an urgent matter.
- This line of thinking does not line up with what the gospel actually teaches.
 - Baptism is essential to becoming a disciple (Matthew 28:18-20).
 - Baptism is essential to being saved (Mark 16:15-16; 1 Peter 3:21).
 - Baptism is essential to receiving forgiveness of sins.
 - Baptism is essential to having one's sins washed away (Acts 22:16).
 - Baptism is essential to getting into Christ and putting on Christ (Galatians 3:27).
 - It is through baptism that one is spiritually circumcised (Colossians 2:11-13).

- **Baptism is both immersion and sprinkling.**

- Bible baptism is immersion! It never involved sprinkling in New Testament times.
- Bible baptism is when a person is taken under water and then comes up out of the water.
 - Paul refers to baptism as a "burial" (Romans 6:1-4).
 - Jesus was immersed in water (Matthew 3:16).
 - The Ethiopian eunuch was also immersed in water (Acts 8:36-39).

- **Baptism is the most important step in God's plan of salvation.**

- If we are not careful, we can focus on baptism so much that we neglect emphasizing to people the other important steps in God's plan of salvation.
- There are things God expects us to do that are just as important as baptism.
 - We must believe the gospel (Mark 16:15-16).
 - We confess the name of Jesus (Acts 8:37).
 - We must repent of our sins (Acts 2:38). In the case of those in unlawful marriages, since God's law for marriage is binding upon everyone, repentance requires that they come out of those relationships (Hebrews 13:4; Matthew 19:9; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Baptism washes away sins, not marriage covenants (Acts 22:16).
 - We must be faithful to Jesus after baptism (Acts 2:42).

- **Baptism will condemn others to hell.**

- Since every person will be judged by God for his or her own actions, our actions cannot affect those who have died (2 Corinthians 5:10).
- If we have a relative that has died lost, do we think he or she wants us to be lost too (Luke 16:19-28)?
 - This misdirected fear can actually lead to generations of family members being lost!
 - We need to focus on obeying the Lord's will concerning baptism, and let Him deal with those who have already died.

Conclusion: Have you submitted to the Lord's will concerning baptism?

Shawn Jeffries