



Global Good

News Literature

Basic Christianity



Part II

GLOBAL GOOD NEWS LITERATURE

“All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17



“The entrance of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.” Psalm 119:130

***Note: All Scriptures in this study are either from NIV or NKJV**

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Lesson Seven

Baptism & Holy Communion

The two ceremonies the Lord gave to the church are Baptism and Holy Communion. These are not just ceremonies but are commandments given by the Lord for the church to do.

Holy Communion

Holy Communion is also called “The Lord’s Supper” reminding us the last supper the Lord had with his disciples.

“And he took bread, gave thanks and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; **do this in remembrance of me.**” Luke 22:19

The Apostle Paul also mentions what the Lord did during the Last Supper.

“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken^{1b} for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” ²⁵In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me.” ²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.

²⁷Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 11:23-27

What is the purpose of the Holy Communion?

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- A. To remember the sacrifice the Lord made on our behalf. As he said, “do this in remembrance of me.” (Luke 22:19).
- B. To show the unity and the fellowship we have with one another (among believers). (Luke 22:14-20, 1 Cor. 10:21)
- C. To proclaim his death to all until he comes back. (1 Cor. 11:26)
- D. To remind us of His second coming. (1 Cor. 11:26)

How often should we do it?

There is no prescribed frequency. He just said, “as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup”. Some do it every month, some do it on special occasions etc....

What does the bread signify?

The bread signifies the body of the Lord that was broken for us. “On the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you;” 1 Cor. 11:23-24

- A. His side was pierced (John 19:34)
- B. He was scourged. (Isaiah 53:5, 1 Peter 2:24)
- C. They shoved a crown of thorns on His head. They spat on Him and mocked him. (Matthew 27:28-31, Mark 15:17-20)

What does the wine signify?

As the Lord Himself said, the wine signifies His blood that was shed for us.

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“Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. ²⁸For this is My blood of the new^[al] covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”
Matthew 26:27-28

Who should participate in Holy Communion?

The only person who is considered worthy of this ceremony is the one who has accepted the precious sacrifice the Lord has made on his behalf. **Whoever has accepted Jesus Christ as his personal savior and Lord can partake of the Holy Communion.**

How should a believer prepare himself?

Every believer should examine himself/herself before partaking of the Holy Communion. Even though being a believer gives us the privilege to partake of the Holy Communion, **taking it while we have un-confessed sin in our heart is dangerous. That’s why we have to examine ourselves, confess all our sins and take it with a clean conscience.**

“Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. ³⁰For this reason many *are* weak and sick among you, and many sleep.” 1 Cor. 11:27-30

When the verse says, **“and many sleep”**, it means people actually died because they took this ceremony lightly with un-confessed sin in their lives.

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Why should we participate in Holy Communion?

- To remember the sacrifice the Lord made to redeem us.
- To proclaim his death until he comes back.

“For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁵In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, **in remembrance of me.**”²⁶For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you **proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.**” 1 Cor. 11:23-26

So, Holy Communion has a double purpose, looking back in remembrance of His sacrifice and looking forward, to proclaim his death until his second coming. Praise him for what he did and proclaim to others, until he comes back, that he died for them too.

BAPTISM

The word baptism means to be immersed or dipped into something. In the Bible we read about different kinds of baptisms.

“Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary *principles* of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, ²of the **doctrine of baptisms**, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.” Hebrews 6:1-2 (NKJV)

What are these different kinds of baptisms?

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1. When the Holy Spirit baptizes a believer into the Body of Christ.

This baptism is accomplished when someone hears the Gospel and repents and believes in the Lordship of Jesus Christ. At that time the Holy Spirit instantaneously places the person into the Body of Christ. This baptism is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:13

“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.”

This verse does not mention water at all. It is talking about the baptism that is administered by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ. The baptizer is the Holy Spirit while the medium we are baptized into is the Body of Christ. The whole chapter of 1 Corinthians chapter 12 is talking about the Body of Christ; as such we should understand the baptism referred to in verse 12 as being baptized into the Body of Christ.

Also, in Galatians 3:27 Paul refers to this kind of baptism.

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

In this verse, Paul clearly says ‘baptized into Christ’, not into water.

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When the apostle Paul refers to ‘One Baptism’, in Ephesians 4:4-6, he is referring to this baptism.

*“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, **one baptism**; one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.”*

When a sinner is convicted of his sin by the Holy Spirit and comes to the Lord through repentance and faith, he will participate in this One Baptism administered by the Holy Spirit.

2. The Baptism of John the Baptist

“He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.” Luke 3:3

The baptism of John the Baptist was a baptism that prepared sinners to repent and get ready for the coming Messiah. This baptism started with John the Baptist and ended with John the Baptist.

3. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

This baptism is a baptism that is available to every believer in Jesus Christ. John the Baptist said:

*“I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will **baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.**”*

Jesus re-iterated the same thing by saying to his disciples;

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“For John baptized with water, but in a few days, you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” Acts 1:5

As Jesus promised, the disciples were baptized with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

“When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. **And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts 2:1-4 (NKJV)

The difference between this baptism and the one mentioned first, is that the first one is when one is born again by becoming part of the body of Christ, whereas this one is when one is filled with (or baptized) in the Holy Spirit. In the first one the baptizer is the Holy Spirit the medium we get baptized into is the body of Christ, whereas in this baptism the baptizer is Jesus Christ and what we get baptized with is the Holy Spirit.

4. The Baptism of tribulation

Referring to the cross ahead of him, Jesus said:

“But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!” Luke 12:50

Also, when James and John were asking a selfish question Jesus asked them;

“But Jesus answered and said, “You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be

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baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” Matthew 20:22 (NKJV)

5. The Baptism in water

This baptism is the baptism Jesus commanded his disciples to carry on.

“Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20

Even though this baptism and the baptism of John the Baptist are both administered with water, unlike the baptism of John the Baptist, this baptism is not for repentance. It is rather an act of obedience to the Lord’s command, after someone has repented and believed in the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The remaining of this lesson would be focused on this particular baptism.

**The following table summarizes
the different kind of baptisms**

Kind of Baptism	Baptizer	In What?	Why?	Verses
The One Baptism	The Holy Spirit	The Body of Christ	New Birth	1Cor 12:13 Gal 3:27 Eph 4:4-5 2 Cor 5:17
John’s Baptism	John the Baptist	In Water	For Repentance	Luke 3:3

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Holy Spirit	Jesus Christ	By the Holy Spirit	To receive power and be a bold witness	Acts 1:5 & 8 Matthew 3:11
Baptism with tribulation	The World, the Devil, and the Flesh	In tribulation (tests & trials)	To endure and fulfill the will of God while going through tribulation	Luke 12:50 Matthew 20:22 Luke 22:42 1 Peter 4:19
Believers' Water Baptism	Minister	Water	To identify with the death & resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ	Matthew 28:19 Mark 16:16

What is the meaning of the believers' water baptism?

A. It signifies the identification we have with our Lord Jesus Christ.

Just as our Lord Jesus Christ died in the flesh and was buried, when the believer goes into the water, he/she is saying '**I am dead to sin and to this world**'. As Jesus was resurrected from the dead, to be alive forever more, likewise, the believer, when being lifted up from the water is saying, '**I am resurrected with Christ unto God, to live for Him**'. This is the declaration the believer makes when he/she is baptized.

“Don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his.”

Romans 6:3-5

“Having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.” Colossians. 2:12

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B. It is the pledge of a Clear Conscious towards God

Referring to the family of Noah in the Ark, being delivered from God's wrath by being lifted up by the water that drowned the rest of mankind, the Apostle Peter says:

"In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."
1Peter 3:20-21

This verse never said water baptism saves us. It merely says it **'symbolizes'** our salvation or identification with Christ Jesus. This water baptism is an outward ordinance that symbolizes what happened when we were baptized into the body of Christ as described in the first kind of baptism mentioned above.

The baptism mentioned first, happens instantaneously in the unseen Spiritual realm, whereas, this water baptism we are commanded to obey, happens in the physical world as a testimony to the world, that we have died to sin, and to the world and have been buried and resurrected with Christ. **Water baptism is a reflection or a symbol of what happened to us in the unseen world by the Holy Spirit, when we got saved.**

C. Jesus referred to water baptism as "Righteousness"

When Jesus humbled himself to be baptized in the hands of John the Baptist, John refused saying, **"I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?"**

"Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Matthew 3:14-15

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When Jesus referred to John's Baptism as part of fulfilling all righteousness, he was not referring to baptism as something that would make us righteous in and of itself, but that 'humbling ourselves to obey what God has commanded is always acceptable before God. Something righteous simply means something that is acceptable before God.

Which comes first - Water baptism or Faith?

When we search the scriptures, whenever people got baptized, they were baptized after they believed. No one is ever recorded in the scriptures as being baptized in water before they had faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The most typical example is the Ethiopian Eunuch whom Phillip baptized.

"Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, *here is* water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." So, he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him." Acts 8:37-38

"Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized." Acts 18:8

"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." Mark 16:16

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“But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. ¹³Simon himself believed and was baptized.” Acts 8:12-13

In all these verses, the sequence is very clear. First comes the faith or believing, then comes the water baptism. It is never in reverse.

Even Our Lord Jesus Christ himself was brought to the temple when he was 8 days old to be consecrated to God according the Old Testament command found in Exodus 13:2, but he was baptized when he was 30 years old. (Luke 2:22-24; Luke 3:21-23)

How is water baptism administered?

We are aware that different denominations have different way of administering water baptism. Even though the issue of how water baptism is administered should not be an issue that divides Christians apart, as other fundamental issues as salvation in the sacrificial work of Christ alone, we will state what we believe is taught in the scriptures regarding this issue.

- a. We believe water baptism should be in total immersion into water. When we read of Jesus being baptized in Jordan, we read; “As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up **out of the water.**” Matthew 3:16

Regarding the Ethiopian Eunuch, it says:

“Then both Philip and the eunuch **went down into the water** and Philip baptized him. ³⁹When they **came up out of the water**, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.” Acts 8: 38-39

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- b. Water baptism should be administered in the name of “**The Father and of the Son and The Holy Spirit**” as commanded by Jesus Christ himself. (Matthew 28:19)

Some people say that believers should be baptized in the name of Jesus because in the book of Acts we read that the Apostles “Baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ”. There are two ways to look at this. Jesus gave a very clear command as to in whose name they should baptize. Either they were disobeying his command or there is another explanation. They could not be disobeying because they are His apostles on whose teachings the church is founded. One explanation is that the command Jesus Christ gave is “**Prescriptive**”, while the passages we read in Acts about the different incidents of the Apostles baptizing people in the name of Jesus is merely “**Descriptive**”. **The prescription Jesus gave is “In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit”**. What we read in Acts is that the whole incident of those people being baptized occurred in the Name of (in the authority of) our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **It doesn’t necessarily mean the actual baptismal ceremony occurred in the Name of Jesus Christ.**

The other explanation is, since the Name of Jesus Christ was highly controversial and the litmus test for true believers, the Apostles under the direction of the Holy Spirit might have used the Name of Jesus to emphasize the Lordship of Jesus Christ to the world. **The bottom line is, the clear and direct ‘prescription’ given to us by the Lord Jesus himself is to baptize in “the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.”**

Two erroneous views about water baptism

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a. Water Baptism is essential and necessary for Salvation.

There are some Christian denominations that believe baptism is an essential part of salvation. We would mention some of the verses they use for their belief.

Mark 16:16 “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”

This verse does not state that baptism is necessary for salvation, rather, it just states that ‘whoever believes and is baptized will be saved.’ It does not say that if you believe and you are not baptized you will not be saved. It only says, ‘whoever does not believe will be condemned.’

Another verse they use to say baptism is necessary for salvation is 1 Peter 3:20-21

“In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”
1Peter 3:20-21

As we have mentioned previously, this passage does not say water baptism saves us, but it *symbolizes* what happened when we got saved.

Yet another verse they use is John 3:5

“Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.”

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The way they interpret this verse is that someone has to be baptized in water and filled by the Holy Spirit in order to be born again or saved.

They misconstrue the water as being water baptism. But the scripture clearly tells us how we got born again.

“For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.” 1 Peter 1:23

The Scriptures refers to the Word of God as the water that cleanses us, the church or the Bride of Christ.

“To make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word.” Eph 5:26

So, when John 3:5 says “Water and Spirit”, we have to understand it from the totality of the Scripture concerning the new birth. When a sinner hears the Word of God and is convicted by the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit uses the precious Word of God to bring him to repentance and cleanse the sinner by the blood of Jesus and baptizes him/her into the Body of Christ. That is the only requirement for someone to be saved or born again.

The last verse we will look into, which is used by those who say water baptism is essential for salvation, is Acts 2:38

“Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

They use this verse to claim that baptism is necessary for the forgiveness or remission of sins. What we have to ask is, what does the Scripture say about remission (forgiveness) of sins?

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Acts 3:19 “Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.” This verse clearly tells us what one needs to do for his/her sins to be wiped out – REPENT.

Acts 10:43 “All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” This verse mentions “Believing in Him” as the main requirement to get forgiveness of sins through his name.

Matthew 26:28 “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.” Here we see the “Blood of Jesus” as being an essential part of getting forgiveness of sins.

Nowhere in the above verses do we see ‘water baptism’ as being a necessary part of forgiveness of sins.

The things that are absolutely essential for the remission (forgiveness) of sins are:

- Repentance
- Faith
- The blood of Jesus

b. The other erroneous view is to see water baptism as not necessary at all.

The only thing we want to say to counter this view is, “How can we minimize something the Lord gave as part of His last command to the Apostles.”

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“Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”
Matthew 28:19

In Summary, we learned:

1. Water baptism is something Jesus Christ himself called as a “Righteous Act”
2. Water baptism should follow real Faith, not the other way around.
3. We get baptized after we got saved, not as a necessary part of our salvation.
4. We get baptized to be identified with our Lord Jesus Christ’s death, burial and resurrection.
5. We get baptized to be obedient to Christ’s command

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Lesson 7 – Baptism & Holy Communion- Quiz

(Please give your answers on a separate piece of paper)

Student ID #: _____
Student Name: _____
Address: _____

1. How and why was the Holy Communion started?
2. What are the two ingredients symbolized in the Holy Communion?
3. What are the necessary pre-conditions for participating in the Holy Communion?
4. What is the message someone communicates when he/she get baptized?
5. Is baptism necessary for our salvation? Why?
6. What did Jesus mean when he referred to John's water baptism as "righteousness" in Matthew 3:15
7. Among the different kinds of baptism, explain the difference between #1 & #5
8. Have you been baptized? If your answer is 'no', are you planning to obey this important command given by our Lord Jesus Christ?