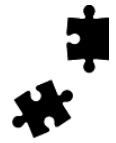


WHAT IT MEANS TO BE THE **CHURCH**



Lesson 8: A Case for Believer's Baptism

Tom Rodgers, Lead Pastor

- I. The starting point to develop a case for believer's baptism is the Savior's command to His disciples in the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18–20.
- II. Water baptism is not an inherent part of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and is therefore not required for the reception of eternal life (cp. John 20:30–31)—**1 Corinthians 1:14–17**.
- III. The ministry of John the Baptist is the starting point to understand the passages in the New Testament that include the command to be baptized in water for the forgiveness of sins—**Matthew 3:1–2, 5–6**.
 - a. Although many Jewish people believed John's message and were baptized in water, many rejected his message and instead chose to let the blood of Jesus be on them—**Matthew 27:25**.
 - b. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter essentially addressed that same group of Jewish people to prove that Israel's rejection of the Messiah was wrong and what to do because of it—**Acts 2:14–36**.
 - c. After positively responding in 2:37, Peter directed them to change their minds and be baptized in water, just like John had ordered, in order to be forgiven for their unique sin (verse 36)—**Acts 2:37–38**.
 - d. Saul of Tarsus became a Christian in the same way as the other Jewish people did on the Day of Pentecost—**Acts 9:1–19, 22:6–16**.
- IV. The normative experience of conversion began when Cornelius became a Christian: **1) faith in Jesus Christ for eternal life, 2) the reception of the Holy Spirit, and 3) water baptism to publicly identify himself with his Savior—Acts 10:43–48**.
- V. The normative pattern of salvation, which began with Cornelius, was replicated in the lives of the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26–39), Lydia of Thyatira (Acts 16:14–15), the Philippian jailor (Acts 16:29–33), and Crispus of Corinth (Acts 18:8).
- VI. Many New Testament passages involving baptism are references to the baptism of the Holy Spirit that places us in Jesus Christ without the use of water—**1 Corinthians 12:12–13; Romans 6:3–4**.
- VII. We do not follow Jesus Christ into the waters of baptism for the same reason He was baptized, because we can never legitimately declare ourselves to be sinless and an eligible sacrifice for sin as He did—**Matthew 3:13–15**.
- VIII. Immersion seems to be the best mode for believer's baptism for several reasons.
- IX. Believer's baptism is best understood as an outward expression of an inward possession and is an important step on the pathway of discipleship.