



The Good News

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What must I know to be baptized?

By Michael McCleary

At first glance, this may seem like a simple question to answer. Yet, it is a question that non-baptized and baptized individuals must ask themselves, for even baptized individuals may not truly be Christians if they did not know what they needed to know to be baptized. So, we ask, what must I know to be baptized?

1) I must know and believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God. In **Acts 8:37**, after Philip had taught the Ethiopian eunuch regarding Jesus, the eunuch asked Philip what hindered him from being baptized. Philip replied that if he believed with all his heart he may, and the eunuch replied that he believed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. We learn that an individual must know and believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and consequently that it is He to whom we must go for salvation, as Peter tells the Jewish elders in **Acts 4:12** that there is “*no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved*”.

2) I must know that baptism saves me – not just accepting Jesus into my heart. Many in the religious world believe that once you accept Jesus into your heart, your sins are taken away, and baptism is simply an outward sign of an inward grace. They do not believe that baptism saves a person. Yet, **1 Peter 3:21** tells us that it is baptism that saves us, not just accepting Jesus into our heart. The passage mentioned earlier concerning the Ethiopian eunuch also reveals baptism as being essential. At no time do we read of Philip preaching about baptism, but we know he preached about Jesus. Our religious friends might say that he was saved when he confessed Jesus, accepting him into his heart. If this were true, why was the eunuch so concerned about being baptized? Why after being baptized did go on his way rejoicing? Why would Philip teach about Jesus and then also teach about baptism? It is because baptism “*doth now save us*”.

3) I must know that baptism removes my sins

and adds me to the Lord’s church. In **Acts 2:38**, we see Peter commanding baptism for the remission (dismissal or release) of sins. It is this act of obedience by which we are washed clean of our sins. It is coupled with the Lord adding us to the church that belongs to Christ in **Acts 2:47**. In **Acts 8:12**, we see the Samaritans believing Philip concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ and then they were baptized. The teaching about the kingdom (or rule) of God would of necessity include teaching about Jesus’ body, the church, for those in the church are under His rule. Concerning the name of Christ, this would include teaching Jesus as the Son of God, and what He did in dying for our sins. The fact that they were then baptized tells us two things: (1) that baptism was also preached, and (2) it was not enough to just believe and accept Jesus into their hearts, for they had already done this.

Can I be taught wrong but baptized right? Is it possible to be taught that baptism is a sign of remission of sins (inward grace) and it still count after I come to a knowledge of the truth? In all the examples of New Testament conversion, they knew what they needed at the time of their baptism. If we were baptized in a denomination or a church that does not teach the true requirements of salvation, **we are not a Christian, for we were not taught what we needed to know.** Now that we have a knowledge of the truth, it is not difficult to simply be baptized into Christ for the right reasons from the right teaching. We see this happening with the twelve disciples of John in **Acts 19:1-7** where they had to be baptized into Christ even though they had already been baptized by John. Their baptism under the teaching of John did not “count” toward being baptized in Christ.

Consider the state of your soul today and ask yourself if you need to be baptized into the church that is Christ’s, receiving the hope of salvation before it is everlastingly too late.