

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ERIE

James M. Duncan, Pastor

September 29, 2019

The Ordinances of “The Church of the Living God” – Baptism and the Lord’s Supper

Matthew 3:13-17; 28:18-20

As a Bible Believing Baptist church, we have two and only two ordinances. These are, of course, **Baptism**, which we call the initial ordinance, and the **Lord's Supper**, the recurrent ordinance. An ordinance, per Merriam-Webster Dictionary is defined as: **“an authoritative decree or direction”**. So, it is a decree or command.

There are - Three distinguishing marks that characterize the New Testament ordinances:

They were **instituted** by Christ.

They were **taught** by the apostles.

They were **practiced** by the early church.

Baptism is a picture of our identification with **CHRIST**. And there are two illustrations will help us understand the concept of identification. The first is **the Pledge of Allegiance**. The second illustration is **the wedding ring**. A wedding ring identifies a wife with her husband and a husband with his wife. It is a public symbol of a private commitment.

Now there are several questions I want to ask and answer on this important subject of baptism. First,

I. WHO WAS BAPTISED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?

There are a number of scriptures like the following: **Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:12-13, 35-38; Acts 18:8; Acts 2:41-42; Acts 16:13-15; Acts 16:30-33**. But I want to focus on just one for time sake. Lets look at **Acts 8**.

No one was ever baptized until he or she had first **received** God’s **SALVATION** offered through Jesus Christ. Baptism never preceded one's acceptance of Christ, thus **the Bible teaches Believer’s Baptism only**.

Second question is . . .

II. HOW SHOULD WE BE BAPTISED?

The Greek word for “**baptize**” is the Greek verb: *baptizo* - and the primary meaning is “to dip, plunge, or immerse.” Key Scriptures that tells us the **Bible Mode of Baptism are: Acts 8:36-39; Matthew 3:4-6; Mark 1:5; John 3:23; Matthew 3:16**.

Immersion best expresses the significance of our **union** with Christ in:

Death (**Romans 6:3-5**)

Burial (**Colossians 2:12; Romans 6:4**)

Resurrection (**Colossians 2:12; Romans 6:5**)

What About Infant Baptism? **There is not one example or cases of infant baptism in the New Testament, it is for believer’s ONLY.**

Third question . . .

III. WHY SHOULD WE BE BAPTISED?

Christ commanded it: **“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them...” (Matthew 28:19)**. **His followers obeyed:** **“Those who accepted His message were baptized...” (Acts 2:41)**. It is a **demonstration** of our love to Christ: **“Whoever has My commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves Me...” (John 14:21)**. Lastly:

IV. WHY IS BAPTISM A PREREQUISITE TO CHURCH MEMBERSHIP?

Just as Spirit baptism (**1 Corinthians 12:13**) adds believers in our Lord Jesus Christ to the Church, which is His body, so water baptism is the **means** by which believers are **publicly inducted into discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20)** and added to the local church.

The New Testament teaches the following order of events: people **heard** the message regarding Christ, **responded** in saving faith, were **baptized** and **united** with the local body of believers (cf. **Acts 2:41-41, 47**).

Pastor John Piper shares the significance well: **“Baptism gets its meaning and its importance from the death of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who died in our place and for our sins, and from his triumph over death in the resurrection that guarantees our new and everlasting life.”**

Once you have accepted Jesus Christ into your hearts you need to identify yourself with Christ by symbolically crucifying your life (**which represents your dying to sin**), **by being buried with him (in the water, that is baptism)**, and by being resurrected with him as well (**by rising from the water**). Have you followed our Lord Jesus in believer’s baptism that we have spoken about today? If not make that important decision today.