

# CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES COURSE PAPER 3

## WATER BAPTISM

### **Bible Memory Verses: 1 Peter 3:20-21**

"In the ark only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolises baptism that now saves you also - not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ...."

### **Every believer needs to be baptised**

The Bible makes it very plain that every believer needs to be baptised. It is such an integral part of Christian initiation that the New Testament takes it for granted that a profession of faith in Christ will be followed more or less immediately by water baptism. Consider the following verses:

Acts 2:41 "Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about three thousand were added to their number that day."

Acts 18:8 "...and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptised."

It is a condition of membership of this church that you have been baptised by immersion as a believer, or that you are willing to be baptised at the earliest opportunity.

### **Why be baptised?**

Baptism is closely linked with believing in Jesus Christ. Some scriptures place them side by side as part of becoming a Christian:

Mark 16:6 "Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

Acts 2:38 "Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins may be forgiven."

Acts 22:16 "And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptised and wash your sins away, calling on His name."

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

This explains why water baptism is regarded as being of such importance that it is a requirement for membership.

### **What pictures and examples do we find in the Bible?**

1. Noah and the flood - See memory text.

2. Children of Israel at the Red Sea - 1 Corinthians 10:1-4. Exodus 14. Answer the following questions:

a) What did they leave behind?

b) Who were they dependent upon?

c) Where were they going?

3. Jesus at the Jordan - Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-10 and Luke 3:21-22. Can you find two reasons why Jesus was baptised? You may find the key to one reason in Matthew 4:19.

a)

b)

4. Early Christians.

In the first paragraph of this study you have seen some verses in Acts which show this truth. Can you find any more?

### **What does baptism do for the believer?**

1. It is an act of obedience to Christ a clear-cut demonstration that we know and acknowledge our new Lord, who said:

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."

There is great blessing and satisfaction in obeying the Lord. Our baptism will set a pattern of obedience to His Lordship in our lives as a whole.

2. There is a cutting away of the old nature as the dominant power in our lives. Just as Israelite boys in the Old Testament days received physical circumcision, so God's new-born children today receive at their baptism a spiritual circumcision, or a circumcision of the heart. Like all God's blessings this must be received by faith.

Deuteronomy 30:6 - "The Lord your God will circumcise your heart... so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and will all your soul..." Colossians 2:11-12 (Amplified New Testament) - In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, but in a (spiritual) circumcision (performed by) Christ, by stripping off the body of the flesh (the whole corrupt, carnal nature with its passions and lusts). (Thus you were circumcised when) you were buried with Him in (your) baptism, in which you were also raised with Him (to a new life) through (your) faith in the working of God (as displayed) when He raised Him up from the dead."

### 3. Other Scripture references state:

Romans 6:14 "...baptised into his death..."

Galatians 3:24 "...clothed with Christ..."

Ephesians 4:5 "...one body and one Spirit...one hope...one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God..."

#### **Objection!! "I have been baptised as a baby"**

1. Baptism is not for babies. Not once does the New Testament refer to such a practice. BAPTISM IS FOR BELIEVERS ONLY, which implies a certain level of mental development. (See Mark 16:16 "...whoever believes and is baptised..." John 4:1 and 2 "...Jesus gained and baptised more disciples...", Acts 2:38 "...repent and be baptised...", Acts 18:8). We have seen children being baptised, but only when they had a clear understanding of Jesus as their Lord and Saviour and because they wanted to obey Him by baptism.

2. Baptism by sprinkling is a contradiction of terms. The word "baptise" is an Anglicisation of a Greek word meaning to dip, immerse, submerge or plunge into a liquid. It was used by dyers to describe the act of dipping material in dye. New Testament baptism was by immersion.

Acts 8:38-39 "Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptised him, when they came up out of the water..."

Mark 1:9-19 "At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming up out of the water..."

#### **You and Baptism**

1. Have you been "born again"? - if yes, then,
2. Have you been baptised by immersion - if no, then,
3. Are you willing to obey the Lord Jesus and be baptised as soon as this can be arranged?