

This intent of this study is to take a comprehensive look at baptism in the New Testament. The approach used is a study method suggested by our Savior in Luke 10:25-28 when a lawyer came to test Him. Jesus pointed the man to what the law says, what it meant to him, and what he should do. This has proven to be a very effective way to study the Bible, whether the study is topical or expository. You can read more of this approach and other ways to study and interpret scripture in Bible Study for Joy and Profit by Charlie Brackett. You can learn more by visiting http://clarionword.com/product_info.php?cPath=47&products_id=213.

Your comments and questions about this study are welcome. Please send them to charlie@clarionword.com

What does the Bible say?	What does it mean?	What should I do?
<p>The sum total of all verses on a subject is the totality of God's revealed truth on that matter. What is in this column is the infallible, unerring word of the Almighty God according to the New King James version.</p> <p>Introduction: Every reference to the words <i>baptism</i>, <i>baptisms</i>, <i>baptize</i>, <i>baptized</i>, and <i>baptizing</i> in the New Testament have been included in this study. Actually, the focus of the study could be limited to use of these words after Christ's death on the cross. The reason is that references before the cross predated when the new covenant, the law Christians live under today, became effective. The new covenant's authority began with the death of the testator, Christ (Hebrews 9:15-17). Scripture references before the cross have been included primarily for background and to learn the teaching and practice of Jesus Himself regarding this important subject.</p> <p>Typing the scripture references and copying exactly what the verse(s) say(s) has helped me focus on the preciseness of truth. We have no right to change it.</p>	<p>Determining what God's word means involves arriving at my interpretation. It could be right or wrong. My goal, of course, is to understand truth as correctly as possible. I've tried to find the <i>Author's Intended Meaning</i> (AIM). Some things I've looked for regarding NT baptism have been 1) who is qualified to be baptized, 2) what was the mode of baptism, 3) for what purpose, and 4) what was the result.</p> <p>In this column is my human understanding – fallible and error-prone – though it is my best, prayerful effort at this point in my understanding of God's truth. Lord willing, I will return to this study in a few years to see if further maturity will help me see His truth more clearly.</p>	<p>In this column I wrote what I needed to do in my life to obey the teaching of the verse(s) being studied. Where I did not find something I needed to do, I indicated why. I hope my attitude has been one of humble, obedient submission no matter how distasteful, looking for that which I have left undone and need to obey or grow in. I've tried to avoid this study of baptism as an academic exercise or an attempt to prove my position right. Lord, help me if I have not been honest in this search for truth. O Lord, help us all draw closer to You in appropriation of your saving grace, and glorify You in the process.</p>

Definitions:

Vines definition of the noun *baptism*: Greek *baptisma*, consisting of the processes of immersion, submersion and emergence (from *bapto*, "to dip");

Vines definition of the verb *baptize*: Greek *baptizo*, "to baptize", primarily a frequentative form of *bapto*, "to dip", was used among the Greeks to signify the dyeing of a garment, or the drawing of water by dipping a vessel into another, etc.

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>John Came Preaching and Baptizing</i></p> <p>Matthew 3:1-8 - 1 In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea,² and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" ³ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.'" ⁴ And John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him ⁶ and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?⁸ "Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance.."</p>	<p>John was called "the Baptist" because, as he preached repentance, he baptized those who believed his message that the kingdom of God was at hand, or near. Because of that belief, they repented and confessed their sins. He then baptized them in the Jordan River.</p> <p>Chapter 3 confirms that John baptized in water. Despite contrary depictions by modern media, there had to be enough water for him to immerse. The Greek word "<i>baptizo</i>", the word John would have used to describe what he was doing, meant to immerse or submerge. History records that only immersion was practiced until almost a thousand years later when sprinkling was introduced.</p> <p>John also taught that one's life after baptism should bear the fruits of true repentance. Baptism is not effective unless repentance is real, resulting in a changed life.</p>	<p>John lived under the law of Moses, a covenant law that was replaced by a later, better covenant in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 8).</p> <p>We live during the dispensation of the new law of Christ. While we can learn from what went before, we must find the authority for our actions in the new law.</p> <p>The things commanded by John do not apply to us today unless we find them repeated in the new covenant.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>John's and Jesus' Work Contrasted</i></p> <p>Matthew 3:11-12 - 11 "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² "His winnowing fan <i>is</i> in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."</p>	<p>The purpose of John's statement is to teach his disciples the superiority of Jesus. He does this by contrasting baptism in water, which is the only baptism he could perform, to baptisms in the Holy Spirit and fire, which Jesus would do. The former probably refers to baptism of the Spirit as recorded in Acts 2 and 10 (see explanations of those passages). The latter may refer to the trials and persecutions his disciples would face, but I believe more likely to His role as the One who would bring judgement.</p> <p>John's comments do not mean that Jesus did not also baptize in water.</p>	<p>No application for me under the old covenant.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>John Baptizes Jesus</i></p> <p>Matthew 3:13-17 - 13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ And John <i>tried</i> to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?"¹⁵ But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit <i>it to be</i> so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him. ¹⁶ When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. ¹⁷ And suddenly a voice <i>came</i> from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."</p>	<p>What a powerful example for us! Jesus submitted to John's baptism though he was without sin. John realized that Jesus did not need to be baptized, but Jesus explained it was fitting for even He, the divine, sinless Son of God, in order to fulfill all that is righteous.</p> <p>Can we do less?</p>	<p>The example can be followed even though we live under a different law.</p> <p>I have followed the example of Jesus having been baptized according to my understanding of the commands of the new law.</p>

<p><i>Request Regarding Zebedee's Sons</i></p> <p>Matthew 20:20-23 - 20 Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. 21 And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom." 22 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 baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able." 23 So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but <i>it is for those</i> for whom it is prepared by My Father."</p>	<p>This cannot be a reference to His baptism in water by John. The baptism to which he refers is also called a cup He is <i>about</i> to drink. It is still in the future. That cup must be the trials and persecutions, even a cruel, unjust death, He would suffer in only a few short months.</p> <p>Having questioned if these two men could handle such a baptism of fire, Jesus then affirmed that they would indeed face trials similar to his own. History affirmed it was so. The apostle James, one of these two sons of Zebedee, was killed with the sword by King Herod for the cause of Christ (Acts 12:2).</p>	<p>No immediate application for me except to realize the price that some have paid to remain faithful to the Lord and to realize that should I be put to such a test, I will need to respond as the apostle James. Lord, help me have the courage.</p>
<p><i>Jesus' Authority Challenged</i></p> <p>Matthew 21:23-27 - 23 Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?" 24 But Jesus answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: 25 "The baptism of John--where was it from? From heaven or from men?" And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' 26 "But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the multitude, for all count John as a prophet." 27 So they answered Jesus and said, "We do not know." And He said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.</p>	<p>Jesus often answered a question with a question, especially when being tested as He was on this occasion. Nothing new is learned here about baptism except that it was commonly associated with John, and that the people believed his baptism to be from heaven.</p> <p>The notion that baptism originated in heaven, in the mind of God, seems logical and right. That immersing someone in water could take away sins is so strange a concept that it is doubtful to this writer that man's mind could have conceived it.</p>	<p>No application to be made.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Great Commission</i></p> <p>Matthew 28:18,19 – 18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.</p>	<p>Jesus, the One with all authority in heaven and on earth, commanded the apostles to go into the entire world and make disciples of those they met. The invitation to be a disciple of Jesus Christ is open to all genders and races. They are made disciples by the process of baptism in the name of, or by the authority of, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The divine three are one in the authority that Jesus said was given to Him. Though not stated, the implication is that one who has decided to become a disciple by being baptized must first believe the teachings of the apostles about Jesus. Otherwise, why would he or she submit to baptism? After baptism, the new disciple is to be taught to observe all things that Jesus had taught them. Thus, the command given them to make disciples has been commanded generation after generation down to today. Just as they, we are to make disciples of all nations by baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and to teach them to do the same.</p>	<p>Upon learning about Jesus and that I could be His disciple, I believed and was baptized. Having once been baptized, there is now no further application in my life of this part of the Lord’s command to them. Today’s application for me is to continue to make disciples for Jesus by baptizing them and to teach them to observe all of His commands. Though His command is not directly to me, those he commanded were told to teach others to do the same, therefore, I also am to go and make disciples. Since Jesus has been given all authority, I must always focus new disciples on Him. They are not to be my disciples, but His. They are not disciples because of me, but because of Him and what He did. From scripture, I know of no other way to make a disciple for Him than to baptize those who believe.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>John Came Baptizing; Jesus is Mightier</i></p> <p>Mark 1:4-8 - 4 John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. 5 Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. 6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7 And he preached, saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. 8 "I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."</p>	<p>This is Mark’s account of the scene given in Matthew 3:1-12. As we would expect, Mark’s is much briefer. See comments on the Matthew account.</p>	<p>No application here for me except to learn about this Jesus who is mightier than John.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Jesus Baptized by John</i></p> <p>Mark 1:9-11 – 9 It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan.10 And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.11 Then a voice came from heaven, “You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”</p>	<p>See comments at Matthew 3:13-17.</p>	<p>Honor the man Jesus who is demonstrated as the God Son, equal in divine nature to God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>James and John Request Privilege</i></p> <p>Mark 10:35-40 - 35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask." 36 And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" 37 They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory." 38 But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" 39 They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; 40 "but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but <i>it is for those</i> for whom it is prepared."</p>	<p>See comments on Matthew's account of this incident at Matthew 20:20-23.</p>	<p>Already stated at Matthew's account.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Leaders Challenge Authority of Jesus</i></p> <p>Mark 11:27-33 - 27 Then they came again to Jerusalem. And as He was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to Him.28 And they said to Him, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority to do these things?" 29 But Jesus answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one question; then answer Me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things:30 "The baptism of John--was it from heaven or from men? Answer Me."31 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' 32 "But if we say, 'From men' "--they feared the people, for all counted John to have been a prophet indeed.33 So they answered and said to Jesus, "We do not know." And Jesus answered and said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."</p>	<p>See comments at Matthew 21:23-27.</p>	<p>No application to be made.</p>

STUDY OF BAPTISM

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Great Commission</i></p> <p>Mark 16:15, 16 – 15 And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”</p>	<p>This passage is parallel to Matthew 28:18, 19 though new information is added. The command to go to everyone is the same. Here, how to make disciples is declared as preaching the gospel, i.e., the good news of salvation in the kingdom of the Savior. If one who hears that message believes it and is led by that belief to be baptized, he or she <i>will</i> be saved. If the hearer does not believe, he or she will not have any reason to be baptized and will <i>not</i> be saved. From this I would conclude that if a person did not believe the message and was baptized anyway (why, I don't know), that person would be condemned. Jesus said that salvation is the result of belief <u>and</u> baptism.</p>	<p>I was baptized many years ago based on my belief in the gospel message. Therefore, I have met the condition of this passage for salvation.</p> <p>This passage does not tell <i>me</i> to go into the world and preach the gospel, verse 14 indicates it was to the eleven apostles that he spoke. By putting Mark's and Matthew's accounts together it becomes clear that this command to preach and baptize is laid upon me as upon the apostles in the beginning.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>John Came Preaching and Baptizing</i></p> <p>Luke 3:2-6 - 2 while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.³ And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins,⁴ as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.'⁵ Every valley shall be filled And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough ways smooth; ⁶ And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.' "</p>	<p>Luke's account of John preaching and baptizing in the region around Jordan confirms what Mark said in Mark 1:4-8, namely John was preaching a <i>baptism of repentance for the remission of sins</i>. Baptism into Christ is not referred to in quite the same way. In Acts 2:38 Jews were commanded "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit".</p> <p>See Acts 19:1-7 for further discussion on the differences between John's baptism and baptism into Jesus Christ.</p>	<p>Understanding the nature of John's baptism in order to explain to others seems the only application to be made of this information.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>John Teaches Those He Baptized</i></p> <p>Luke 3:7-14 - 7 Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 "Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as <i>our</i> father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.9 "And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." 10 So the people asked him, saying, "What shall we do then?" 11 He answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise." 12 Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" 13 And he said to them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you." 14 Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages."</p>	<p>John taught those who came to him for baptism. Those who are properly baptized must understand why. What is the purpose? The one who is immersed without understanding has not really been baptized, only made wet. Among other things John taught that those who are baptized must "bear fruits of repentance", that is, their lives must show their repentance, or turning away from past sins. Baptism is the beginning of new life. (See Romans 6.)</p> <p>Notice that John did not necessarily teach them to change occupations. Tax collectors, though Jews generally thought it an evil occupation to collect taxes from the Romans, were told to be honest in their dealings. Soldiers were told to be fair and satisfied with their lot.</p>	<p>I also must teach those who want to be baptized. Since John's baptism is no longer valid, the teaching of baptism's purpose has changed.</p> <p>Bearing fruits of repentance must still be taught. Baptism does indeed begin a new life.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Baptisms of Jesus and John</i></p> <p>Luke 3:15-17 – 15 Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ <i>or</i> not,16 John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.17 "His winnowing fan <i>is</i> in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire."</p>	<p>The people were anxious for the coming of the Messiah spoken of in prophecy. So anxious, in fact, that they supposed John was the one. John's answer pointed them to Christ's superiority in all things as characterized by His superiority in baptism. John could baptize only in water, but the Lord also baptized with the Holy Spirit. No man, though a prominent baptizer, is the equal of the Savior. The one who baptizes is nothing; it is the saving action of the blood of Christ applied by the Savior in the water of baptism that is important.</p> <p>See also Matthew 3:11-12.</p>	<p>I must remember that I am nothing. Consequently, it is imperative that I teach and administer baptism according to the Lord's will precisely else my efforts at baptism will be non-effective.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>John Baptizes Jesus</i></p> <p>Luke 3:21-22 - 21 When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened.22 And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."</p>	<p>Baptism was certainly an important act in the time of Jesus. All of the people were baptized as well as the God-Son, Jesus. Remembering that in those days to be baptized was always to be immersed (the meaning of the word) makes this all the more significant. Notice that God the Father was well pleased when His Son was baptized.</p>	<p>There is nothing in this passage that I need to apply in my life.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Jesus Assesses John's Work</i></p> <p>Luke 7:28-30 - 28 "For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." 29 And when all the people heard Him, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John.30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.</p>	<p>People then were different than those today. Some will submit to God in baptism and some will not. This passage shows clearly that when one rejects baptism he or she rejects the will of God for them. The flip side of that is quite interesting. When one is baptized he or she "justifies God". This statement seems a bit strange. Does God need justifying? Certainly not in the sense that He is somehow out of line, not right or unjust. How can humans then justify God? Two thoughts come to mind. First, when an individual is baptized it demonstrates that God's plan for the salvation of mankind works. He is justified. The second is more oblique. Apparently when man lines up with God's will, that is, when man is justified or made right with God, all is right. The Creator and His creation are reconciled, made right. God is justified with His creation, not because God needed to change, but because man did.</p> <p>I'm not sure that either of these thoughts is correct. The key point, however, is that baptism does it. Justification does not occur before or without baptism!</p>	<p>There is nothing in this passage that I need to apply in my life except to understand and appreciate the levity of this message and teach it to others.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Jesus Asks About John's Baptism</i></p> <p>Luke 20:1-8 - 1 Now it happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel, that the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted Him 2 and spoke to Him, saying, "Tell us, by what authority are You doing these things? Or who is he who gave You this authority?" 3 But He answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, and answer Me: 4 "The baptism of John--was it from heaven or from men?" 5 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' 6 "But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, for they are persuaded that John was a prophet." 7 So they answered that they did not know where <i>it</i> was from. 8 And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."</p>	<p>Jesus refused to answer the chief priests, scribes and elders when they asked by what authority He did the things He did. He would not because they refused to admit that the baptism of John was from heaven. If they would not recognize the authority by which John baptized, they would certainly not recognize the authority by which Jesus worked and taught. Clearly, John baptized by God's authority given for a limited time while the first covenant was still in force. When the law of Christ became effective, baptism was in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and not only forgave sins, it was the means by which God bestowed the gift of the Holy Spirit. See Matthew 28:19 and Acts 2:38.</p>	<p>Perhaps I should limit my time discussing doctrinal differences with those who refuse to recognize the absolute authority of God's word.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>John Explains His Mission</i></p> <p>John 1:19-31 - 19 Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" 20 He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." 21 And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." 22 Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" 23 He said: "I am 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Make straight the way of the LORD, ' as the prophet Isaiah said.'" 24 Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees. 25 And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" 26 John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. 27 "It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose." 28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing. The Lamb of God 29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! 30 "This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.' 31 "I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."</p>	<p>John never claimed to be equal with Jesus. He said, "I am not the Christ." Actually, he preached superiority of the Christ, the one whose sandal strap he was not worthy to loose. When asked why he baptized if he was not the Christ, Elijah or the Prophet, simply stated that he baptized with water.</p> <p>John here uses baptism as one aspect of the comparison between them. He baptized with water while Jesus baptized with the Holy Spirit (see verse 33 below).</p>	<p>I find no direct application here for me.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>John Bears Witness of Jesus</i></p> <p>John 1:32-34 - 32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. 33 "I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' 34 "And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."</p>	<p>John baptized Jesus and on the significant occasion he witnessed the heavenly affirmation that Jesus is the Son of God. John saw the Spirit of God ascending from heaven like a dove, alighting on Jesus to indicate with absolute certainty who the Father's voice from heaven was declaring as the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. Matthew's account further adds (Matt 3:17) that the Father declared Him, "...My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."</p>	<p>I find no direct application here for me.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Jesus and John Baptizing</i></p> <p>John 3:22-23 - 22 After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He remained with them and baptized. 23 Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized.</p>	<p>Both Jesus and John baptized where there was "much water". The reason inherent in the meaning of the words <i>baptized</i> and <i>baptizing</i>. In New Testament times it meant simply <i>immersion</i>. Other meanings evolved several centuries later and are neither scriptural nor true to the Greek language.</p>	<p>I find no direct application here for me.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Dispute About Jesus Baptizing</i></p> <p>John 3:25-30 - 25 Then there arose a dispute between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purification. 26 And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified--behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!" 27 John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven.28 "You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before Him.'29 "He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled.30 "He must increase, but I <i>must</i> decrease."</p>	<p>It seems some of John's disciples became jealous because people began to go to Jesus to be baptized. Not John. He affirmed that the authority by which Jesus baptized was from heaven, and also that Jesus would <i>increase</i> in importance, while he, John, must <i>decrease</i>.</p>	<p>I find no direct application here for me.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Jesus Baptized More Than John</i></p> <p>John 4:1-3 - 1 Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John² (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples),³ He left Judea and departed again to Galilee.</p>	<p>It is interesting that it is said that Jesus baptized though He did not; His disciples did it on His behalf. Clearly, they baptized by His authority and approval. It means that what they did was exactly what He wanted them to do.</p>	<p>I must baptize in the form and manner and for the reason that Jesus has approved, i.e., authorized, or the baptism I administer will be useless. Further, the baptism to which I personally submit must, in the same way, be approved by Jesus. I believe my baptism was.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>John's Place for Baptizing</i></p> <p>John 10:40-42 - 40 And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed.⁴¹ Then many came to Him and said, "John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true."⁴² And many believed in Him there.</p>	<p>John had done much of his baptizing in a particular region, no doubt because there was much water there. See Jon 3:22-23.</p>	<p>I find no direct application here for me.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Holy Spirit Baptism Promised</i></p> <p>Acts 1:4, 5 - 4 And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; 5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."</p>	<p>Here, Jesus is promising baptism of the Holy Spirit to the apostles (the antecedent of "them" in verse 4 is identified as the apostles in verse 2), which would occur in a few days in Jerusalem. This is not a universal promise. Nor is the baptism of the Holy Spirit to be confused with the water baptism that was commanded by the Lord in Mark 16:16.</p> <p>Promises are to be received, while commands are to be obeyed.</p> <p>They did wait in Jerusalem and, as promised, received the baptism of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2.</p>	<p>Since the promise of baptism with the Holy Spirit was made to the apostles and not to me, I neither look for nor expect it.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Jesus' Baptism an Apostolic Qualification</i></p> <p>Acts 1:15-23 - 15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said, 16 "Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus; 17 "for he was numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry." 18 (Now this man purchased a field with the wages of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out. 19 And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, Field of Blood.) 20 "For it is written in the book of Psalms: 'Let his dwelling place be desolate, And let no one live in it'; and, 'Let another take his office.' 21 "Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 "beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection." 23 And they proposed two: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.</p>	<p>While the apostles and others waited for the promise of being baptized with the Spirit, they chose a replacement for Judas Iscariot. Peter spoke to them stating the qualifications the man they chose must meet. Among them, he had to have been with Jesus from the time of his baptism by John until His ascension. Only an eyewitness to the life, miracles and teachings of Jesus could serve as an apostle.</p>	<p>Interesting passage teaching me the marks of a true apostle. There is no direct application to be made in my life.</p>
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<p><i>Peter's Answer To "What Shall We Do?"</i></p> <p>Acts 2:37, 38 – 37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" 38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."</p>	<p>By crying out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do", those who heard Peter's sermon indicated that they believed that which he had presented – the resurrected Christ (verses 32-36). Since they believed, they needed next to repent and turn to the Lord. Then baptism was necessary for them to receive the two-fold promise stated in the latter part of verse 38. They had to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for, or unto, remission of sins. Baptism is <i>essential</i> to salvation. That fact is clearly stated here and in other passages that we are looking at in this study.</p> <p>Not only were they promised remission of sins when they were baptized, but also that they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This is very significant. I understand this to be the Holy Spirit Himself coming to live in the baptized believer as a seal, down payment or promise of salvation to come (2 Corinthians 1:21, 22 and Ephesians 1:13-14). I do not believe this is any miraculous manifestation of the Holy Spirit. As one reads through Acts, it is quickly obvious that many who were baptized could not perform miracles. 1 Corinthians 12-14 also confirms this fact.</p> <p>Baptism for any other reason than for remission of sins and receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit is <i>not</i> true baptism!</p> <p>Notice that verse 39 of Acts 2 affirms that the promise of forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit is available not just to them, but to <i>all</i> who obey.</p> <p>Paul states in Romans 8:11 that the indwelling Spirit is the means by which we will receive life immortal. This Spirit establishes His abode within the saved individual in baptism.</p>	<p>Like Peter, I must teach and practice repentance and baptism for the salvation of men.</p>
<p><i>God Adds Those Who Are Saved</i></p> <p>Acts 2:41 – 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.</p>	<p>They were added to the number of disciples based upon their baptism into the body of Christ. This parallels the thoughts of 1 Corinthians 12:13 ("we were all baptized into one body") and Galatians 3:27 ("as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ"). It is obvious that they first believed, then they must have repented as Peter told them to do in verse 38. Upon their belief and repentance they were proper candidates for baptism into the body of saved.</p>	<p>My job is like Peter's: to convince of sin and need for salvation and to teach repentance and baptism.</p> <p>The <i>Lord</i> will add those who are saved; that is <i>not</i> my job.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Samaritans Baptized</i></p> <p>Acts 8:9-13 - 9 But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great,¹⁰ to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God."¹¹ And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time.¹² But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.¹³ Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.</p>	<p>Believing the things about the kingdom of God precedes baptism. Immersing one who does not believe only gets them wet, and believing without being baptized is equally ineffective. When first century hearers of the gospel believed, they were immediately baptized.</p> <p>Philip no doubt taught them about baptism as he told them "the things concerning the kingdom of God" else how would they have known to be baptized. He taught belief <i>and</i> baptism. We should do no less.</p>	<p>As I teach about the kingdom of God, the task is not complete until I have taught about baptism.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Miraculous Power of the Spirit Received</i></p> <p>Acts 8:14-17 – 14 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, ¹⁵ who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶ For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>Philip came performing miracles. Though he baptized, the people could not do miracles until the apostles laid hands upon them. Philip could not impart this measure of the Holy Spirit, as could they since he was not an apostle.</p> <p>Notice verse 18. When Simon saw that the power to do miracles was acquired by the laying on of the apostles hands, he want to buy the same ability the apostles had. This incident is one of several scriptural reasons to believe that the Holy Spirit is <i>not</i> still performing miracles. When the last of the apostles died, there were none left to pass the power.</p>	<p>Though I can baptize, I cannot perform miracles; no apostle has laid hands on me.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Conversion of the Eunuch</i></p> <p>Acts 8:35-39 – 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. 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. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.</p>	<p>The baptism of the eunuch by Philip teaches us several important things. First,</p>	<p>There is no specific application for me in this passage.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Baptism of Saul (Paul)</i></p> <p>Acts 9:3-6 – 3 As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. 4 Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" 5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads." 6 So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Acts 9:17-18 – 17 And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." 18 Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized.</p>	<p>Some have said that Saul (later the apostle Paul) was saved on the road to Damascus at the moment he met the Lord and believed. I do not believe that was so. He believed and repented on the road, but was not saved until his later baptism in the city. Permit me to explain.</p> <p>He turned from his mission to persecute Christians, and obeyed the Lord's command to go into the city to learn what to do. His obedience brought him to Ananias' door where he was told what the Lord had planned for his life. Then Ananias laid hands on him; his sight was restored, and he was filled with the Holy Spirit. At that point, I understand he was still not saved. Acts 22:16, where Paul recounts this experience, says as much. There, Ananias is reported to have said to arise <i>and be baptized, washing away sins</i>. Here, the very last phrase of verse 18 says simply "he arose and was baptized." The unmistakable conclusion of putting these two accounts together is that Saul was saved when he was baptized.</p>	<p>There is no specific application for me in this passage.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Jesus' Work Followed John's</i></p> <p>Acts 10:36-38 - 36 "The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ-- He is Lord of all--37 "that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached:38 "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.</p>	<p>"The baptism which John preached", is used as a time marker. It was a significant doctrine, and is a significant event in the life of anyone who submits to it. It marks the beginning of their eternal salvation. No event in a person's life is more significant. Not even marriage or birth of a child. Certainly not an achievement measured in this world's goods, fame or contribution to the good of all.</p> <p>I believe this passage probably refers to the baptism of Jesus by John rather than the point in time when John began preaching the doctrine of baptism.</p>	<p>There is no specific application for me in this passage.</p>

<p>Acts 10:46-48 – 46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, “47 Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have receive the Holy Spirit just as we have?” 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.</p>	<p>Recorded in this chapter is the first gospel sermon preached to the Gentiles. Peter was the preacher. As he finished, God poured out the Holy Spirit upon them in fulfillment of the other half of Joel's prophecy that the Spirit would be poured out on all flesh. I believe that prophecy was fulfilled representatively in the small group of Jews who received the Spirit in Acts 2, and now these Gentiles in Acts 10. Though they were baptized with the Holy Spirit does not indicated they were saved. I know of no passage that teaches that. God baptized them with the Spirit to prove to Peter and the Jews with him that they should baptize Gentiles in water. Peter understood that baptism of a believer put that one into Christ, but in all of his experience he had never been in fellowship with a Gentile. In fact, he was taught that it was wrong to associate with Gentiles, the unclean. Reading the first part of this chapter show how much convincing Peter needed to preach to and accept Gentiles into the Lord's body.</p> <p>Once convinced by the evidence that they had received the Spirit and were, therefore approved of God, he commanded their baptisms. In this connection, see Acts 11:15-17 and the comments there.</p>	<p>There is no specific application for me in this passage.</p>
<p>Acts 11:15-17 – 15 “And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. 16 Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, ‘John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ 17 If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?”</p>	<p>I find great significance in the comment by Peter, “.. the Holy Spirit fell upon them, <i>as upon us at the beginning.</i>” The apostles had challenged Peter when he returned to Jerusalem after converting the Gentiles of the house of Cornelius. They were Jews. They didn't understand why Peter baptized Gentiles into the body of Christ. So he explained the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Cornelius as the same thing that happened to them at the beginning. The beginning can only be the events of Acts 2. It was when they, the apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit, and it was the beginning of the Lord's church. Now Peter has affirmed that Gentiles were also baptized with the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>What I find most significant is that Acts 2 and Acts 10 are separated by a half dozen or so years, during which time thousands of converts had been added to Christ. The necessary inference of Peter's statement is that none of them, not one since Pentecost in Acts 2, had been baptized with the Holy Spirit. Today, many would have you believe that the Holy Spirit will baptize any convert who asks for Him to baptize them. If that is so, what does this passage mean? My conclusion is that they are mistaken. There is no example of Holy Spirit baptism based on a request; every time in scripture the Holy came as the fulfillment of a promise of the Savior, that promise Peter recited in verse 16.</p>	<p>There is no specific application for me in this passage.</p>

<p>Acts 13:23-25 – 23 “From this man’s seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior – Jesus – 24 after John had first preached, before His coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. 25 And as John was finishing his course, he said, ‘Who do you think I am? I am not He. But behold, , there comes One after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to loose.’”</p>	<p>Paul made this statement during his discourse on the Sabbath in the Jewish synagogue at Antioch. This is not the only place that John’s baptism is styled “the baptism of repentance”. See Acts 19:4. Mark 1:4 speaks of John’s baptism as “a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins”. The significant difference in John’s baptism from the baptism that puts one into Christ is twofold (Acts 19:2-5): 1) John baptized telling people they should believe on the One that would come after him whereas the baptism taught by the apostles was in the name of the Lord Jesus, and 2) John’s baptism was associated with the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). This was not the “gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in the opening of 1 Corinthians 12, but the gift of the Sprit Himself, the indwelling Spirit referred to in Romans 8:9-11 and 1 Corinthians 6:19.</p>	<p>There is no specific application for me in this passage.</p>
<p>Acts 16:14, 15 – 14 Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. 15 And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” So she persuaded us.</p>	<p>The story of Lydia's conversion sheds interesting light on the conversion process. The things spoken by Paul were key to her salvation. Whether God opened her heart miraculously or simply by Paul's persuasive presentation of the gospel is not of great importance to the events. She heeded the message. Her response was by her own will; neither the Lord nor Paul coerced her. Though we don't know what Paul said, no doubt he told her all she needed to know. It is reasonable to assume that he told her of the Savior and His death for her, of the need to repent and confess Him as the Lord God, and of the baptism, its purpose and mode. Paul encountered her at a riverside, a convenient place for baptism.</p> <p>The conversion of Lydia's household should not surprise us. They had the same interest in serving Jehovah God as she. They were their worshiping God with her when Paul found them. And they heard the same message from Paul as she. Some have reasoned that since her household was baptized there much have been infants baptized as well. While it is true that some households have babies in them, others do not. In fact, there is nothing in the language that insists <i>all</i> members of the household were baptized. Some may not have believed Paul arguments, and remained as they were.</p>	<p>No direct application to make.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Philippian Jailer Saved</i></p> <p>Acts 16:23-34 – 23 And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw <i>them</i> into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely.24 Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. 25 But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.26 Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed.27 And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself.28 But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here."29 Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas.30 And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"31 So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."32 Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.33 And he took them the same hour of the night and washed <i>their</i> stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized.34 Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.</p>	<p>What a beautiful story of conversion this is! This jailor had the good sense to recognize the power of the living God when he saw it and to realize that he was in need of salvation. "What must I do to be saved?" Oh, that more today in the free world, where individuals believe themselves to have no need of salvation, would recognize their need. "...for all have sinned..." Paul said in Romans 3:23.</p> <p>The answer given, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved", has been taken by some to mean that mere belief is enough. That position ignores all of the other passages, such as Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16 and many others) that indicate baptism is essential for salvation. One part of truth cannot be held to the exclusion of all other parts, which relate to the same matter.</p> <p>One who truly believes will be immediately baptized as was the jailor. Notice that his rejoicing was after baptism. He understood that before baptism he had no reason to rejoice for he was not yet saved.</p> <p>Also notice that it is said he had believed in God after his baptism. Belief in not complete until it becomes obedient belief.</p>	<p>No direct application to make.</p>
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Acts 16:30-34 – 30 And he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” 31 So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.” 32 Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. 34 Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.

When asked what to do to be saved, the apostolic answer was to believe on the Lord Jesus. Many people have easy drawn conclusions from this statement that the inspired writer never intended. One such conclusion is that one must *only* believe. There are several reasons this cannot be the meaning: 1) The text does not say only believe. When one believes in the Biblical sense of the word, obedience always follows. Jesus said, “He who believes and is baptized shall be saved...” (Mark 16:16). If the jailer truly believed he would act upon that belief and be baptized, which is what happened. 2) Nowhere in scripture is the faith only doctrine taught. James 2:19b: “Even the demons believe and tremble.” and James 2:24: “You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.” The Bible differentiates works into three categories: works of man (Rom 4:2); works of the law (Rom 3:28); and works of faith (1 Thess 1:3). Salvation *cannot* come by our own working, or by obeying the Law of Moses, and are foolish to expect salvation will not come without doing the works of faith that God has commanded. 3) Generally, those who teach faith only are inconsistent. While they insist that making baptism essential for salvation denies salvation by grace, they teach one must not only believe but also repent and pray for Jesus to come into their hearts. Are not repentance and prayer things the supplicant must *do*? 4) No statement regarding salvation stands alone. God’s truth on a matter is the sum total of all He said on that subject. 5) The statement about the jailer “having believed “ in verse 34 should not be overlooked. This statement was made *after* he was baptized. It could not have been said until he was baptized because until then he had not *truly* believed.

Another erroneous conclusion that could be drawn from this passage is that all of the jailer’s household would be saved because he believed. Of course, that is not what is meant. Rather, he and his entire house would be saved upon believing. Each member had to believe to be saved. Immediately after saying they could all be saved, the text states that “they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house”. Here is the basis of belief – hearing the proclaimed word of God.

No direct application to make.

<p>Acts 18:8 – 8 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.</p>	<p>As with the jailer's household, the house of Crispus believed because each individual member heard the Lord's word and believed. No one in Crispus' house was saved because Crispus believed, just as no one today can be saved because another believes. Here, three of the logical steps of conversion are stated: hearing the word, believing that word and being baptized for the remission of sins. Other passages refer to two others: repenting (Acts 2:38; 17:30) and confessing (Acts 8:37; Rom 10:9, 10; Matt 10:32, 33). Putting it all together answers the question of how to be saved.</p>	<p>No direct application to make.</p>
<p>Acts 18:24-26 – 24 Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. 25 This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. 26 So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.</p>	<p>Not every baptism is the same. Though Apollos spoke and taught accurately what he knew, he apparently didn't know about any baptism but John's. He needed someone to explain to him "the way of God more accurately". The husband and wife team of Aquila and Priscilla took on the task of confronting and correcting Apollos. They must have done this in a good spirit and Apollos must have had a good heart because the following verses indicate that he accepted their correction and went on preaching.</p>	<p>I find no personal application here for me except as I may meet someone who, like Apollos, does not correctly understand baptism. Then I must follow the example of Aquila and Priscilla.</p>
<p>Acts 19:1-7 – 1 And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples, 2 he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." 3 And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism." 4 Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on the Christ Jesus." 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 When Paul laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. 7 Now the men were about twelve in all.</p>	<p>The obvious lesson here is that not every "baptism" is valid in the eyes of the Lord. As a result of Apollos' preaching, these disciples had been baptized the only way they knew, with John's baptism. John's was a baptism of repentance looking forward to the time Jesus would come. After the Lord's coming, or certainly by the time of the cross and resurrection, John's baptism was invalid. So they were rebaptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Or, more correctly, they were baptized correctly. It was not really a "rebaptism" since the first was not acceptable to God. The lesson here is a very important one: the purpose of baptism is crucial. If baptism is essential for salvation and one is baptized for any other reason than to be saved, then it follows that that person was never baptized in God's sight. In other words, they are not saved. The text indicates that after baptism Paul laid hands on them and they received miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit. They spoke in tongues and prophesied. The only place I know of in scripture that describes miraculous tongue speaking is in Acts 2. There they spoke human languages that they had not previously learned. Having no other explanation of tongue speaking, I must conclude that these men also spoke human languages they had not studied.</p>	<p>No direct application to make but to continue to recognize the distinction that sets the baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus apart from all other "baptisms", whether from God or man, and to teach that those who have been erroneously "baptized" should be rebaptized as were these.</p>

<p>Acts 22:16 – 16 'And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'</p>	<p>Apparently, Paul knew all that he needed to know to be saved; he had only to act on what he knew. At this point, there can be no further reason for delay. It is time to arise, and be baptized. Paul was still in his sins when this statement was made to him. The action of baptism was for the purpose of washing away his sins. Of course, Paul was not agent to accomplish the washing. Based on his own will, he could only decide and arise to act. Nor is baptism the agent of washing. There is no intrinsic power in the water. The saving agent is a merciful God, who takes away the sins when a person decides to obey Him by being baptized. That is the significance in the phrase "calling on the name of the Lord." The act of baptism, an act of obedience to a command of God, constitutes the "calling". By obeying in baptism, an individual is calling on God to remove his sins just as God has promised to do. (See Mark 16:15,15; Acts 2:38; and many more. Also, compare 1 Peter 3:21.)</p>	<p>No direct application to make.</p>
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<p>Romans 6:3-8 – 3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin. 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,...</p>	<p>From the many important lessons in this passage I will glean only those directly related to baptism. First, baptism is the way we get into, or experience, the death of Christ. There are at least two reasons that this is very important:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) It is in the death of Christ that we contact the saving power of His shed blood. It is by His blood that we are justified, or saved (Rom 5:9); brought near to God (Eph 2:13); make peace with God (Col 1:20); are redeemed (1 Pet 1:18, 19; Rev 5:9); cleansed from all sin (1 John 1:7); washed from our sins and made white (Rev 1:5; 7:14); and overcome the devil (Rev 12:11). 2) We must taste of His death in order to taste of His resurrection (Rom 6:4, 5). It is in baptism, which is the “likeness of His death”, that we crucify our old self with Him. It is at that point that the sin of past life is done away, and we are no longer slaves of “sin leading to death, but of obedience leading to righteousness” (verse 16). <p>Verse 4 affirms that baptism is a burial into death, “that just as Christ was raised from the dead ... we also should walk in newness of life”. New life in Christ begins as one rises from the watery grave of baptism. The old life of sin is past, the new life in Christ lies ahead. This is where sins are washed away as those sins of which were washed from the Corinthian brethren (1 Cor 6:11). Not by the action of water, but by action of God in response to a good conscience (1 Pet 3:21).</p> <p>The Holy Spirit’s likeness of baptism to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ is in complete harmony with the NT Greek meaning of the word <i>baptizo</i> (to dip or immerse).</p> <p>This view that baptism is immersion in water and is essential to one’s salvation is the only view that fits this passage. There is no other mode or purpose of baptism that comes close.</p>	<p>No direct application to make. The rich, comprehensive nature of Paul’s treatment of baptism in this passage suggests that I should study it more fully. I believe the case for scriptural baptism, that which God would approve, could be made effectively from this passage alone, if we had no other. The application for me, therefore, is more study of this context.</p>
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<p>1 Corinthians 1:13-18 – 13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Peter? 14 I thank God I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15 lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name. 16 Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides I do not know whether I baptized any other. 17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. 18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.</p>	<p>It appears that Paul was trying to de-emphasize any importance that some at Corinth may have attached to the one who performed a baptism. They had preacher-itis to the point of dividing. There is no saving power in the man who brings the message, nor is there any saving power in baptism itself. The power is in the gospel (Romans 1:16) and in a loving and merciful God.</p> <p>When the gospel message is preached and believed, baptism is the natural result. True belief causes one to do whatever the Lord has commanded. The message is not about baptism, it is about believing in the Lord and obediently following Him, which includes repenting, confessing Him as Lord, being baptized into Him, and living a life of faithful service.</p> <p>Several years ago, a Baptist preacher told me that many Baptists, including those of his congregation, no longer practiced baptism by immersion, or in any form for that matter. He referred me to this passage as the reason why. He said Peter taught and practiced baptism, but later when Paul came on the scene the practice began to be discontinued. Now we should not practice it at all. Of course, nothing in this passage remotely suggests that. I never cease to be amazed at the lengths to which men will go in distorting scripture to come up with their own, new thing. Maybe it has something to do with the fact that many today see baptism as "the foolishness" of the message of the cross.</p>	<p>No direct application to make.</p>
<p>1 Corinthians 10:1-4 – 1 Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, 2 all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.</p>	<p>This is an interesting use of the term baptism to the Israelite passing through the Red Sea on their escape from Egyptian bondage. By their "baptism" they were saved, and made their entrance into the oneness of eating the same spiritual food and drinking the same spiritual drink.</p> <p>Today, baptism saves us and is our entrance into the fellowship and spiritual blessings that are in Jesus Christ.</p>	<p>No direct application to make.</p>
<p>1 Corinthians 12:13 – 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.</p>	<p>The idea that baptism is the entrance into the one spiritual body of Christ, where spiritual blessings are shared, frequently occurs in Paul's writings. Baptism is the great leveler. All in Christ are equal, whether Jew or Greek, slave or free. We are equal brothers and sisters, partakers of the Holy Spirit, the Giver of eternal life.</p> <p>The NU-Text (variant reading based on the Critical Text) omits "into" before one Spirit.</p>	<p>No direct application to make.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Baptism of the Dead</i></p> <p>1 Corinthians 15:21-32 - 21 For since by man <i>came</i> death, by Man also <i>came</i> the resurrection of the dead.22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those <i>who are</i> Christ's at His coming. 24 Then <i>comes</i> the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.26 The last enemy <i>that</i> will be destroyed <i>is</i> death.27 For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under <i>Him</i>," <i>it is</i> evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted.28 Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.29 Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead?30 And why do we stand in jeopardy every hour?31 I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.32 If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage <i>is it</i> to me? If <i>the</i> dead do not rise, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"</p>	<p>Verse 29 in this context, which refers to baptism for the dead, is very perplexing. Many possible explanations of this practice have been suggested. I certainly am not comfortable with my understanding, but here it is:</p> <p>Since the context has to do with the concept of resurrection after death, and since Paul asks why be baptized for the dead if there is no resurrection, those engaging in the practice must have expected it to change the outcome of the resurrection. For whom? It seems logical, for the dead one for whom they were baptized.</p> <p>My conclusion is that there were some in Paul's time who thought they could be vicariously baptized for a departed loved one who had not been baptized while alive. They thought it would change the departed one's eternal destiny.</p> <p>Paul neither confirmed nor denied the validity of the practice. He simply asked what the point is if there is no resurrection. Since there is no other information in scripture to legitimize the practice, and since all other passages dealing with baptism indicated the believing individual who is baptized is the one who is saved, I have decided the practice had no value and was born of misunderstanding of the true nature of baptism.</p>	<p>Continue to study this subject with an mind open to a better grasp of truth.</p>
<p>Galatians 3:26, 27 – 26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.</p>	<p>Here we have a parallel statement of the same fact, much in the style of the parallelisms of Hebrew poetry. We are made sons of God through our faith in Jesus Christ. Stated another way, being baptized puts us in Christ and in the family of God.</p> <p>When you think about it, this is a very revealing passage. If one has not put on Christ, he or she cannot be in Christ where all spiritual blessings are found (Ephesians 1:3). The blessings in Christ, including salvation, are enjoyed after one has put on Christ. How do we put Him on? Clearly, the passage is stating that baptism is the means of putting on Christ.</p>	<p>No direct application to make.</p>

<p>Ephesians 4:1-6 – 1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another love 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.</p>	<p>The bond of peace and shared brotherhood among Christians depends upon the oneness of seven fundamental elements stated in this powerful passage. Unfortunately, the world of Christianity today is badly ruptured because there is not universal agreement about the “oneness” of these essentials. Generally, all agree in the oneness of four: one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, and one God the Father. But we are divided over the oneness of the body, the faith, and baptism. Denominationalism has divided the body and given rise to the notion of “different faiths” even to the point of advocating “the faith of your choice”. The one baptism has been replaced by immersion to demonstrate a saved condition, sprinkling, pouring, baptism of infants, Holy Spirit baptism, and no baptism at all. A multiplicity is not one! Are there multiple Lords? Heaven help Christianity-at-large for the arrogance that has fostered this nonsense.</p> <p>A significant point to notice in this passage is that when Paul wrote the Ephesians (about 62 AD) there was only <i>one</i> baptism. There had been more: John’s baptism, Holy Spirit baptism, and immersion in water for remission of sins. But by the time of this writing, there was only one. John’s had passed (Acts 19:1-7). And the two occasions of Holy Spirit baptism where passed (See the discussion on Acts 10:46-48 and 11:15-17.)</p>	<p>No direct application to make but to teach these great truths. If all Christianity could understand the truth of the oneness in Christ set forth in this passage, surely we would not be as divided as seen everywhere today.</p>
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<p>Colossians 2:11-13 – 11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,</p>	<p>Circumcision is the cutting away of unwanted flesh. The circumcision not made with hands of which Paul speaks is a work of God, not man. It puts off "the body of the sins of flesh", and it happens in baptism. In other words, baptism is that circumcision not made with hands, the circumcision of Christ. Not any baptism, but the one, true baptism spoken of in Ephesians 4 -- immersion in water.</p> <p>It is hard to miss the significance of baptism in this verse. Listen to Paul: "buried with Him" and "raised with Him". This is an obvious reference to going down into and coming up out of the water of baptism. It is effective only if done through faith in God's ability to raise one from the death in sin to new life just as He raised Jesus, the Son, from the dead.</p> <p>Before baptism, we are dead in trespasses of God's will. We are dead in uncircumcision. But then in baptism He makes us alive together with Him. All trespasses are forgiven!</p> <p>The believer in Jesus Christ as the savior who has not yet been immersed in water for the purpose of having sins forgiven is still spiritually dead in his or her sins. Realizing that should cause an individual to lose no time in being baptized, made alive together with Him.</p>	<p>No direct application to make.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Baptism is a Fundamental</i></p> <p>Hebrews 5:12-14 - 12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.13 For everyone who partakes <i>only</i> of milk <i>is</i> unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, <i>that is</i>, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.</p> <p>Hebrews 6:1-3 - 1 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary <i>principles</i> of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.3 And this we will do if God permits.</p>	<p>As stated in verse 2, an understanding of the doctrine of baptisms (plural) is fundamental to the Christian's walk in Christ. I am afraid many disciples today do not understand these basics.</p> <p>John said of Jesus in Matthew 3:11, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance ... He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." Baptism with fire no doubt refers to the persecution that many of the Lord's endured because of their faith. In Matthew 28:19, Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,..." In Acts 2, the apostles carried out that command when Peter instructed baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission, that they might receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>Also in Acts 2, Jesus baptized His apostles, representative of Jews, with the Holy Spirit, and later in Acts 10, Cornelius and his house as representative of Gentiles. These two occasions of Holy Spirit baptism fulfilled the prophecy of Joel 2 referred to by Peter in Acts 2. In Acts 11, Peter argued that what happened to Cornelius is what happened to the apostles at the beginning (Acts 2).</p> <p>In Acts 19, Paul had men rebaptized in the name of Jesus who had been baptized only in John's baptism, thus showing that at this point John's baptism was no longer valid.</p> <p>By the time Paul wrote Ephesians 4:5 (probably in the early 60s, perhaps about 62 AD), there was only one baptism. John's baptism was no longer valid and Holy Spirit baptism had fulfilled its purpose leaving only immersion in water for the forgiveness of sins.</p> <p>(For further discussion on this important topic, see the comments at each of the scriptures cited in this section.)</p>	<p>No direct application to make.</p>
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<p>1 Peter 3:18-22 – 18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, 19 by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, 20 who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. 21 There is also an antitype which now saves us – baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.</p>	<p>Since our focus in this study is baptism, many good lessons in this passage will be passed over without comment.</p> <p>This passage affirms that baptism in water saves and explains how that happens. Peter compares salvation by baptism to the salvation Noah and his family found in the ark. Those in the ark were saved by water, Peter says. Of course, those outside the ark were destroyed by water. The difference lies in man's willingness to obey the Lord's commands. Noah was not saved by his own ability to build an ark; there was nothing in his experience that caused him to see the need or know how to prepare for it. God directed the building and Noah, by faith, simply obeyed.</p> <p>Noah and the ark are a type of the salvation we can find in Christ. Not the real thing, but a type. Peter says the antitype (the opposite of type, or the real thing) is baptism. Further, he affirms that it saves us. In the same way as the ark, baptism saves those who, in faith, are willing to follow God's direction. Baptism is a work of God, not man.</p> <p>The washing away of sins in baptism to which Acts 22:16 refers has nothing to do with removing filth from the flesh. Baptism is not about physical water or any physical thing. It is spiritual. It is about God's willingness to take away our sins coupled with our willingness to meet Him in obedience, or as Peter put it, "the answer of a good conscience toward God".</p> <p>One last point of comparison with the water that saved Noah: baptism not only saves, it also destroys. Those who refuse to obey God in this command stand condemned. Just as in Noah's day, the water that saves the obedient condemns those who refuse.</p>	<p>No direct application to make.</p>
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