

# Christian Discipleship Guide



*“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, ‘All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.’” (Matthew 28:18-20)*

## 4. Believer's Baptism

1. After we have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, our first act of obedience in service to the Lord is baptism. Any believer can be baptized; it takes no special talent or effort. Jesus set the example Himself by submitting to baptism before beginning His public ministry (*Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22*). It is clear that Jesus was baptized in obedience to God's plan. In *Matthew 3:15*, Jesus said, "... Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." This point of submission and obedience is the single most important thing to realize regarding baptism. Other biblical examples of those who submitted to baptism after salvation are the Ethiopian eunuch (*Acts 8:26-39*), the Apostle Paul (*Acts 9:18*), the Philippian jailer (*Acts 16:25-33*), Crispus - the chief synagogue ruler in Corinth (*Acts 18:8*), and Lydia of Thyatira (*Acts 16:14-15*).
2. There are two purposes of baptism (*Romans 6:3-4*). One is that baptism pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The other is that baptism is a public testimony of the new believer's identification with Jesus Christ through the death, burial, and resurrection, which is how we were saved. Baptism identifies us with the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. The clearest case of an individual's baptism in the Bible is the Ethiopian eunuch (*Acts 8:26-39*). In this passage, the eunuch asked Philip, "... what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip then answered with the condition of baptism in verse 37, "... If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest (be baptized)." Then the eunuch's response sealed the matter, "... I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Hence, the only requirements for baptism are the same requirement for salvation as found in *Romans 10:9-10*, that is, **heart belief** in Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior, and **confession** that Jesus is Lord and Savior. There are no cases of baptism in the Bible of anyone but believers. Some other instances of baptism immediately after salvation are the Samaritans converted by Philip (*Acts 8:12*) and Crispus, the chief synagogue ruler in Corinth (*Acts 18:8*).
4. Water baptism by immersion (not by sprinkling) pictures our identifying with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. As we are immersed into the water, it reveals to others the death of the "old man," that is, the unsaved man facing eternal damnation. When we are under the water, it pictures our life as dead and buried in Christ. As we are raised up out of the water by another's power, we go forth to walk in newness of eternal life. The clearest example of baptism by immersion was when Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch went down into the water and came up out of the water (*Acts 8:38-39*). Jesus was baptized in the same manner by John the Baptist (*Matthew 3:16*). And, John the Baptist needed a large volume of water to perform baptisms (*John 3:23*). As seen previously, baptism is a picture of death, burial, and resurrection. The only way to bury someone is to put them completely underground. The biblical method of baptism is by complete immersion. No one in the Bible was ever sprinkled, because no one can be buried by sprinkling dirt on them.
5. It is important to understand that baptism is *not* essential for salvation. The Bible makes it clear that a man is saved by grace through faith without works, including baptism (*Ephesians 2:8-9*). But, the "Great Commission" proves it is essential for service and spiritual growth. Baptism is an integral part of the commission, preceding teaching (*Matthew 28:19-20*). So, before anyone can be taught to follow Jesus Christ, they must be willing to submit to this first act of obedience. If a person refuses to obey the Lord in the first point, he will not obey in future points (*Matthew 3:13-15*).

6. Since baptism is a public confession of our faith in Jesus Christ, most often it will be done publicly in front of the local church community. Many times, people will be baptized in lakes, ponds, creeks, or rivers, which is fine. The Lord Jesus Christ was baptized in the Jordan River. The actual place of baptism is not important. It is the act of public testimony of your identification with the Lord Jesus Christ that is the important point.

7.

8. **Questions:**

9. Give the key reason why God instructs the Christian to be baptized.

---

---

---

---

10. What are the purposes for baptism found in Romans 6:3-4?

11. \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

12. \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

13. According to Acts 8:36-37 and Romans 10:9-10, the Ethiopian eunuch had to fulfill two requirements before he could be baptized. What were the two requirements?

14. \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

15. \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

16. Is Baptism essential for salvation? \_\_\_\_\_. Explain your answer using Ephesians 2:8-9.

---

---

**17.**

**18. Additional Scripture Verses:**

19. *Matthew 3:13-17; Matthew 28: 19-20; Mark 1:9-10; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:1-8; Acts 2:38; Acts 2:41; Acts 8:12-13; Acts 8:35-39; Acts 9:18; Acts 10:47-48; Acts 16: 14-15; Acts 18:8; Acts 19:3-5; Romans 1:16; Romans 6:1-6; 1 Corinthians 12:13; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:5; Ephesians 5:26; Colossians 2:12; Titus 3:5-7; Hebrews 6:1-3; 1 Peter 3:21.*