

Baptism: A Question Worth Answering

Children have a way of asking question after question: what, why, who, when, and how. While those questions may test our patience, they also lead to learning and understanding. In much the same way, honest spiritual questions can lead us closer to the truth of God's Word. One question that deserves careful Bible study is this: what does God say about baptism?

In Acts 8:35-39, Philip preached Jesus to the Ethiopian eunuch. As they traveled, the eunuch saw water and asked, "What hinders me from being baptized?" They both went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. This account helps us see that baptism is not a mere symbol of sprinkling or pouring, but an immersion in water. Other passages describe baptism as a burial and resurrection with Christ (Romans 6:1-10; Colossians 2:12).

The Bible also answers why one is to be baptized. Baptism is commanded by God (Acts 2:38; Acts 10:48), is connected with the washing away of sins (Acts 22:16), and is tied to salvation through the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 3:21). For this reason, baptism should never be treated as unimportant or optional when God has spoken so plainly.

Who, then, should be baptized? The Scriptures show that those who hear, believe, repent, and are able to understand the gospel are the ones who respond in baptism (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:37-41; Acts 8:35-39). Baptism is the obedient response of a penitent believer who desires to be united with Christ and have sins forgiven.

When people ask what baptism is, why it matters, or who should be baptized, we should be ready to answer from Scripture. Baptism is an immersion in water, commanded by God, for the forgiveness of sins and salvation. If you have not obeyed the gospel, consider the question of the Ethiopian eunuch: "What hinders me?"

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