

QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK US.

1) Why do you not baptise infants?

The question opens up the whole topic of baptism, and in this we are keen to follow the New Testament pattern.

- 1) **Baptism was commanded by the Lord Jesus Himself.** He told His apostles to make disciples, "baptising them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28.19). In light of that consider the following:
 - Baptism *is not* essential for salvation: salvation is by the grace of God, and is based on the sacrifice of Christ. It is received by faith in Christ without any additions.
 - Baptism *is* essential if the command of the Lord Jesus is to be obeyed.
- 2) **Baptism was by immersion in water.**
 - The word *baptise* means *to dip*. For example, it is the word a Greek woman used when she was dyeing a garment: she *baptised* the garment in the dye.
 - The Lord Jesus Christ Himself was baptised by immersion. Mark 1.9 states literally that He was baptised *into* the Jordan, and the following verse speaks of Him "coming up out of the water."
 - Acts chapter 8 cites the story of an Ethiopian man who was converted to Christ: it tells of his subsequent baptism. Of Philip and the Ethiopian it says that *they went down both into the water: after the baptism they came up out of the water* (verses 38-39).
 - Baptism by immersion is confirmed by the fact that the spiritual teaching connected with the ordinance has to do with burial and resurrection (Romans 6. 3-4).
- 3) **Baptism was only for those who had believed.** A reading of the Book of Acts will reveal this. (This paragraph answers the original question).
 - It was those who *gladly received his word* who were baptised in chapter 2.41.
 - Reference has been made to the Ethiopian in chapter eight. It was after he believed that he was baptised, as is the case with Saul of Tarsus and Cornelius in chapters nine and ten.
 - A brief statement in chapter 18.8 summarises the New Testament pattern for this, "Many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptised."
 - In the records of households being baptised, there is never a hint that any of these family members were infants.

- In Acts 19, twelve men who were baptised prior to conversion were baptised again after they received Christ.
 - In Bible days, baptism was *immediate* upon conversion. In fact the longest recorded gap between salvation and baptism was in the case of Saul of Tarsus, and the interval was only three days!
- 4) **Baptism was an opportunity for believers to declare publicly their union with Christ.** They were *baptised into* (*into association with*) *Jesus Christ* says Romans 6.3 (see also Galatians 3.27).
- Romans chapter 6 teaches that believers are associated with Christ in His death and resurrection: that has broken our links with sin as a slave master, and has given us power to live for God. This fact is symbolised in the believer's baptism: it denotes burial and resurrection (V4-5).
 - At conversion, confession is made with the mouth that Jesus is Lord (Romans 10.9). Baptism is a further opportunity to declare allegiance to Him.

The foregoing is very brief: if you would like relevant literature, please contact us, but more importantly, take time to read the appropriate Scriptures for yourself, particularly the Acts of the Apostles. Thank you for contacting our web site.