

Baptism and Communion

Class Outline

I. What is Water Baptism All About?

A. What is water baptism?

1. To be completely immersed or submerged (Matthew 3:16)
2. A life-changing experience

B. Why should you be water baptized?

1. Your soul needs to be saved
2. Leave the baggage behind
3. A public declaration of your desire to take the next step with God
4. Identification with Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection
5. Not a requirement for being saved

C. When should you be water baptized?

1. Any time after you're saved
2. It's good to have an understanding of baptism first

D. Who is qualified to baptize you?

1. Anyone who is a believer
2. Anyone who has been baptized themselves (Matthew 28:18-20)

E. Where can you be baptized?

1. Anywhere you can go "completely under"
2. Anywhere others can witness your next step with God

II. What is Holy Spirit Baptism All About?

A. Who is the Holy Spirit?

1. The Holy Spirit is a person (John 15:26)
2. Jesus could only be in one place at a time - the Holy Spirit lives in every believer (John 14:12)
3. The Holy Spirit gives us wisdom and direction

B. What is Baptism in the Holy Spirit?

1. Immersion in the power and authority of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4)
2. Being filled with His power

C. How do I get baptized in the Holy Spirit?

1. Become born again
2. Simply ask (Luke 11:10)

D. How do I know when I've been baptized in the Holy Spirit?

1. Speaking in tongues (Romans 8:26-27)
2. Praying in the spirit

III. What About Communion?

A. Communion is remembering Jesus' life, death, and resurrection (1 Corinthians 11:23-25)

B. Partaking of His life brings life and strength to our bodies

C. Communion is a time of examining yourself to see if there are areas God wants to change

D. Communion can be taken anywhere and any time

What is Water Baptism All About?

Water baptism is talked about a lot in Christianity, but what does it really mean? Let's take a look at the Who, What, When, Where, and Why of water baptism.

What... is water baptism?

The dictionary definition of baptism is to be completely immersed or submerged (like a submarine). Water baptism means to be completely covered in water. Matthew 3:16 says: "After His baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on Him." Jesus was completely submerged!

Why... should you be water baptized?

When you are born again, your spirit gets saved immediately. What still needs to be worked on is your soul (which is your mind, will and emotions) - and sometimes these guys can be a bit stubborn! Baptism is a public declaration that you're ready to take the next step and leave that past "baggage" behind. So, it's important to gather together people that love and support you as witnesses as you publicly declare your love for and commitment to Him! Water baptism is also identification with Jesus' death (in the water), burial (under the water), and resurrection (up out of the water).

One thing to note is that some people would say that you need to be water baptized to get into heaven, but as we saw in Romans 10:9-10, believing and declaring is all it takes to come into relationship with God. Water baptism is just the next step.

When... should you get water baptized?

The only requirement in the Bible for water baptism is that you first be born again. That's it! No classes, no tests, just born again! Also, it's good to have an understanding of what water baptism is all about, which is why you're reading this!

Who... is qualified to water baptize you?

Matthew 28:18-20 is known as the Great Commission. This was Jesus' parting words to His followers before He went back to heaven. He said: "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Notice Jesus put baptism in there right between sharing His love with others and teaching them about the things of God. He must have thought it was pretty important! These followers were commissioned right then and there to baptize. So, if you're a believer and have been baptized yourself, you're qualified too!

Where... can you be water baptized?

Remember that the definition of baptism is to "go completely under." So anywhere that can be done will work. Baptisms have been done in lakes, rivers, swimming pools... even bathtubs! Also, it should be done where other people can gather around and witness this great step you're taking in your walk with God!

What is Holy Spirit Baptism All About?

Our relationship with the Holy Spirit is an extremely important part of our walk with God. When we are born again, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside of us – to lead us with wisdom and understanding of God’s Word. Let’s look at the who, what, and how of the Holy Spirit.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

John 15:26 says: “When the Friend I plan to send you from the Father comes—the Spirit of Truth issuing from the Father—he will confirm everything about me.” Jesus here is talking about the Holy Spirit. He is not a ghost, or an abstract entity. He is a person. The person of the Holy Spirit lives inside of us when we’re born again.

John 14:12 says: “I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father.”

Jesus walked the earth as a man. He did great miracles, signs, and wonders, but he could only be in one place at one time. Jesus said we could do greater works than He did because the Holy Spirit, whom He sent, lives in every believer. So now, throughout the world, His works are being done – because the Holy Spirit lives in His people!

The Holy Spirit speaks to us, giving us wisdom and direction. If we’re tuned in to Him, He will lead us where we should go, and He will keep us from going where we shouldn’t. You may have gotten a feeling before that you shouldn’t do something you were about to do. Or maybe that you should do something that you weren’t going to do. This is the Holy Spirit leading you. He walks with us and speaks to us... we just need to listen!

What is Baptism in the Holy Spirit?

Luke 24:49 says: “And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven.” Just like water baptism, baptism in the Holy Spirit is a complete immersion.

Acts 2:1-4 says: “On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.”

Holy Spirit baptism is being filled with His power. This power allows us to be more sensitive to the voice of God. It better equips us to perform the same miracles, signs, and wonders that Jesus did – because all of the power and authority of heaven is backing us up!

How do I get baptized in the Holy Spirit?

When you were born again, it happened by you asking with your mouth and believing with your heart. Holy Spirit baptism is just as easy! All that is required is for you first to be saved and then simply ask. Once you do this, believe that you have received, and then begin walking in this new power!

Just like Luke 11:10 says: “For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.” That’s all there is to it!

How do I know when I've been baptized in the Holy Spirit?

One key evidence of being baptized in the Holy Spirit is to speak in other tongues. You may have experienced people doing this. It may seem a bit strange (or very strange), but it is simply the Holy Spirit speaking the perfect will of God.

Romans 8:26-27 says: And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for, but the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will."

Think of it this way... as was mentioned earlier, the Holy Spirit is a person. He resides in you. When He prays, He uses your voice to speak. The words He speaks are not English – they are the words of the spirit. So, this "praying in tongues" or "praying in the Spirit" is just the Holy Spirit inside of you using your voice to pray the perfect will of God. How cool!

There may be situations that you need to pray about, but you don't have all the information. Praying in English is great, but it may not be enough. The good news is that the Holy Spirit knows every aspect of the situation! So, when you pray in the spirit, you can know that you're praying the perfect will of God.

The more you practice praying in the spirit and walking in the power of the Holy Spirit, the more sensitive and exercised you'll be at hearing His voice. Obey when He speaks. This will make it easier to obey the next time He talks to you. Remember that He loves you and wants the best for you. So start walking with Him today!

What About Communion?

Communion is another very important way of fellowshiping with God. It is taking the bread (which represents Jesus' body that was broken on the cross) and the blood (which represents the blood that flowed and cleansed us from our sin).

1 Corinthians 11:23-25 says: "For I pass on to you what I received from the Lord himself. On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and said, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this to remember me.' In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant between God and his people - an agreement confirmed with my blood. Do this to remember me as often as you drink it.'"

Receiving communion is a way of reminding ourselves of all that Jesus did in His life, death, and resurrection. He paid the ultimate price by taking all the sins we would ever commit, so that we could be free to live for Him for all eternity! When we partake of His life, it brings life and strength to our bodies.

Also, communion is a time for examining yourself, to look at those areas that are not fully surrendered to God. As you sit quietly, remind yourself of Jesus and all He has done for you. Ask Him if there is anything He wants you to change or adjust, so you're better able to serve Him.

Communion can be celebrated anytime and as often as you like. You can receive it at church, at a Life Group meeting, or even at home by yourself.

