

Despite the doctors' reservations on Grace's condition, the family decided to attend a spiritual convocation in Elizabeth Church. At the convocation, Grace's family learned that the church had been fasting and praying for them before they arrived. With the intercession of many brothers and sisters, Grace's family received showers of blessings. Grace's mom received the Holy Spirit during the first day of fasting prayer. Grace also received the Holy Spirit the second day. During the baptism, both Grace and her mom saw the vision of the blood of Jesus Christ. After the baptism, the paleness in Grace's face and the coldness in her hands disappeared. The next morning, Grace returned home for her weekly blood transfusions. Miraculously, her blood count had increased! God had restored her bone marrow production of red blood cells. Having seen God's power, Grace stopped taking the prescribed medicine. Instead, her family prayed harder, knowing that many brothers and sisters in Christ were doing the same. The family continued their morning fasting prayer for three months. Thank God, Grace's blood count increased until she completely recovered.

By the love of God, Grace was able to lead a healthy, active life after baptism. She was able to participate in numerous spiritual convocations and seminars, visit many churches abroad, and attend college in Washington, D.C. Grace's testimony not only demonstrates the almighty power of the Lord, but also shows us the importance of baptizing into the name of Jesus Christ and becoming God's children. May all the glory be to God in heaven. Amen.

## REFLECTION & PRAYER



*"Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them" (Acts 2:41). On that joyous day in Acts, three thousand were baptized. But do we ever stop to think about how many of the three thousand were saved at the end? Baptism is only the beginning of our walk of faith. It marks the start of a lifelong journey of renewal and cleansing. May the Lord protect and guide us as we continue to grow in spirit and walk toward our heavenly home.*

## Lesson 5

# The Doctrine of Baptism (2)

### Listed Scriptures

Mk 16:14-20 ; Acts 22:1-21 ; Rom 6:1-14 ; Gal 3:26-29 ; Col 2:11-13 ; 1 Pet 3:20-21

### Lesson Aim

- 1) To review our church's doctrine of baptism and its implications
- 2) To confirm why our doctrine of baptism is based on the Bible

### Memory Verse

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, though the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit." (Tit 3:5)

### Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

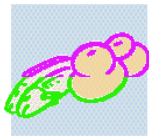
Acts 21-26

**Note to teachers:** This quarter's lessons do not contain the Bible Background section since they pertain more to the history of our church.

## WARM UP



As second or third generation True Jesus Church members, many of our students may not remember their own baptisms as infants. Therefore, it may be difficult for them to understand baptism on a personal level. In order for the students to get a first-hand account of baptism, ask them to recount the last baptism they attended. What were some of the things they observed? How did they feel? Why can baptism be a life-changing event?



## Part 1

*Effects of Baptism*

Not only did Jesus Christ Himself receive baptism (Mt 3:16-17), He commanded His students to “make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Mt 28:19). The Lord Jesus also said, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mk 16:16). Thus, we can see that baptism is an essential command directly related to salvation.


**A . Sanctification and the Remission of Sins**

The main effect of baptism is the remittance of sin. The Bible tells us that when we are baptized, our body of sin is “done away with” so that we are no longer slaves of sin (Rom 6:6). That is why disciples such as Peter and Paul preached that baptism in the name of Jesus Christ could remit sins (Acts 2:38, 22:16). Once our sins are cleansed, we become “sanctified” and “justified” (1 Cor 6:11).


**B . Resurrection and Renewal of Life**

In baptism, we experience death, burial and resurrection with Christ (Rom 6:3-5). We are literally born again so that we may enter the kingdom of God (Jn 3:5). After we are raised with Christ through faith (Col 2:12), we should make the determination to walk in the newness of life (Rom 6:4). As Paul would say, “Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?” (Rom 6:1-2).


**C . To Have Part With Christ**

Baptism allows us to take part with Christ. As Galatians tells us, “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Gal 3:27). Not only so, we are “baptized into one body” (1 Cor 12:13) and become members in the church, or the body of Christ. Therefore, one cannot join the church without proper baptism.

**D . To Have Part In Salvation**

Baptism allows us to have part in salvation. From Titus 3:5, we learn that we are saved through the “washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.” Jesus Christ also said, “unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (Jn 3:5). Just as the Noah’s family was saved through the floodwaters, we are saved through baptism today. As Peter says, “There is also an antitype which 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” (1 Pet 3:21). Once our consciences are cleansed with the blood of Christ (Heb 9:12-14), we can have part in salvation.



## Part 2

*The Biblical Method of Baptism*

**A . In a Living Source of Water**

Old Testament typologies and New Testament examples show us that baptism has always been conducted in a living, or natural flowing, source of water. In the Old Testament, Zechariah prophesied that a “fountain” would be opened for uncleanness (Zech 13:1). God also promised that He would pardon His people by casting their sins “into the depth of the sea” (Mic 7:18-19). Later, Paul interprets this promise as the New Testament baptism (1 Cor 10:1-2). In the New Testament, Jesus Christ Himself was baptized in the River Jordan. In fact, Aenon, or the place where He received baptism (Jn 3:23), carries the original meaning of “double spring” in Greek. Nowhere in the Bible does it record people being baptized in man-made containers such as cisterns, tubs or pools. By this reason, we should also be baptized in natural sources of living water.


**B . In the Name of Jesus Christ**

We baptize in the name of Jesus Christ because “there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). That is why the apostles also did everything and baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38, 8:16, 10:48, 19:5, 22:16). Please also refer to Lesson 4.



## C. Face Down

Baptism is a death, burial and resurrection with Christ (Rom 6:3-5). When we are baptized, we are buried with Christ (Col 2:12). In order to die in the likeness of Christ, we should bow our head as the Lord did on the cross (Jn 19:30). Bowing our heads not only shows our humility, but also demonstrates our repentance as a sinner (Ezek 9:6; Ps 40:12; Lk 18:13-14).



## D. Full Immersion

The original meaning of *batisma*, the root of baptism, means “to dip or immerse.” The Greek Orthodox Church, one of the oldest Christian churches, continues to emphasize the original meaning of the scriptures, and continues to perform full immersion baptism today.

Old Testament prefigurations teach us the importance of full immersion baptism. For example, the story of Noah’s flood describes how the “all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered” (Gen 7:18) because “all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened” (Gen 7:11). Since the flood is an antitype for the New Testament baptism (1 Pet 3:20-21), we should also be fully covered by water during baptism.

Another Old Testament antitype is the crossing of the Red Sea. When the Israelites crossed the sea, “the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.” (Ex 14:22) Because “passing through the sea” is an antitype for baptism (1 Cor 10:1-2), we should be surrounded by water when we are baptized into Jesus Christ. Likewise, in the New Testament, Lord Jesus received an immersion baptism because He “came up immediately from the water” (Mt 3:16). Disciples such as Philip followed this example and “went down into the water” when he baptized the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:38).



## Part 3 Qualifications



## A. Qualifications of the Baptists

- a. Be filled with the Holy Spirit  
The person who baptizes to remit sins must be full of the Holy Spirit because

only the Holy Spirit has the power to forgive sins (Jn 20:22-23). The Holy Spirit not only proves that the baptist is sent by God (Jn 20:21-22, Lk 4:18), but also testifies that there is both water and blood in the baptism (1 Jn 5:6-7; Jn 19:34; Eph 1:7).

- b. Be baptized properly  
In order to forgive sins, a person must first be forgiven (Jn 20:22-23), and one must be properly baptized for their sins to be forgiven (Rom 6:4-7).



## B. Qualifications of the Baptism Candidates

- a. Must believe  
Jesus Christ said, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mk 16:16). Therefore, those who receive baptism must believe that Jesus Christ is the one and only Savior, that “there is no other name under heaven given among men” that can save us (Acts 4:12). Baptism candidates must also believe that Christ’s blood can remit sins (Eph 1:7), and that the blood is present in the baptismal water under the witness of the Holy Spirit (Acts 22:16; 1 Jn 5:6-7). Lastly, those who baptize into our church must believe that the church is the body of Christ (Col 1:24), and the temple of God (Eph 2:19-21).
- b. Must repent of sins  
Repentance must take place before baptism, for even the apostles preached, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized” (Acts 2:38). Repentance includes turning away from evil (Mt 3:6; Acts 3:26) and drawing near to God (Acts 26:20; Tit 2:14).



## Part 4 Infant Baptism

Although there are many conflicting views on infant baptism, our church believes that infants should be baptized for the following reasons:

- a. Although they may not have committed any crime, infants are born with original sin (Ps 51; 5, Rom 5:12). Since they carry sin and have no power over death (Ecc 8:8), they need to be baptized for the remission of sins in order to be saved (Tit 3:5).

- b. God includes children in His promise of salvation. When Peter preached about baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit, he said, "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:39). During Jesus Christ's ministry, He said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 19:14).
- c. Old Testament prefiguration of baptism included infants. When the covenant of circumcision was given to Abraham, God commanded babies to be circumcised on the eighth day (Gen 17:9-14; Lev 12:2-3; Col 2:11-12; Gal 3:27). Little children and infants also received salvation along with adults when the Israelites were "baptized" into the Red Sea (1 Cor 10:1-2; Ex 10:9-10, 24, 12:31).
- d. The family was baptized as a unit during the apostolic times (Acts 16:15, 32-34; 1 Cor 1:16). Since infants are part of the family, they should not be excluded from baptism.

## C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



**1** If we are "saved by grace," why do we need to get baptized?

**2** What is an antitype? What are two Old Testament antitypes for New Testament baptism? (An antitype, or type/typology, is either something in the Bible that happens earlier (in the Old Testament) that foreshadows a significant event that happens later (in the New Testament). An example is the Old Testament flood, which is an antitype for baptism (1 Pet 3:21). Adam was also a pattern, or an antitype for Christ.)

**3** What are the two qualifications of baptists (those who baptize others) in the True Jesus Church? What's the reasoning behind these rules?

**4** If living also means moving, would a whirlpool be okay as a baptism site? Why or why not?

**Live Report**

Group students into teams. Each team must include at least one reporter and at least one interviewee. Ask the group to decide on a baptism testimony (can be personal or from other church members). Ask the group to write an interview script for the baptism. Interviewees may include onlookers, baptists, friends or family members. Emphasize that the answers must be true to the testimony. No exaggerations. Allow each group 5-10 minutes to present. You may wish to video each group separately and play them back for the class.

## Other options

Allow students to make a video documentary of baptism experiences in your local church or ask students to write down a testimony of baptism that occurred in their family.

## Example

**Testimony: God's Grace in Baptism, by Sis. Elaina Aug 2002**

Because of the Lord's grace, both my husband and I were able to be baptized on March 14, 1999. That morning, the preacher picked up the six of us who were to receive baptism. Determined to be God's children, we were full of joy. My husband looked very happy the whole way. However, I also felt like crying because I kept on remembering how the Lord Jesus died for our salvation.

Many brothers and sisters were waiting for us when we arrived at the baptismal site in Long Beach. Their greetings of love made me feel that we were part of one big family. My husband must have felt the same, too, since he was smiling the whole time. When everything was ready, we prayed and began to sing hymns. The preacher went into the water and started praying. All of a sudden, I saw a red color gradually appear from my right side and extend toward the left. Tears came to my eyes because I knew that it was the blood of Jesus and that God was with us. My eyes were full of the sight of Jesus' blood when the first sister was baptized. Feeling God's tremendous love, I could not help but kneel down and cry out loud. I felt that the Lord Jesus loved me so much; that I was a sinner, unworthy of His salvation.

When it was my turn, I knelt down in the water and found that it was warm. I felt that God's love was around me, and that my sin was being washed away. After

the baptism, I told my husband that I saw the blood of Jesus. He was very touched and confident of God's grace. When we returned to church for the Holy Communion and Foot Washing, I was asked to testify about what I saw. Praise God that another sister who received baptism that morning also witnessed about seeing the blood of Christ.

In the days following our baptism, my husband and I felt constant joy and thankfulness in our lives. However, about a month and a half later, something suddenly came to my mind. I asked my husband, "How come I haven't heard you say anything about your health recently?"

I was curious because my husband had been suffering from a worsening heart condition that could not be fixed by doctors. At times, his heart rate would fall under 58 beats per minute. Therefore, he would often lie down and complain that he couldn't breathe well. To my surprise, my husband looked at me and replied, "Hmm...I actually don't feel any pain anymore. In fact, I'm quite comfortable. God must have healed my illness, even though I did not pray and ask Him to. He must have understood my suffering and had mercy on me."

Praise the Lord! God not only allowed me to see the vision of His precious blood, but also healed my husband during baptism. Because of God's grace, my husband has become a healthy person with a normal heart. Because of His mercy, we can now concentrate our efforts on doing holy work in church. May God in heaven be glorified and praised forever. Amen.

#### **Report based on testimony:**

- Reporter: Good evening, Sister Elaina. We are glad you can be with us today.
- Sis. Elaina: Good evening, Bro. \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you for having me.
- Reporter: I heard you had a wonderful experience during today's baptism. Would you mind sharing it with us?
- Sis. Elaina: Thank God, I did have a wonderful experience and I'm eager to tell everyone about it. I witnessed the blood of Christ at the baptism site today!
- Reporter: Really? What was it like?
- Sis. Elaina: Well, let me first tell you a little about why I made the choice to become baptized... (continue)



*As believers of Christ, we were all bought with the priceless blood of our Lord Jesus. May we constantly remind ourselves of the grace of God and the price He paid for our salvation. As the Bible tells us, "For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor 6:20)*