

SCHOOL OF KNOWING AND SERVING GOD

PB: 385 BERTOUA (CAMEROON)

Tel: (237) 677-43-69-99

[bcc@ztfministry.org](mailto:bcc@ztfministry.org)



TEACHING ON BASIC DOCTRINES

UNIT 2

"THE WAY OF OBEDIENCE"

# LESSON 1: WATER BAPTISM



## PREFACE TO THE COURSE ON THE WAY OF OBEDIENCE

The first course on THE WAY OF LIFE discussed the creation, the fall of man and his redemption through Jesus Christ the Son of God.

We saw that:

Man, God's privileged creature, created in God's image, became an old creation (a degenerate creature) the day he disobeyed God and, as a result, God's image in him was distorted. By disobeying God, man conceived the seed of sin and instantly became rebellious in nature. We want to remind the reader here that it was through Satan's instigation (the ancient serpent) that man disobeyed God (Genesis 3: 1-6). By choosing to listen to Satan instead of God, man deliberately broke his commitment to God, to establish a new one with God's enemy. Man thus broke away from the presence and authority of God, to be ruled by the system we have named the Satanic Trinity, that is, the world, the devil and the flesh. We saw that the world opposes God the Father, the devil opposes God the Son and the flesh opposes God the Holy Spirit.

We also saw that man being thus separated from God, was doomed to a sole, final destiny, the second death. But God in His love and compassion for man sent His Son, Jesus Christ to annihilate him who has the power of death, that is, the devil. By His death on the cross, Jesus won a far-reaching and final victory over the totality of the Satanic Trinity. He overcame the world, the devil and the flesh.



By His death on the cross, His victory over Satan, and through His resurrection, Jesus opened for man, a way out of the old creation. We clearly said that redemption is a work resulting exclusively from God's initiative, without the least contribution from man. The gift of eternal life is therefore God's free gift. We stressed, however that even as God offered the gift, it is man's choice to accept (or reject) it, and that eternal life is only given to those who receive Jesus Christ.

The new birth is a secret transaction between man and his God. The baptisms and witnessing treated in The Way of Obedience are solemn actions in that none of them can be or remain hidden. They express man's response to God and to the new life granted him by God. Water baptism (or baptism into water), the baptism into the Holy Spirit and witnessing are a decisive step towards an effective breach with the Satanic Trinity. The change of kingdoms is normally a product of conversion, without which there is no genuine conversion. But the inner transaction cannot be valid before God, before Satan and before the world if it is not confessed. So the person who goes through the way of obedience is proclaiming that in his life:

- It is no longer the world dominating but God.
- It is no longer the devil dominating but Jesus Christ
- It is no longer the flesh but the Holy Spirit dominating.



The global content of the three lessons in this course is a reproduction of the book entitled The Way of Obedience whose author is Dr. Zacharias FOMUM. I have however deemed it necessary to modify some of the content in order to present it in the form of a Bible course.

I will never cease to ask you to get a Bible and to check for yourself, the exactitude of the Bible passages quoted in this course. We want to use this course to lead the student to draw from the source of these teachings - the Bible.

Take the pain to read all the Bible passages quoted in this course. As you read on, open your heart to God, for the Lord has a message for you in each passage you read.

May God bless you!



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE TO THE COURSE ON THE WAY OF OBEDIENCE

LESSON I: WATER BAPTISM

THE PRACTICE OF WATER BAPTISM

- 1) Is the baptism of babies biblical?
- 2) Who is qualified to be baptized?
  - 2.1) Baptism on the day of the Pentecost.
  - 2.2) The baptism of the first African.
- 3) For how long should a person who has experienced the new birth wait to be baptized?
- 4) How should believers be baptized?
- 5) Can a person be baptized twice?
  - The baptism of the Ephesians: Rebaptism (Acts 19: 1-6)
- 6) In what name should believers be baptized?
- 7) Who should baptize believers ?

## I. THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF WATER BAPTISM

WHAT BAPTISM IS NOT

- 1.1) Baptism is not a removal of dirt from the body (I Peter 3 : 18:21)
  - 1.2) Baptism is not the end.
- ### 1) SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD AND COMMITMENT TO GOD



- 2.1) A world under water.
- 2.2) Baptism and salvation.
- 2) SEPARATION FROM THE DEVIL AND UNION WITH CHRIST
  - 3.1) Union with Christ in his death: death to sin.
  - 3.2) Union with Christ in His burial.
  - 3.3) Union with Christ in His resurrection.

Points to remember



## LESSON I: BAPTISM INTO WATER

When someone has passed from death unto life in the Lord Jesus, the next thing that he should do is to get baptized. That is at least what the various examples drawn from the Bible teach us. Throughout this course, we will say nothing other than what the Bible says about this topic, for God's word is the final authority on the matter. The psalmist says: "thou hast commanded thy precepts to be kept diligently" (Psalm 119: 4). We insist on the fact that what the Bible teaches on baptism is simple and complete and that none of its prescriptions on this subject should be subject to any personal interpretation. We are going to see under the heading "Practical issues of water baptism", some examples of this baptism in the Bible, and under a second heading, "The spiritual signification of water baptism"; we will state the meaning that the Bible gives of water baptism.

### THE PRATICAL ISSUES CONCERNING WATERBAPTISM

Is the baptism of babies biblical?

The Lord Jesus was not baptized as a baby. As a baby, he was dedicated to the Lord. The Bible says, "And when the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord" (Luke 2:22). The Lord Himself followed this pattern in His ministry. When babies were brought to Him, He blessed them. He did not baptize them. The Bible says, "And



they were bringing children to Him, that He might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it He was indignant, and said to them, 'let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belong the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it'. And He took them in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands upon them" (Mark 10:13—16).

The Lord Jesus asked to be baptized. He insisted on being baptized and refused to be dissuaded from it. The Bible says, "Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented Him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?' But Jesus answered him 'let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.'

Then He consented" (Matthew 3:13-15).

Nowhere in the Bible do we read that babies were baptized. As we have seen clearly, faith in the Lord is a prerequisite for baptism. Sinners must repent, receive the Lord Jesus and then they can be baptized.

- Babies cannot understand the word of God.
- Babies do not understand their lost state before God.
- Babies cannot receive the Lord Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

Therefore, babies must not be baptized. What if the parents are believers? Well, God has no grandchildren. He has children. People



must become individually and personally vitally related to the Lord Jesus. There are no "Genes" of faith in the Lord Jesus which a believing parent can pass on to the baby, therefore, the babies of believers are born into the devil's kingdom and must personally, through repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus, come out of the devil's kingdom and be transferred into the kingdom of Christ and then they can be baptized. Before then, baptizing them is a lie, the devil's lie aimed at deceiving multitudes, and oh! "The multitudes that are now in hell and many more that will follow" because by being baptized as children, they are deceived into thinking that they are children of God.

What of the practice of saying, "Baptize babies and later on teach them about the Lord Jesus and bring them into salvation in Him"? This the doctrine that says, "He who is baptized and later on believes shall be saved". This too is a doctrine of the devil for the Lord Jesus said, "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved". God said so and still says so. Anyone who twists God's order of things will not go unpunished. (Revelation 22: 18- 19).

We therefore sum up by saying that the baptism of babies is not of God, but of the devil, first of all because we find no such example in the Bible, and then because according to the Bible only someone who asks to be baptized should be baptized.



## WHO IS QUALIFIED TO BE BAPTIZED?

Baptism on the day of the first Pentecost

It was the day of the first Pentecost. Peter had just preached the gospel. The Bible says, "Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said to them, "repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:37-38).

Peter gave this commandment to people who:

1. heard his message
2. were convicted of sin (cut to the heart)
3. Asked intelligently what they should do.

Peter asked them to do two things:

1. to repent
2. to be baptized

So the people who were being addressed had to be able to repent. They had to put that ability into action. They had to repent. After repentance, they had to be baptized. They had to do both things -repent and be baptized- They were not allowed to repent and not be baptized nor to be baptized without repentance.



When they did these two things, Peter promised them that they would receive two things from God:

1. Forgiveness of sin
2. The gift of the Holy Spirit

It was obvious that if they failed to do their part, God would withhold His own part. Peter further said to them, "For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to Him". (Acts 2:39). We immediately ask, which promise was for them, their children and all who are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to Him? It is the promise that they would receive the forgiveness of sin and the gift of the Holy Spirit if they repented and were baptized. The promise had meaning only to those who had fulfilled the conditions that it demanded. It offered absolutely nothing to those who could not repent or would never repent. The promise was for those "whom the Lord our God calls to Him". The Lord calls those who are able to hear His call and able to respond if they so desire.

Of those who were cut to the heart and asked the question, "Brethren, what shall we do?" Some receive Peter's words. They fulfilled the condition by repenting and were baptized that same day. Those who were baptized were added to those who had fulfilled the condition by repenting and were baptized that same day. Those who were baptized were added to those who had believed before and had been baptized.



These people were added to the local church, by believing and being baptized. Had they believed but not been baptized, they would never have been added to the local church. They would have been justified before God because of their repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus. But, they would have had no place in the visible body of Christ; they would have had no place in the life, conflicts, victories ... of the people of God on earth.

The baptism of the first African (Acts 8 : 26-39)

The first African whose baptism is mentioned in a distinct way in the Bible was the Ethiopian eunuch. The Lord sent Philip the evangelist to go and witness to him. Philip "opened his mouth, and beginning with this scripture he told him the good news of Jesus". (Acts 8:35). This good news must have included the need to repent for the Bible says: "And as they went along the road they came to some water and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?"

(Acts 8:36). Had he heard a "gospel" that did not include the need to repent and be baptized, he would never have asked that question. He would never have received the ministry of baptism into water; he would have received an incomplete message and had an incomplete experience!

When the Ethiopian asked what prevented him from being baptized, Philip said to him, "if you believed with all your heart, you may. "The eunuch replied, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Acts 8:37).



Philip did not say, "Look, this very important man has asked to be baptized. How wonderful that he should condescend to ask! Let me seize the opportunity at once, else he may change his mind." No. He was not excited just because the man wanted to be baptized.

He investigated the man's spiritual condition. Philip was sort of saying, "What you have asked for is good. It is right that you should want to be baptized. But wait. Not all people who asked to be baptized qualify for baptism. Only those who believe with all their heart qualify, and these must believe in the Lord Jesus, not half-heartedly but **WITH ALL THEIR HEARTS**. All their beings must be involved.

When a person believes in the Lord Jesus in that total way, he can be baptized! If he does not so believe, he must not be baptized. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus in the way I am talking about? "The Ethiopian replied, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." (Acts 8:37). He was saying, "I commit my whole being to the truth that Jesus is the Son of God. I also commit myself to the implications of that truth. I commit myself to the Lord Jesus."

By that confession, the man confessed Christ and met the basic requirement for baptism.

It is clear that the Lord Jesus Christ our example inaugurated a type of baptism we can call the baptism of the children of God.

A person should not be baptized in order to become a child of God, but should be baptized because he has become a child of God. Only those who are converted qualify to be baptized. In order to be baptized then, one must become a child of God and then ask to be baptized.



FOR HOW LONG SHOULD A PERSON WHO HAS EXPERIENCED THE NEW BIRTH WAIT TO BE BAPTIZED?

A person should be baptized immediately after he has received the Lord Jesus as his Lord and Savior. On the day of Pentecost, those who believed were baptized that same day. The word of God says, "So those who received his word were baptized, and they were added that same day about three thousand souls." (Acts 2:41). Take note of "that same day". Cornelius and his household were baptized immediately they believed. (Acts 10:47). The Philippian Jailer was baptized the same night he believed. The Bible says, "And He took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he was baptized at once, with all his family". (Acts 16:33).

The early church did not wait for days or months to baptize anyone who believed. The Bible gives us no room for waiting. Many advance human reasons for waiting. For example, some say that people should not be baptized immediately because they want some time to elapse so that they can be sure if the conversion is genuine. There are two reasons why this is a teaching from the devil. The first reason is that the apostles did not seek to be assured in this way. The Bible gives no room for anyone to try to make any such assurances. Only the Holy Spirit can produce true converts. He does not need time to do it. No human being can say in an ultimate sense that this one belongs to Jesus. The Lord knows those who are His. In a sense, only He knows those who are His.



He also knows the hearts of men. We have seen that He did not trust Himself to those who believed on Him because of His miracles. We notice in the Bible times that people withdrew. The apostle John says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out, that it might be plain that they all are not of us". (I John 2: 19). For some time, these people about whom the apostle talks were part of the local church. Afterwards they went away to prove that they were not genuine. They had made a confession of Christ and had been baptized, but they did not truly belong. The apostles did not know this from the beginning, but God knew them for what they were. The apostles acted on the confession of these people and baptized them. God acted on what He saw in them and did not commit Himself to them. The apostle Paul had completed a wonderful ministry in Asia, (Acts 19:1-19), so much so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord in two years. So mighty was this miracle-backed ministry that the Bible testifies that "The word of the Lord grew and prevailed mightily". (Acts 19:20). But these people did not press on to the end. The same apostle who ministered to them was later to write "you are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me". (II Timothy 1 : 15).

The Lord knew their hearts from the beginning. They were stony soil. The apostle did not know this. He acted on their confession. Were he to wait to see whether they were true converts, he would never have baptized them, but he did.



The question also arises, "If one is to wait to see if they are genuine converts, how long must one wait?"

"The only thing that would make sense would be to wait until the person's dying day to be sure that he would not backslide, for some go away after days and others after many years. Some go away having produced no fruit for men to see, but others are fake even after much fruit. (Matthew 7:21-23). The apostles were faced with false conversions, backsliding, and so on but they still baptized people immediately they received the Lord Jesus. To depart from their pattern is folly.

Finally, it is a matter of whether or not we want to follow the pattern in the Bible. Some have gone off the standard as to who should be baptized. They give their reasons for putting God's word aside or they twist it to serve their purpose. Others have gone off the rails on the issue of how baptism is to be carried out and today, even those who say they are committed to the whole truth have gone off as to when the person should be baptized. They have all gone off the way and they shall answer on the day of reckoning. God is concerned about all aspects of His truth; as for you be faithful to the word. Baptize people immediately they confess Christ. Do not wait for any other inward or outward sign. The signs shall follow. God bless you.

#### HOW SHOULD BELIEVERS BE BAPTIZED?

To baptize come from "Baptizô" (Greek), Baptizein (German) which etymologically means to immerse, to plunge. In the case of the



Lord Jesus, the Bible says, "And when He came up of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove". (Mark 1: 10).

No man can come out of water unless he has first entered into it. The Lord Jesus was therefore baptized (immersed) in water. In the case of the Ethiopian eunuch, Philip did not just say to him "Well, Mr. Minister of finance, you are on a long journey and your time is very precious. Let's not bother giving you the right baptism. We can replace the right baptism with something else I'm going to invent to replace the usual method. I'll spare you the trouble of taking off your clothes, of plunging you into water and changing your clothes. All this is going to delay you, and besides all this is not necessary. What really matters is the spiritual meaning. Haven't you got a little water? I'll just sprinkle a few drops on your head and that will do." He did not do that for if he had done so, that would have been an abominable before the Lord. That would have been sprinkling and not baptism, and God's commandment on baptism would have been disregarded.

Philip just went ahead and did the right thing. Whether or not it was convenient mattered less. The Bible says "And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they BOTH WENT DOWN INTO THE WATER, PHILIP AND THE EUNUCH, and he baptized him". (Acts 8: 38-39).

Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch did not just stand on the river bank for Philip to pour a handful of water on the latter's head. No.



They BOTH WENT DOWN INTO THE WATER, and after the baptism, THEY CAME UP OUT OF THE WATER.

Thus, all were baptized by immersion into water and no room was given for circumstances to determine the mode of baptism. Baptism is a burial. We then ask the following question

CAN A PERSON BE BAPTIZED TWICE?

THE BAPTISM OF THE EPHESIANS: REBAPTISM (Acts 19: 1-6).

"While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. And he said to them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' and they said, 'No, we have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.' And he said, 'Into what then were you baptized?' They said, 'Into John's baptism,' and Paul said, 'John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus.' On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul laid his hands upon them the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spoke with tongues and prophesied." (Acts 19: 1-6).

These people had received John's baptism. This means that they repented from their sins and abandoned their sinful ways. After that, they were immersed in John the Baptist's way, for baptism is conducted by immersing (or plunging in, dipping in).



However, they still lacked something.

They had repented towards God as John the Baptist demanded, but they personally still needed faith in the Lord Jesus. Although they were disciples, they were not saved. Because they had repented but had not received the Lord Jesus, they could not receive the Holy Spirit. They were subnormal disciples: repented, baptized in water, but without Christ and without being baptized into the Holy- Spirit.

What did the apostle do? He proclaimed Christ to them and led them into a union with Christ. They were regenerated, born again from on high. Paul, after being satisfied that they had become God's children did not say, "Well; I know you had been baptized before by the right method although you've been justified yet. I will not bother you anymore. What you received was not right because you had not yet believed. However, we are just going to consider your first baptism, although it was not the right one. We are going to ask God to sanctify your first baptism so it can be valid." No, Paul did not say that! He just did the right thing by baptizing them. That was their second baptism, but the first correct one. This was the only baptism that was valid before God. It was this second and only correct baptism that stood as an answer to a good clear conscience towards God, through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

If a person is immersed a million times, as long as he has not received the Lord Jesus before immersion, what is conducted on him as baptism is not biblical.



God does not consider such a baptism. It is useless. The person must be baptized by immersion after having believed. Only such a baptism matters before God.

Some people think that God can sanctify the wrong baptism of children or that of adults conducted on them before they actually believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. That certainly is another lie from the devil. As we have already seen, the baptism unconverted adults (religious irreligious can the Lord of glory sanctify the devil's lies? Can He say something is right when it is wrong? Can He close His eyes to the deformation of His word? No! His truth is forever settled in heaven and He will never unseal it. What about those who do not want to obey in the baptism and who teach and encourage others not to obey? The Lord says, "Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven". (Matthew 5:19).

#### IN WHAT NAME SHOULD BELIEVERS BE BAPTIZED?

The Lord Jesus who gave the command to baptize said, "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28: 19). These are His words. They are final. He was right. He is right; so please, obey His instruction. Baptize people in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Do not deviate from that.



He said so and the one who said so will be your judge. You should so act that when you get there you will tell Him, "I did as you commanded." God bless you.

#### WHO SHOULD BAPTIZED BELIEVERS?

A person who is qualified to baptize others is that person who has repented of his sin, received the Lord as his personal savior and has himself been baptized. You cannot lead someone into an experience, which you never entered. It is a terrible thing to be soaked by an unbeliever who has been given some religious title by one human religious organization or another.

If a person can clearly show the way of salvation to another and help that one to receive the lord Jesus then he has got the right spiritual qualification to baptize the person he has those led to the Lord.

To teach that only "pastors", "evangelist", should baptize those, who qualify and want to be baptized is to teach something foreign to the New Testament.

To demand that someone who wants to be baptized should promise that he will join your denomination is an abomination. Why not ask him to promise that he will join your denomination before you show him the way of salvation?

The eyes of the Lord are turned towards His coming kingdom and His coming glory. All that is known as denominational Christianity



will soon be exposed for what it is - the enemy's trap. When the Lord does that, many will find that they have labored in vain. To avoid the shock that day will bring, get back to the Bible. Believe what it says. Live out what it says the way it says it, and you shall not be put to shame when the Lord returns.

## THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF WATER BAPTISM

### WHAT BAPTISM IS NOT

Baptism is not a removal of dirt from the body (I Peter 3 : 18-21)

In some well-known denomination, "baptism" is administered to some dying people, because the devil makes them believe that baptism will grant them entry into God's Kingdom. It is in this same denomination that people are made to believe everything else apart from (believing in) God, because the devil has made them believe they can live the way they wish, as long as they remain faithful to their denomination ; for the day they die, the prayers of others will move God into forgiving their sins. We again want to remind the reader here that only the blood of the Lord Jesus purifies repentant sinners from all their iniquities (cf lesson 3 of our course on the Way of Life).

Baptism is not the end

Some think that all they need to do is to repent and be baptized, and by so doing. Would have fulfilled God's will and there would be nothing more to do.



This is a big lie. As we have just seen, there is the seeking of things above and the putting to death of the things that are earthly. If anyone stops at baptism, God will not be pleased with him. The word of God says, "I want you to know, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same supernatural food and all drank from the supernatural Rock which followed them, and the Rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them, God was not pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things are warnings for us, not to desire evil as they did. Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written: "the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to dance." We must not put the Lord to test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents; nor grumble as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. Now these things happened to them as a warning, but they were written down for our instruction, upon whom the end of the ages has come" (I Corinthians 10:1-11).

Baptism is not the end. Press on with the Lord. Also, remember that the baptism into water is only a part of one baptism. The word of God says, "there is one body... one Lord; one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all" (Ephesians 4:4-6).

For the children of Israel, the one baptism was a baptism into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. For the believer, the one baptism



is baptism into water and into the Holy Spirit. When you have been baptized into water, you should go ahead and complete your baptism by submitting yourself to the Lord Jesus, the baptizer into the Holy Spirit, so that he may baptize you with the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist said, "I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry, He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Matthew 3 : 11).

After you have sought and received the baptism into the Holy Spirit, you should know that is not the end. Jesus is the end. The apostle Paul said, "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and may share His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained this or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me His own" (Philippians 3:10- 12) .

[separation FROM THE WORLD AND COMMITMENT UNTO GOD](#)

[A world under water](#)

Those who belong to the Lord are not of the world, though they are still in the world. They ceased to be of the world the day they became a new creation. They were indeed separated from the world the day they ceased to be part of the old creation. They are to make this



secret transaction with God public by solemnly proclaiming their divorce with the world and their commitment to God. We saw in the preceding course that in the Satanic Trinity, the world opposes God the Father.

For a person's commitment towards God to be recognized and considered by men, the individual must publicly divorce with God's enemy the world (the world as a system).

When anyone is crucified with Christ, the world is also crucified to him. The apostle Paul put it very clearly. He said, "But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world" (Galatians 6:14). The world that was crucified was also buried with Christ. When you go into the water of baptism, your world goes with you into the water. The world has no resurrection power because it does not have the life of Christ. Therefore, it remains under water; it is dead to you. Can you imagine someone loving, admiring and caressing a corpse? No! Therefore, all who have been crucified with Christ and buried with Him must not love the world. There is a sense in which they cannot love the world, for the love of the Father is in them. TO such, the apostle John could say, "do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, love of the Father is not in him" (I John 2:15).

It is only the world that is buried in water baptism; the things of the world that lure one away from the Lord Jesus are also buried. Baptism means that all these things are under water. To turn again and



love them and serve them after one has buried them is very sad. Let me remind you who have been baptized: the world for you is finished. You must have no more plans for self-glory, self-exaltation, self-adoration. All your plans are to be centered only on the Lord Jesus and His kingdom. You have no choice about this.

#### BAPTISM AND SALVATION

The Lord Jesus said, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16: 16). The Lord is not talking here about being saved from hell. This salvation is received on the basis of faith in Him. When a person believes in Him, he is immediately saved from the consequences of sin. He immediately receives the power to become a child of God.

He immediately has eternal life. The Bible says, "But to all who received Him, who believed in His name, He gave power to become children of God ; who were born, not of man, but of God" (John 1 : 12-13) . "There is now therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8: 1). "Because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead you will be saved. For man believes with his heart and so is justified, and he confesses with his lips and so is saved" (Romans 10:9-10). "For everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved" (Romans 10: 13). "I write this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life "(I John 5:13).



So, before God, a person is saved from the very moment when he believes.

He is justified and there is no condemnation for him.

However, this same person had earlier belonged to the world that crucified the Lord Jesus that is hostile and opposed to God. He can be justified before God but before man, he is seen as still belonging to the system that is opposed to Christ. He therefore has no testimony before man that he has left that world system, that he has been separated from it, that he has, as it were, given it over to judgement. Baptism does this, it separates from the world. It saves from the world system.

The apostle Peter said, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation (world)" (Acts 2:40). The Bible continues immediately, "So those who received his word were baptized"

(Acts 2:41). They saved themselves from this crooked world by being baptized, but they were not saved from eternal death by being baptized, but by faith in the Lord Jesus. Baptism has to do with the world. We know that Saul of Tarsus met the risen Lord on the Damascus road. From that moment of his surrender to him, he was justified. When Ananias got to him, he called him "Brother Saul" (Acts 22:13), to show that Saul now was a child of God. But he told Saul, "And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name"

(Acts 22:16). The question is, "were Saul's sins not washed away when he believed three days before on the Damascus road? What sins must he now wash away by being baptized?" The answer is that before God, Saul's sins were washed on the Damascus road but before the



world, his sins were still considered to be upon him. He had to rise and be baptized, washing them away.

What if his sins were forgiven and washed away by God, yet before man he was considered to be still in them? Well, he like the thief on the cross would have eternal life BUT before the world, he would have no testimony. He would still be considered a part of the world. He would not be known as part of the Lord's called out ones.

You see, when a person believes he must be baptized in order to be added to God's called out ones. The Bible says, "And he testified with many other words and exhorted them, saying, 'save yourselves from this crooked generation.' So those who receive his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls."

If you believe but you are not baptized, you are an isolated individual. The world knows you to be part of it. You do not belong to the local body of Christ because you have not been added to it by baptism.

Does it matter if you are part of the local body of Christ? Well, God's purposes in time are totally tied up with that body.

Not to be part of it is to separate yourself from God's purposes in time. Therefore, why do you wait? Rise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.

In many countries, no persecution would be inflicted on someone



who believes but is not baptized. Somehow, the people think that while a person is unbaptized, he is not altogether lost to them. They consider he has not made the final decision to belong eternally to Christ and His Body for better or for worse". The world still has hopes in such a one. However, when the person is baptized, they know for certain that he means business with Jesus, that he is lost to them forever. His baptism declares to them in a very final way, "I am finished with the world, with your religious systems and all they offer." From that, point on he is singled out for persecution and may even be killed.

You who believe but do not want to be baptized, I want to ask you, «Is it because you have a secret desire of denying the Lord some day? Are you so afraid of persecution and therefore do not want to identify yourself wholly with the purposes of Christ?

Are you afraid of being thrown out of some religious system or another? "I encourage you to consider the following words of the Lord Jesus carefully. He said, "I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of man also will acknowledge before the angels of God" (Luke 12:8-9). Jesus refused to be exempted from baptism. You too should refuse to be exempted. Be baptized at once.

#### [SEPARATION FROM THE DEVIL AND UNION WITH CHRIST](#)

The day a person receives Christ in his heart, he also unites himself with Him. But this union remains secret and semi-official until



the day he legalizes it before men by being baptized. In a sense, the person's union with Christ is not valid before the world until the day he solemnly performs the act of separation from the devil and union with Christ. This can only be done through baptism. An example drawn from marriage well illustrates what we are saying. A man and a woman can be engaged to each other. They are married and do everything to remain faithful to each other. But men will not consider them married until the day they solemnly declare their commitment to each other before at least a third person.

The person, by his baptism confesses that he has parted with the devil and has united himself with Christ. This union is threefold:

UNION WITH CHRIST IN HIS DEATH : DEATH TO SIN

The Bible says, "What shall we say then? Are we to continue to sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" (Romans 6: 1-3).

When a person is baptized, he is saying, "I am dead with Christ because I *was* crucified with Him. Sin crucified Christ therefore I part whole-heartedly with it in all its forms and manifestations". To go on living in sin after one has been baptized is a terrible thing. It is re-crucifying Christ.



#### UNION WITH CHRIST IN HIS BURIAL

Christ died on the cross. He also rose again. What lay between His death and His resurrection? It is His burial. His grave stood between the cross and the resurrection. He did not avoid burial. The reality of death is confirmed by the act of burial.

Baptism stands for burial. It is the burial of those who have died with Christ.

The waters of baptism are the grave where the convert to Christ buries all that pertains to the old life. In those waters, he leaves his old self that was crucified with Christ. Dear friend, baptism means that you have decided to let go of everything that does not fit into God's will for you.

#### UNION WITH CHRIST IN HIS RESURRECTION

The Lord Jesus did not remain in the grave. He rose again from the dead. The grave was not the ultimate end. After the grave, there was the resurrection and resurrection life for Him.

A person who is buried with Christ in baptism must also be raised into the new life in Christ. The Bible says, "We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life" (Romans 6: 4). "You were buried with Him in baptism in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead



And you who were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses" (Colossians 2 : 12-13).

Your death with Christ on the cross did not impart God's life to yours. The cross-brought an end to that 'which was contrary to God in you. Your new life is tied to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; You were made alive together with him.

When you are raised out of the waters of baptism, you have only one way open to you, the way of newness of life in Christ. The way open to you is the way of Christ-likeness which includes love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, compassion, lowliness, meekness.

Because you have been raised with Christ, you are to seek the things that are above and put to death what is earthly. This is holiness and it is all tied up with baptism. The Bible says, "If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you shall also appear with Him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience.



In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (Colossians 3 : 1-10) .

The devil pushes many people to baptize babies by making them confused about baptism and the new birth. It is astonishing that people could be so blind or pretend to be so blind. The Lord Jesus said, "For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, fornication, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a man" (Mark 7:21-23). If what defiles man comes from his heart, how can baptism which is purely an external act change him? For man to be changed, his heart needs to be changed. Those who were baptized without knowing Christ can agree with us that such "baptism" has never made them any better than others. Some adults not willing to repent of their sins simply get baptized as if baptism were a magical act that would change their condition before God. The new birth of spiritual regeneration is an operation that takes place in the innermost part of the (human) being, in the hearts of those who receive Christ. A confession of faith in Christ and baptism without this operation will never change the spiritual state of a person. A typical example is that of Simon, the sorcerer in Acts 8:9-24.



## POINTS TO REMEMBER

Baptism into water is a command of the Lord Jesus Christ to all who believe. By the very example of the Lord and others recorded in the book of the Acts, the Bible teaches that baptism is for the children of God, that is, people who have been reconciled to God.

It teaches us that baptism must be by immersion into water, and that any believer who leads someone to Jesus Christ ought to baptize the person, on condition that the one baptizing has himself been baptized. Finally, the Bible teaches us that after repentance no other preparation before baptism is necessary.

Baptism into water for the believer means taking his stand with regard to the world, which crucified Christ, and which opposes the Father; it also means taking sides with the people of God. Obedience to the commandment of God to get baptized is a decisive step on the way of sanctification. Faith in the heart without a solemn confession is well prepared territory for this world system to exercise its grip on people who have been born again. The act of confessing publicly has deliverance power.

Here is a testimony of one of our sisters who has experienced this power.

"My name is Henriette ALO'O MBARGA. I committed myself to follow the Lord Jesus Christ during a spiritual retreat organized by young secondary high school and university students from various



institutions in the city of Yaounde, To be more specific, this involved students of the university Bible Group (G.B.U), and this was in January 1980.

At the time, I was a student at the Yaounde Technical High School, where Bible studies were regularly organized on Thursdays. Having repented from my sins, some of the university students who participated in the Bible studies began drawing my attention to the fact that I now needed to be baptized. My refusal was quick and categorical. While these students took the pains to explain to me the truth, I was so insular and blinded by my prejudices against them that I was unable to receive their message. I remember that I was not even willing to read the Bible passages that they suggested to me on this topic. I rejected their telling me what the Bible says on the issue.

After passing the "Baccalaureat" (equivalent of G.C.E. 'A' level) examination, I travelled to Douala; but while there, I did not join any Bible study group. I felt somehow alienated and even lonely. Since my departure from Yaounde I made no progress in my spiritual life. I had been marking time, I had been going round the same spot; but hardly did I associate this with my refusal to get baptized.

While in Douala, I met other children of God who encouraged me to get baptized. Again,

I resisted the proposal. But there was a conflict' within me about, the matter. I believe my sister (who had believed in the Lord some



months earlier.) And other children of God had begun praying for me. After some time, I realized that this baptism which I was resisting, was that taught by the Bible. At this juncture, I actually wanted to succumb to it, but there was another problem: my mother. What would she say? I thought of the "disgrace" it would bring upon her as an elder in the church, if she told her acquaintances that I had had myself "re-baptized". I thought particularly of her friend who stood as my godmother the day I was sprinkled with water as a baby some twenty years back. When I imagined how much I would embarrass my mother, I couldn't just bear the thought, so I suppressed it. This conflict in me continued and it became obvious to everyone at home, what I was going through.

My sister continued in the Christian faith. She had. Herself baptized and made obvious progress in her walk with the Lord.

Although I had known the truth before her, I was just marking time. I began doing Bible studies with the young students of Douala Technical High School, but that did not solve the problem. I lived in this situation until the day I was finally convinced that unless I obeyed God in the waters of baptism my attempts to serve Him would be a waste of time, today; I cannot quite explain how things happened. I do not remember, I just know that the following Sunday, I told my sister that I was going to be baptized that day, and that I would not accept to wait another day. That same day, I was baptized, God had won.

Later on, I regretted for having wasted all this time resisting God.



In fact, two years had elapsed between the day I stood up to receive the Lord Jesus in my life, and the day I got baptized.

I felt nothing in particular in my body as I came out of the waters of baptism, but a great event had taken place. The old man in me had just been buried in these waters out of which I came to start living in newness of life. In fact, since that day, it was as if scales had fallen off my eyes, for shortly afterwards, I began seeing the Christian life in a new way. My commitment to the Lord and to His work became more real and more concrete. Glory be to His holy name»!

The Christian life is one of obedience to the word of God, and obedience to the commandment of the Lord to us to be baptized is a decisive step on the way of sanctification in the sense that baptism represents a stand taken by the believer with regards to God, against the devil and the entire Satanic Trinity. But this experience remains dead as long as it does not demonstrate the attitude of the believer's heart and if it is not lived on a day-to-day basis. In the same way that those who have repented from their sin should bear fruit that befits repentance so should those who are baptized bear fruit worthy of baptism. A person who through baptism proclaims separation from the Satanic Trinity, and who yet loves the world, and sets his mind on the things of the world is not different from a person who refuses to be baptized either due to love for the world or the fear of men. The love of the world is enmity with God.



God the Father is ashamed to be called the God of those who have proclaimed separation but do not live it. Such people are false. They are traitors. They have broken their pledge of commitment unto God. God is not ashamed to be called the God of those who do not delight in anything in this world for He has prepared them a city (Hebrews 11 : 13-19). The New Jerusalem is for those who are. Saved from the world and who are living their salvation. The New Jerusalem is for those 'who are baptized and who live their baptism.

By this baptism, a person proclaims his divorce from Satan and his union with Christ. The Lord Jesus said, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast" (Matthew 9: 14-15). The bridegroom had been taken away and those who are truly united to Him cannot find satisfaction in any other thing. Instead, they mourn the absence of the One they love, and nothing else can replace the bridegroom. It is a treacherous act to proclaim that one is united with Christ meanwhile the absence of Christ produces no burden, no grief, no distress in their hearts, to claim that one has broken away from Satan, yet still loves or tolerates what Satan offers only shows a lack of frankness, of uprightness of heart and of sincerity. If we have the same tastes and desires as those who belong to Satan do, can we dare proclaim that we are united with Christ? The true bride is not she who only has a legal marriage certificate but she who remains loyal to the bridegroom.



How many then, in this generation that claims to be Christ's, constitute the true bride? Many have betrayed Him. Are you grieved by the absence of the bridegroom? Or are you at ease in the house of His (the bridegroom's) enemy? Do you live your baptism from day to day? If yes, then you are truly saved and the bridegroom will soon come to take you away.

Lesson2 of this series will deal with the baptism into the Holy Spirit.