

# Biblical Baptism

*John 3:22-24*

**Thought for the Day:** Biblical baptism by immersion is a public testimony of a person's faith in Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of his / her life.

The mandate of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) is to "make disciples." Jesus tells us exactly how to make disciples. We make disciples by: 1) Going – As we are going about our daily lives, we are to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with others. 2) Baptizing – We baptize those who are ready to publicly profess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. 3) Teaching – We teach the Word of God to Christ's followers so that they can know and love the Lord, grow and become like the Lord, and go and show the Lord to others.

## 22 After this...

- After the events that took place in Jerusalem during Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread recorded in John 2:13-3:21.
- Chapter Two:
  - Jesus cleansing of the Temple.
  - Confrontation with the Jewish religious leaders; Jesus claimed to be the Son of God; His predicted that He would rise from the dead three days after His death.
  - Mention that Jesus was performing miracles—proof of His identity as the Messiah and evidence of His divine authority for His teachings.
  - The note that Jesus did not entrust Himself to the people because He knew what was in their hearts.
- Chapter Three:
  - Conversation with Nicodemus.
  - Jesus' teaching that we must be born again, born from above, by the Spirit of God, if we hope to participate in the Kingdom of God.
  - The claim that Jesus had come from Heaven and therefore spoke with divine authority concerning heavenly things.
  - We are born again when we acknowledge our sins and put our trust in Jesus Christ to be our Savior from sin.
  - Jesus' prediction that He would die by crucifixion as a substitute for those who put their faith in Him.
  - Faith in Jesus delivers us from the condemnation of God.
  - Our love for God or the world is manifested, not in what we say, but in what we do.

**...Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he remained there with them and was baptizing.**

- They left the city of Jerusalem and went out into the countryside, probably to the Jordan River where there was plenty of water, so they could baptize people.
- Jesus was teaching about the kingdom of God and inviting people to prepare to enter the kingdom by repenting of their sins and putting their faith in Him as the Messiah, the Savior of the world. (Based on His conversation with Nicodemus)

- The people were baptized as a public testimony that they were becoming followers of Jesus and His teachings.
- According to John 4:1-2, it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples.

**23 John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized 24 (for John had not yet been put in prison).**

- For the first months of Jesus' ministry, John the Baptist faithfully continued his ministry of calling people to repent of their sins and to prepare themselves to follow the Messiah.
  - Undoubtably, his message changed from the early days of his ministry, from "The Messiah is coming," to "The Messiah is here!"
  - He continued to proclaim that "Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world," and then encouraged his converts to follow Jesus.
- Why do we baptize by immersion, versus sprinkling or pouring?
  - If you baptize by sprinkling or pouring water on people's heads, you don't need a lot of water.
  - If you baptize by complete immersion, you need a substantial amount of water with some depth to it. (Acts 8:26-40)
  - If you were baptizing by sprinkling or pouring, it would be much easier to stay in town and just pull up a bucket full of water from the town well.
  - The Greek words *transliterated* "baptize" and "baptism" literally mean to completely submerge or immerse under water.
    - In secular Greek usage, the word *baptizo* is used for dipping cloth into a dye, for the purpose of changing the color of the cloth.
    - *Baptizo* was also used in the sense of "causing to perish (as by drowning a man or sinking a ship)."
  - In baptism, we have a picture of a person dying to their old life of sin and disobedience, and then resurrecting to a new life of faith and obedience to the Lord.
  - In the Greek language there are separate words for sprinkling and pouring water; these words are never used in the numerous N.T. accounts of people being baptized.
  - Biblical baptism was always by complete immersion.
- Why do we not "baptize" infants?
  - There is not one single New Testament account of an infant being baptized.
  - A careful study of the New Testament accounts of Christian baptism shows that there are five things that always took place *before* a person was baptized:
    - They heard and believed the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
    - Their heart was opened by the Lord to understand and respond in faith.
    - They repented of their sins.
    - They believed in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation from their sins.
    - They received the Holy Spirit as a result of the above four items.
  - An infant is not capable of doing any of these things.
- Baptism does not save anyone; it is a symbol of the salvation that a person has already received at the moment they placed their faith in Jesus Christ to be their Savior and to forgive them of their sins.