

ARMED FOR WAR Discipleship Course

SECTION 3 – The Six Foundational Doctrines

Lesson 8 - The Doctrine of Baptisms

Hebrews 6:1-2 *Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.*

Notice that this is the doctrine of baptisms; not the doctrine of baptism as in singular, but baptisms, as in plural. We are going to discover five very distinctive baptisms revealed in Scripture, and are going to see the significant spiritual importance of each of these. Everything God does is for a divine purpose and has supernatural breakthrough connected with it. The five baptisms are water baptism, Holy Spirit baptism, the baptism of fire, the baptism into His death, and the baptism into His suffering.

Water Baptism

Matthew 3:4-6 *Now John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.*

This is the first place in Scripture that baptism is ever mentioned. And as we learned, when it is first mentioned anywhere that sets a precedent on how you are to interpret that principle or truth for the rest of Scripture. We see right here that John was baptizing them in the Jordan because of their sin. Now history would tell you the Jordan was a filthy river. It's a very interesting dichotomy there.

The word 'baptized' literally means to be immersed in liquid. It speaks of a ceremonial washing or cleansing.

Baptized requires an act of humility. It is more than just a natural event. It is a spiritual event. When they came out to the river Jordan it literally required an act of humility to come.

Water baptism requires us to humble ourselves.

Water baptism is not just a symbolic act, but it has a powerful spiritual force that is connected to it to bring about a life-changing transformation in our lives. That's why the Bible says we must repent and be baptized every one of us. It is interesting that we have diminished the role of water baptism in our modern churches to simply a ceremonial act. If you go overseas into many countries you can confess Jesus as your Lord and that's fine, but when you get baptized you can be thrown into prison.

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What life decision are you making when you get water baptized?

At the point of baptism you are making a life determination, a life decision that you have rejected what you were and you are accepting something brand new.

That is literally what water baptism talks about. It literally talks about a point where you are washing yourself of your old life. You are making a choice to die to who you were and you are now taking on a whole new life. You are washing away everything that you were in the past. You are humbling yourself before God, and you are saying His way is the only way for me from this day forward.

They had to humble themselves in two ways. First, they had to publicly allow themselves to be immersed in filthy water. Second, they had to spiritually humble themselves before all who were there because they were coming for the remission of their sins. As they humbled themselves they were confessing their sins publicly.

There is a powerful breakthrough in publicly confessing sin.

As a student of revival, I have seen so many times in history that the great revivals often have this element where people would begin to get up and publicly confess their sins. The great revivalists Charles Finney actually taught people to make lists as God was dealing with them during the revival times of every single thing they had ever done wrong. When they remembered something that they hadn't ever talked about they would specifically confess that specific sin. They would go one right after another. But it is in the nature of sin that we do this blanket prayer and so few people are walking delivered and free in the church today. There is something powerful to publicly taking responsibility before God for the wickedness in our own lives.

Water baptism is not just a symbolic act. It is a public declaration that everything that I am, I am dying to. And when I come up, it is no longer I who lives, but Christ who lives in me.

Matthew 3:6 *And were baptized again in the Jordan, confessing their sins.*

We see that with this verse water baptism is tied forever with the confession of sins.

Psalms 32:5 *I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," And You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah*

Notice that the forgiveness didn't come until there was first a confession. The Bible say in the Book of John that *if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us of all*

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our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. It didn't say if we just feel sorry for our sins. It didn't say if we just feel guilty for our sins. But it said if we confess our sins.

There is a tremendous power to sin confession where we begin to come forward and take verbal public responsibility for our sin. Does not the Bible say to confess our sins one to another? We relegate our sin to struggles, little battles. But the Bible says to confess your sins, taking full public responsibility, and it requires an act of humility to do that.

Here in the waters of baptism we are dying to who we were and we are being raised up into Christ. We are taking full responsibility for our sins, and when we take on that responsibility that we alone are guilty without excuse there is power. It is only when we take full responsibility for our actions that we get the freedom.

Holy Spirit Baptism

Acts 1:5,8 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now...But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

The word 'power' here is the Greek word *dunimus* which means miracle-working power.

That word 'baptism' literally means to be immersed in; literally to be swallowed up. That word 'witness' comes from the Greek word *martas*. It's where we get the English word martyr from. A martyr is one who is willing to die for what he believes.

Remember Peter was a man of faith and power, bold as a lion. But when he was questioned when Jesus was being crucified and he saw that his life was also in danger, he denied Christ, and ran in despair. Jesus came to him after the resurrection while he was out fishing and turned to him and exposed the true condition of his heart. Twice he asked Peter if he loved Him using the Greek word Agape which is God's love. Twice Peter responded that he had phileo, human compassion or brotherly love, for Jesus. The third time Jesus changed the question and asked Peter if he loved Him, if he had phileo for Him. Peter was grieved because Jesus changed the question exposing his lack. Jesus knew Peter lacked the power to lay his life down. He needed the baptism of the Holy Spirit to receive the power to be a martyr, to lay his life down.

What power does Holy Spirit baptism give to a believer?

The true baptism of the Holy Spirit gives you the power to die to yourself.

Water baptism is the decision to die to yourself, but Holy Spirit baptism is the power to die to yourself. That's why I said there are many people out there speaking in tongues who have never truly been baptized in the Holy Spirit. They will speak in tongues and

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they will move in every form of ungodliness and selfishness because although they have a gift or manifestation of tongues, they do not have the true baptism of the Holy Spirit which gives you the power to die to yourself.

The Baptism of Fire

Genesis 19:24 *Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens.*

The first place fire appeared in the Bible it came for judgment and purification. When we ask God to send His fire we are asking for His judgment and purification. Fire is hot, fire is intense, and fire consumes.

What happens to you through a baptism of fire?

The baptism of fire is that purifying work of God that will pierce and penetrate the deepest recesses of your life and expose the secret sins.

And in the end times the Bible says that everything that can be shaken will be shaken and everything will be purified by the refiner's fire. The Bible talks about the return of Christ, in the book of Malachi, as the refiner's fire. The baptism of fire will cause the heat to rise so much in you with the intensity of the conviction of God that the deepest hidden impurities are going to rise to the surface so that you can bring them to the realm of confession, get them cleansed, washed away, and dealt with.

We have been praying for the fire, we just didn't know what it was. But it's coming with an intensity and with a ferociousness. You will have times when you are so exposed before God that you will even question whether you're saved. But God is just exposing so much of that stuff that was hidden in your heart and bringing it to the surface.

The Baptism into His Death

Romans 6:3-4 *Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

We are baptized into His death and it ties a lot together with the next one, when we are baptized into His suffering. But there is a dying as we are baptized into His death.

Remember, water baptism is the decision to die. Holy Spirit baptism is the power to die. Baptism of fire brings the impurities up to the surface so they can be scraped away and

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washed away by God. And the baptism into His death is when we have relinquished who we are. That it is no longer I who lives. “I am crucified with Christ,” Paul said. “And I no longer live. The life that I now live I live by the faith of the Son of God.” It is no longer me.

God is about to send a baptism of His death, where you’re going to stop talking about yourself and you’re going to die to yourself. And in that death process, then His Son, the power of His Son, the nature of His Son will once again be resurrected inside of you. But it only will happen when you first embrace His death, then you can embrace the resurrection life.

And the Baptism of His Suffering

Mark 10:36-39 *And He said to them, “What do you want Me to do for you?” They said to Him, “Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory.” But Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” They said to Him, “We are able.” So Jesus said to them, “You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized;*

He said that you are going to drink of this cup; the cup of suffering.

Luke 12:50 *But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!*

What was he talking about? He was talking about the suffering of the cross. The Bible says, “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before Him He endured the cross despising the shame.”

What does the baptism of suffering specifically deal with?

The baptism into God’s suffering specifically deals with the things that you must suffer in order to fulfill your calling.

Remember when God sent Ananias to Paul, Saul at the time, when he was blinded on the road to Damascus. God sent him to tell Paul the things which he must suffer in order for Paul to fulfill what God was calling him to do.

And in the baptism of suffering God empowers us, gives us the power, the anointing, the fortitude to carry our cross. Each of us have our own cross. Each of us have a purpose and destiny God has set before us. And with that is a suffering. There is a suffering that

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comes with fulfilling your destiny. But the Bible says if any man is to follow Jesus, he must deny himself, pick up his cross; not somebody else's cross.

Be encouraged by the stories of what God has done in the lives of others in history, but stop looking to their cross and suffering and find your calling, your destiny, and let God baptize you with the power and the anointing to pick up your cross, to deny yourself, and to follow Him daily down the path He called you to do.

The five baptisms - the baptism of water, that decision to die to yourself. The baptism of the spirit, the power to die to self. The baptism of fire, that purifying of the deepest secret sins and motives and attitudes of our heart. The baptism into His death which leads us to the place of resurrection, that once we have embraced His death then we will receive His life. And the baptism of suffering, which leads you and empowers you to be able to pay the price for your calling.

For further study.

Key Topic: Baptisms

1 Corinthians 12:12-14 *For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many.*

Matthew 28:19 *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*

Matthew 3:11-12 *I indeed baptize you with water unto 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 fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.*