

## COMMANDS OF CHRIST

### 2. BE BAPTISED



Jesus said that if we love Him we will obey His commands. In the first study we learnt that Jesus tells us to repent. This means that we are willing to turn away from our sin. The second command is found in Matthew 28:19. What is the command? Jesus tells the disciples to baptise those who repent and believe in Him. We also find that the leaders of the early church told the believers they had to be baptised. In Acts 2:38 we read, “Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” We are going to look at a story in the Book of Acts.

### Scripture Reading: Acts 16:16-34

#### **Some suggestions:**

- i. You could read the story one time and then ask each one in the group to read it themselves.
- ii. Act out the story, with someone taking the part of Paul, Silas, the jailer, his family and the officials.

### Who can be baptised? See v31, 32

The jailer and his family were baptised after they had heard the gospel and put their trust in the Lord Jesus. In Acts 2:38 it also tells us that we need to repent before we can be baptised. So who can be baptised? Those who are old enough to understand the gospel, and have turned away from their sin and put their trust in Jesus as their Saviour and Lord.

### What does baptism mean?

In the story we see that the Philippian jailer and his family wanted to be baptised to show that they had put their trust in Jesus. Baptism is an outward sign of what Jesus has already done in our life. It is obeying the command of the Lord. When a person is baptised they are immersed under water, as a picture of what Jesus has done for us.

- a.) First of all, it is a picture to show others that our sin has been washed away. Of course our sin is not washed away by the water! It is the blood of Jesus that cleanses our sin, but when we are baptised we are showing others what Jesus has done for us. See Acts 22:16
- b.) It is also a picture to show that our old sinful nature has been buried, just as Jesus was buried in the tomb. See Romans 6:3-4. This means that our old nature is dead. When something is dead it has no power! The old nature no longer has power over us, and we can now follow the new nature which God has given us, the name of the Lord Jesus. For those who have already been baptised it is good to ask yourself whether you are following the new nature. Can others see the Lord Jesus in you? Remember that the old nature does not need to have any power over you if you choose to do what pleases God. Jesus wants you to live in victory.
- c.) Lastly baptism is a picture that we have passed from the kingdom of Satan to the Kingdom of God. In the Old Testament we read how the Children of Israel were delivered by God from slavery in Egypt and crossed the Red Sea on their way to the Promised Land. In the same way we have been delivered from the bondage of Satan, and now belong to the Kingdom of God. When we are baptised we are showing others that we have crossed over to the Kingdom of God and we are going to serve Him. 1 Corinthians 10:2

### **When can you be baptised? See v33**

We see that the jailer and his family were baptised 'that very hour' when they believed. If you have truly repented and have turned away from your sin, and put your trust in Jesus, then you can be baptised.

### **Conclusion**

When you repent of your sin and give your life to Jesus Christ, something happens INSIDE your life. The Bible says you are now a new creation. However God wants you to demonstrate to others what He has done on the inside by something that is OUTWARD, and that is to be baptised in water. This shows others that you have asked Jesus Christ to forgive your sin and you have now received a new life. Have you been baptised? It is important that you obey this command of Jesus.