**More Like the Master**

In His Baptism

Lesson 5

*“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water…”*

*(Matthew 3:16)*

**Bible Baptism**

The New Testament speaks of different kinds of baptisms such as 1) the baptism of John (Matthew 3:6-16; 21:25; Mark 1:4-9; 6:14,24; 11:30; Luke 3:3-21; 7:29-30; John 1:25-26,28,31; 3:22-23; 10:40; Acts 1:22; 10:37; 13:24; 18:24; 19:3-4), 2) the baptism of Jesus’ disciples (John 3:26; 4:2); 3) the baptism of the Holy Spirit (John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16), 4) the baptism of fire (Matthew 3:11), 5) the baptism of suffering (Mark 10:38-39; Luke 12:50), 6) the baptism of Moses (1 Corinthians 10:2), 7) ceremonial baptisms or washings (Hebrews 6:2; see Mark 7:4; Hebrews 9:10), and 8) water baptism for the remission of sins (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38,41; 8:12-13,36,38; 9:18; 10:47-48; 16:15,33; 18:8; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 1:13-17; 12:13; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:5; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21).

Our English word “baptism” is a transliteration of the Greek word *baptisma*, meaning a dipping or immersing. Baptism, then, is an immersion in water. A person is scripturally baptized when he is immersed in water (put under the water). It is the baptism of John and the baptism of suffering that plays an important role in the life of Jesus. We want to examine these two baptisms in this lesson. Jesus sets the right example for all people today regarding the practice of baptism.

**Jesus and His Baptism**

Jesus was baptized in water. Before Jesus began his public ministry, he was baptized (immersed) in water by John the Baptist (Matthew 13:13-14; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:31-34). When John was hesitant to baptize Jesus, Jesus answered him and said, *“Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness”* (Matthew 3:15). When Jesus came up out of the water, he prayed and then the Spirit descended upon him as a dove and his father spoke from heaven saying, *“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”* (Matthew 3:16-17). Jesus’ baptism pleased the Father.

Why was Jesus baptized? If John the Baptist was baptizing for repentance unto the remission of sins (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:4) and Jesus had no sin (John 8:46; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 1:19; 2:22), why was Jesus baptized? According to Jesus’ own words, Jesus was baptized *“to fulfill all righteousness”* (Matthew 3:15). What does this statement mean? It means that Jesus’ baptism was for the purpose of showing mankind how to be right with God. It must be remembered that John’s baptism was from heaven, not from men (Matthew 21:25; Mark 11:30; Luke 20:4). John’s baptism was by divine authority and when Jesus was baptized of John, it demonstrated a submission to divine authority and it brought honor to God (Luke 7:29). Jesus was not baptized because he had sin, but he was baptized to show it was the right thing to do. Jesus was baptized to show mankind how to submit to the authority of God.

The Apostle John’s statement about Jesus also helps us to understand why Jesus was baptized. John said that Jesus’ baptism would be the event that openly identified him as the Son of God and savior of the world. John writes: *“I did not recognize Him, but so that He might be manifested to Israel, I came baptizing in water. John testified saying, I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him. I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, ‘He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.’ I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God”* (John 1:31-34). Jesus’ baptism was an act of righteousness and it was also the act by which God would manifest his Son as the savior of the world. Later, Jesus’ own disciples would baptize like John the Baptist did showing that baptism is an important act in the plan of God (John 3:26; 4:1-3).

Jesus was baptized in suffering. At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus was baptized (immersed) in water and at the end of his ministry, he was baptized (immersed) in suffering. Jesus said, *“The cup that I drink you shall drink; and you shall be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized”* (Mark 10:38-39). Here, *“the cup”* (Jesus’ impending suffering and death) and *“the baptism”* are one and the same. The “cup” and the “baptism” that Jesus speaks of here is the suffering that Jesus would experience. Jesus was fully immersed in suffering during his ministry. It was even predicted by the Old Testament prophets that the Christ (Messiah) would suffer (Acts 3:18; 17:3; 26:23).

Jesus went through intense suffering in his life especially toward the end of his ministry. We are told that he learned obedience *“by the things which he suffered”* (Hebrews 5:8-9). Jesus knew that he would have to suffer many things at the hands of others (Matthew 16:21; 17:12; Mark 8:31; 9:12; Luke 9:22; 22:15; 24:26, 46). Ultimately, he suffered the death of the cross (Hebrews 2:9). When Jesus left Jerusalem and went to the cross, he *“suffered without the gate”* (Hebrews 13:12). He also suffered for our sins (1 Peter 3:18; 4:1). A subsequent lesson in this series will focus in more detail on the suffering of Christ.

**The Christian and Baptism**

Baptism in water. Like Jesus, God wants all of mankind who are in sin to be baptized (immersed) in water when the time comes for them to do so. Jesus said, *“He that believes and is baptized shall be saved”* (Mark 16:16). All who have sinned are commanded to repent and be baptized *“for the remission of sins”* (Acts 2:38). They are to be baptized to wash away their sins (Acts 22:16). Baptism places one into the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12). A proper, scriptural baptism does not place one into a man-made, denominational body (as is often claimed today). Baptism, properly taught and administered, places a person into the one body of Christ that we read about in the New Testament (1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:5). Baptism also saves because it puts one in contact with the saving blood of Jesus (1 Peter 1:19; 3:21). We need to follow the example of Jesus and the example of the many converts in the first century who were baptized (Acts 2:41; 8:12-13,36,38; 9:18; 10:47-48; 16:15,33; 18:8). Simply put, sinners today must be baptized to be saved and to be right with God!

Baptism in suffering. Like Jesus, Christians today will also be baptized (immersed) in suffering. The apostles suffered for Christ (Acts 5:41; 1 Corinthians 4:12) and the early Christians suffered as well (1 Corinthians 12:26; 2 Corinthians 1:6). The Apostle Paul, in particular, suffered greatly for Christ (Acts 9:16; Galatians 5:11; Philippians 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 2:2; 1 Timothy 4:10; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:9,12). Paul wrote*, “All that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution”* (2 Timothy 3:12). More about how Christian’s suffer will be studied in a later lesson.

**More Like the Master in His Baptism**

Jesus was baptized in water by John to show mankind what is right. Later, as he lived for what is right, he was baptized in suffering. Today, all who have sinned need to be baptized for the remission of their sins and they need to live a life that is right. When faithful Christians live the right life, they will often suffer for it. However, the suffering of the faithful Christian will be rewarded. Peter wrote, *“After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you”* (1 Peter 5:10). Let us all be “More Like the Master” in baptism – the baptism in water that makes us right with God and the baptism in suffering that comes from doing what is right.

**Questions**

1. What baptisms are mentioned in the New Testament and which two baptisms are the focus of Jesus’ life?

2. What reason does Jesus give for his baptism?

3. What does John say about the purpose of Jesus’ baptism?

4. What kind of suffering did Jesus experience during his lifetime?

5. What can be learned from the following scriptures about the water baptism that God wants for all sinners today (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38,41; 8:12-13,36,38; 9:18; 10:47-48; 16:15,33; 18:8; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 1:13-17; 12:13; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:5; Colossians 2:12; and 1 Peter 3:21)?

the authority for baptism –

the person being baptized –

the element of baptism –

the action of baptism –

the purpose for baptism –

the direction (result) of baptism –

6. What kind of suffering do Christians experience today when they live for what is right?