Baptism

Intro: There is possibly no subject which elicits more passion and arguments that the subject of baptism. Let us study God’s Word and find what He taught about this great subject.

I. WHAT IS BAPTISM
   A. It is a burial or immersion.
      1. The dictionary defines baptism as, “to dip (a person) into or sprinkle with water.”
         a. Dictionaries give the modern usage of a word, not what the word actually means.
         b. People today do sprinkle, pour or immerse for baptism.
            (1) In 251 water was poured on Novatian as a substitute for immersion. (This is the first case in history).
            (2) The council of Ravenna in 1311 authorized the substitution of sprinkling and pouring for immersion.
      2. Greek lexicons teach baptism means immersion.
         a. Arndt and Gingrich say, “dip, immerse.”
         b. Vine says, “consisting of the process of immersion, submersion and emergence (from bapto, ‘to dip’).”
         c. Little Kittel’s says, “‘to dip in or under,’ ‘to dye,’ ‘to immerse,’ ‘to sink,’ ‘to drown,’ ‘to bathe,’ ‘wash.’”
         d. Thayer says, “to dip repeatedly, to emerge, submerge.”
         e. Others would say the same basic thing.
   B. If the Greek writers wanted to express sprinkle or pouring they had words they could use.
      1. ραντίζω (rhantizo) means sprinkling.
      2. βάλλω (ballo) or χέω (cheo) mean pour.
   C. Notice the emphasis of the Bible.
      1. Much water needed; John 3:23 “And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.”
      2. Takes a going down into and coming up out of the water; Acts 8:38-39 “And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”
      3. For sprinkling or pouring water, these are not needed.
   D. It is a burial.
      1. Rom. 6:3-4 “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”
      2. Col. 2:12 “Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”

II. THE ELEMENT OF BAPTISM IS WATER.
   A. John 3:23 “And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.”
   B. Acts 8:38-39 “And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”
   C. 1 Pet. 3:20-21 “Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. 21The like figure
whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:"

III. **BAPTISM IS FOR THE PENITENT BELIEVER.**

A. **Prerequisites for Baptism.**

1. **Hearing; Teaching and Learning**
   a. **Mat. 28:19-20** “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 19Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”
   b. **John 6:44-45** “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 44It is written in the prophecies, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.”

2. **Belief**
   a. **Heb. 11:6** “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”
   b. **John 8:24** “I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.”

3. **Repentance**
   a. **Luke 13:3** “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”
   b. **Acts 17:30** “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.”

4. **Confession**
   a. **Rom. 10:10** “For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”
   b. **Acts 8:37** “And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

B. **Infants, babies and small children cannot do these things.**

1. They do not have the capability of reasoning correctly concerning the facts of Christianity and place their trust in God, Christ and the gospel (believe).
2. They cannot talk, thus they cannot make a good confession.
3. They have no sins of which to repent.
4. Baptism is for the remission of sins, of which they have none.
5. Babies are born innocent, free from sin.
   a. To enter the kingdom one must become as a baby.
      (1) **Mat. 18:3** “And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”
      (2) **Mat. 19:13-15** “Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. 14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. 15 And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.”
   b. **Ecc. 7:29** “Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.”
   c. **Psa. 106:37-38** “Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils. 37 And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.”
   d. **Eze. 28:15** “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.”
e. Man’s spirit comes from God.
   (1) God gives man his spirit.
      (a) Ecc. 12:7 “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”
      (b) Zec. 12:1 “The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.”
      (c) Heb. 12:9 “Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?”
   (2) God gives that which is good; Jam. 1:17 “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

6. No examples of a baby being baptized.

IV. BAPTISM IS FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS.
   A. Mark 16:16 “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
   B. Acts 2:38 “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
      1. Some have said “for” means because of.
         a. Electronic version of Strong’s Concordance, “‘For’ (as used in Acts 2:38 ‘for the forgiveness...’) could have two meanings. If you saw a poster saying ‘Jesse James wanted for robbery’, ‘for’ could mean Jesse is wanted so he can commit a robbery, or is wanted because he has committed a robbery. The later sense is the correct one. So too in this passage, the word ‘for’ signifies an action in the past. Otherwise, it would violate the entire tenor of the NT teaching on salvation by grace and not by works.”
         b. The Greek word εἰς (eis) never refers to action in the past, but always looking forward.
      2. Whatever the “for” relative to baptism it means also for repentance.
      3. cf. the same phrase; Mat. 26:28 “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”
   C. Acts 22:16 “And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”
   D. 1 Peter 3:21 “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”
   E. Man must understand why he is being baptized to be baptized according to the Scriptures.
      1. One cannot obey God accidentally.
      2. It takes the right act based upon the right belief to constitute Bible baptism (true obedience).

Conclusion: Have you obeyed the command to be baptized, doing it for the purpose God said? If not, why not obey His command now for your salvation?