WATER BAPTISM PROCEDURES

First Love Ministries, Inc., of Perry, Georgia
Prayer Study #525

Do you know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by baptism in to death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His. Romans 6:3-5

There are at least six different types of baptism in the New Testament. The most important, and the one that makes all the others relevant, is the Baptism by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ. It is a baptism of blood in the spiritual and confirms that a person has truly been born again. Again without this baptism, all the others (Water Baptism, Baptism in the Holy Spirit, Baptism of Fire, Baptism into His Sufferings) would be irrelevant. John the Baptist's baptism is irrelevant today because a great than John has come And his baptism was a baptism of repentance for the purpose of being spiritually clean for the coming of the Messiah.

In First Love Ministries, we believe in Credo-baptism, which means *Believer's Only* Baptism. Baptism is an outward and visible sign of an inner work in a person's life of being truly born again by faith in Christ Jesus. We go through Baptism, first of all, to tell the world that we are a believer in Jesus; secondly, to remind ourselves that we have been spiritually dead in trespasses and sins but now are spiritually alive only because of Jesus and His giving of His life for us that we might live; and finally, we go through Baptism to follow the Lord's own example, as He was baptized by John the Baptist, and to obey the scriptures.

I remind you today that *ALL* people have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. All are in need of a savior, and there is ONLY ONE savior, JESUS CHRIST. He is the only way to heaven. Any religion or set of beliefs that contradicts this is false.

Those receiving this sacrament of the church are marked by baptism as Christian disciples and initiated into the fellowship of the Body of Christ. Baptism is a type of burial wherein the believer accepts God's condemnation of himself because of sin, admits that he should have been the one who died at Calvary, and thus should be killed and buried out of sight in a watery grace. Thus, the believer accepts God's diagnosis of his case and proves it by going through this symbolic burial. Baptism symbolizes the burial of the

old life. It is administered in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is a public profession of faith in Christ and obligates the believer to live a new life according to the teachings of Jesus.

The act of water baptism does not make as person a believer in Christ who has been born again-*that should be settled before water baptism*!, and water baptism, as we know from what Jesus said on the cross to the thief, is not necessary for salvation, although we strongly recommend water baptism by immersion as a way of identifying with Christ.

The candidates for Water Baptism at First Love are not only baptized by immersion, meaning they go under the water fully, they also are prayed over by the leadership and prophetic people. This is a beautiful ceremony and friends and family are always invited to attend.

Some Pointers Concerning the Procedures We Practice at FLM

1. Anyone being baptized can select any believer to baptize him or her.
2. You will be asked publically before baptism if you believe and acknowledge Jesus as your Lord and Savior.
3. Please do not wear watches, bill folds, shoes, belts, etc, if you are being baptized. All candidates, both male and female should dress modestly. Females especially should wear the proper undergarments.
4. Before you get out of the water, we will have people there to pray over you.
5. Towels will be provided, unless it is an ocean baptism.
6. Bring a complete exchange of clothes.
7. When we baptize inside, do not be careful about the floor staying dry when you get out of the baptismal pool. The floors are frequently shampooed, and we have a machine that will suck up any water. A wet floor is the least of our worries.
8. After water baptism, if you are not already spirit-baptized, pray for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit. We have many teachings on the Baptism of the Spirit and would be glad to sit down with you at any time to discuss this experience, which I believe will be necessary if you are going to stand in the challenging days ahead. It is a baptism that gives power, and that power is to be a witness. The gifts and the ministry of the Holy Spirit are for anyone today who seeks the Lord and desires this experience. Your life will never be the same after the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.