

Study 0017

Scripture Text: Hebrews 6:2a; 1 Corinthians 12:13

As we have seen, there are four baptisms spoken of in Scripture, and these are; *baptism into One Body, Christian baptism, Holy Spirit baptism, and baptism by fire*. In this study, we shall focus on the first; baptism into One Body or baptism into Christ.

As the name suggests, this is the ‘dipping’ or ‘immersion’ of a person who has been saved through the blood of Jesus Christ into the Body of Christ or the Church, by the Holy Spirit. After a person has been saved, he must of necessity be a part of the Body of Christ. Hence, there is a placing or positioning of such an individual into the church universal, as well as in a local assembly of believers or church.

This baptism is something that takes place in most cases, without the full knowledge of the individual. Most times after salvation, an individual finds himself in a local assembly or being drawn to a particular local assembly, and then decides to stay there. In reality, it is the Holy Spirit, leading and directing the individual to that particular assembly (**Psalm 37:23**).

We can liken baptism into One Body to what happens after a baby is born. The new born baby will have to be taken home by her mother where she would be loved, nurtured, and weaned. As the child grows, she would be taught all that she needs to know about the family into which she has been born, and would be subjected to parental guidance and control. Left alone by herself, a new born baby would die; or if after the baby has been nurtured, there is no further care in the area of discipline and proper upbringing, the child will become a problem and a danger to society. In much the same way, when a person is born again of the Spirit of God (**John 1:12-13; 3:1-8**); the Holy Spirit then places that new born believer in a local assembly where he would be loved, nurtured, and weaned; and where he would be taught all that he needs to know about the Christian life (**Ephesians 4:11-14**).

In **1 Corinthians 10:2**, the word of God tells us that the Israelites of old “*were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea*”. This means that they were brought under Moses leadership (as followers of Moses), and thus had to follow Moses’ instructions; and be a part of the covenant God made with them through Moses, and all that God had for them through Moses. In the same way, baptism into One Body brings us under the leadership or headship or authority of Christ. We are thus under obligation to follow Christ’s every teaching and guidance.

The word of God tells us that “*as many ... as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ*” (**Galatians 3:27**). This means that baptism into One Body confers on the believer, the nature, character, or likeness of Christ. Baptism into One Body is the beginning of the branding of the believer as a disciple or follower of Christ, and His teachings.

Through the baptism into One Body, all become one, regardless of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, gender, etc. (**Galatians 3:28; 1 Corinthians 12:13**). This means that a Christian is a Christian, regardless of his nationality or tribe; that is, there is nothing like an Igbo Christian, Yoruba Christian, Ijaw Christian, British Christian, American Christian, Chinese Christian, etc.; only Christians! This also means that there is nothing like a Christian based on denomination, ministry, or church! The Church or the Body of Christ is, however, made up of numerous parts, such as: local assemblies, denominations (so called by men), as well as individuals; and each plays a pivotal role in the development and influence the Church has on earth, and on human societies (**1 Corinthians 12:14-27; Romans 12:3-8**). There is therefore no local assembly, neither is there any denomination, nor is there any individual who is superior to another; they have all been given gifts by God, and they are to use such gifts to be a light to the world.

The following should therefore be noted about every believer in Jesus Christ:

- 1) He is a member of the Body of Christ or the Church Universal.
- 2) He must of necessity belong to a local assembly where ever he may find himself, as directed by the Holy Spirit.
- 3) He must be committed, active, and effective in the local assembly where he is, as well as in the Church universal.
- 4) He needs the local assembly for his spiritual growth; and he is needed in the local assembly for the growth of the Church universal.
- 5) There is nothing like 'independence' in the Church, only 'interdependence'. You are not an island or a one-man riot squad. You need others as much as you are needed by others. God has given you gifts which you are expected to use for the benefit of all.
- 6) You cannot be in the Body of Christ and be living contrary or against His will (**Ephesians 5:23-32**), otherwise, you would be spewed out of the Body (**Revelations 3:15-16**).
- 7) You are not to forsake the assembling together of one another (**Hebrews 10:25**). If you are out of town, prayerfully allow the Holy Spirit lead you to a place of fellowship.
- 8) Baptism into One Body is the doorway into all the other baptisms.
- 9) You are accountable to the pastor and members of the local assembly into which you have been positioned by the Holy Spirit.

EXERCISE

Please answer true or false.

- 1) Baptism into One Body is what happens when you have decided on the church to attend.
- 2) Attending a church does not mean that you have been baptized into One Body.
- 3) You can be baptized into One Body even if you are not born again.
- 4) Without the Holy Spirit there can be no baptism into One Body.
- 5) Once you are baptized into One Body, you don't need the other baptisms.
- 6) Baptism into One Body means that you become interdependent.
- 7) Baptism into One Body means commitment to both the local assembly and the Church universal.
- 8) Baptism into One Body means that you are subject to Christ through and through, just as Israel of old were subject to Moses.
- 9) A sign of baptism into One Body is the manifestation of the nature, character, or likeness of Christ in the believer.
- 10) Baptism into One Body marks the beginning of the branding of the believer.
- 11) Your development as a Christian begins with baptism into One Body.
- 12) A Christian is permitted to sit in a local assembly for as long as he wishes without being involved in ministry.
- 13) When a Christian travels from his base, he is free from church services including bible study, until he returns to his base.
- 14) You may not necessarily be fully aware of your being baptized into One Body.
- 15) Though the Holy Spirit may put you in a local assembly, you still have to choose where you serve in that local assembly.