

## 5. The True Meaning of Baptism

Nangira, who lived in Central Africa, did not consider baptism to be merely optional. For more than a year she had eagerly studied the Bible. She longed to become a Christian. One evening she shared with her husband the things she had learned. Outraged, he shouted, "I don't want this kind of religion in my home and if you keep on studying I will kill you." Although she was crushed, Nangira continued studying, and was soon ready for baptism.

Before leaving for the baptismal service Nangira knelt respectfully before her husband and told him she was to be baptized. He picked up his large hunting knife and shouted, "I have told you that I do not want you to be baptized. The day you are baptized I will kill you." But Nangira, determined to follow her Lord, left with her husband's threats resounding in her ears.

Before entering the water, she confessed her sins and dedicated her life to her Savior, not knowing whether she would be laying down her life for her Lord that day, too. But peace filled her heart as she was baptized. When she returned home, she brought the knife to her husband. "Have you been baptized?" He asked angrily. "Yes," replied Nangira simply. "Here is the knife." Amazed at her courage, he could not take her life.

This lesson opens to us the true meaning of baptism.

### 1. In Christ's great commission, what were they to make

Matthew 28:18,19

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**Note:** Notice God did not say, "Go and make church members!" God said, "Go and make disciples. A disciple is a follower of Christ.

### 2. What three things define a disciple?

Matthew 16:24

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**Note:** This is the kind of conversion that we need. Christ must be the center and substance of everything. If we surrender to Jesus, if we open the door of our hearts and invite Him in, we will be in safe keeping.

### 3. What was done away with at the cross?

Romans 6:6, 7

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**Note:** The old man was destroyed on the cross. We are either a "Slave to God... or a slave of sin." Romans 6:22 Now you become a slave to Christ. A slave doesn't have any time off. Jesus delivers us from the slavery of sin and makes us FREE.

### 4. What symbol is used to describe this experience?

Romans 6:3-5

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### 5. What happens to the desires and passions of the flesh when you belong to Christ?

Galatians 5:24

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**Note:** The problem today is that too many people have been buried alive. The power of the Cross is that when I've been crucified with Christ I really do become a new creature in Him. It's time to invite Jesus to come into our hearts and take control. The reason Jesus had to die on the cross was to destroy sin in our lives! You and I can be free right now.

6. What did the 'spiritual rock' represent?

1 Corinthians 10:2-4

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**Note:** Notice that the Israelites were baptized into the cloud and into the sea. This is going to be very important as we learn about the true meaning of baptism.

**God illustrates the purpose of Baptism**

7. What instrument did God instruct Moses to strike the rock with?

Exodus 17:5-6

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**Note:** According to I Corinthians 10:4 the 'Rock' that was struck represented Christ. The striking of the rock pointed forward to Christ's death, and through His death would come rivers of living waters. The instrument that Christ was struck with was the cross. So when we see the rod we see the cross.

8. What was in Moses' hand when Aaron and Hur held up his hand and Israel prevailed?

Exodus 17:8-12

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9. What does the story of the Red Sea teach us about the purpose of baptism?

Exodus 14 (esp. vs. 10, 16, 21, 26-28)

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**Note:** The (Rod) was stretched out over the Red Sea to show the first work of the cross, deliverance from sin. The second work of the cross is demonstrated when Moses stretched out his (Rod) back over the sea, and the Egyptian army representing that old life of sin was utterly destroyed. The Red Sea is symbolic of the blood of Jesus. It is as we go through the cleansing blood of Christ that we experience deliverance from sin and power to move into the future. The power of the cross not only takes us from death to life... it delivers us from the power of SIN. Hallelujah!! The old life us sin is entirely destroyed. We serve a living Savior, that old man that Christ crucified on the cross is still dead. I think its time to sing.

10. What song will the redeemed sing when they get to heaven?

Revelation 15:2-4

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That song does not belong to the Jewish people alone. It points forward to the destruction of the enemies of all righteousness and the final victory of the people of God. John the revelator beholds, in vision, the white-robed multitude that have "received the victory." They are singing the song of Moses and the Lamb"

In freeing us from the slavery of sin, God has brought about a greater deliverance than that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea. Like the Hebrews, we should praise God with heart and soul and voice for His "wonderful works." The daily blessings that we receive from the hand of God, and above all else the death of Jesus to bring happiness and heaven within our reach, should be a theme for constant gratitude.