

Entering the Kingdom of Heaven

'New Beginning Studies' #1 Of 3 (UPDATED 7-13-18)

Q: Are you willing to do what it takes to enter the Kingdom of Heaven?

Q: Do you have the faith required to be a follower of Jesus?

Q: Are you ready to be "born again"?

Read **Matt. 7:21**

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." (NIV)

Q#1: What is Jesus saying here?

Read **Matt. 6:33**

"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." (NIV)

Q#2: What does "seeking" something FIRST look like?

Q#3: From our first study, we know what His Kingdom is; but what is "His righteousness"?

Q#4: What does Jesus promise those who make "seeking His Kingdom and righteousness" their first priority?

Q: Do you believe Jesus?	YES	NO
Q: Do you trust Him to do what He says?	YES	NO

Read **Heb. 11:6**

"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." (NIV)

Q#5: What is faith?

- **Heb. 11:1** "Now *faith is confidence* in what we hope for and *assurance* about what we do not see." (NIV)

Q: Do you believe that God exists?	YES	NO
Q: Do you believe He rewards those who earnestly seek Him?	YES	NO
Q: Do you believe He will take care of you if you seek His Kingdom and His righteousness ahead of everything else?	YES	NO
Q: Do you want to be a part of God's Kingdom and part of His story?	YES	NO

Read Acts 2:36-40

*“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “**Brothers, what shall we do?**”³⁸ Peter replied, “**Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**”³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”⁴⁰ **With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”** (NIV)*

Q#6: What does it mean to repent?

Q#7: What is baptism?

Q#8: Peter told them to repent and be baptized so that two things could happen. What happens when you repent and are baptized?

Q#9: What would happen if you only did one or the other of these two commands?

Q#10: What is supposed to happen when you repent? (Acts 3:19; Acts 26:20; Gal. 5:19-23; Matt. 3:8).

Q#11: What is supposed to happen when you get baptized? (Romans 6:3-4; 1Peter 3:21; Phil. 3:20; Gal 3:26-29; Col. 2:9-15; John 3:3; 2Cor. 5:17).

Q#12: What does it mean to have your sins forgiven? (Col. 1:13-14; Romans 6:17; Col. 1:21-23)

Q#13: What is the gift of the Holy Spirit? (1John 4:4; Rom. 8:9-11; John 14:16-17)

Q#14: Why is the gift of the Holy Spirit so important? (Eph. 1:13-14; Eph. 2:10; 1Cor. 12:4-7)

TRUTH TO REMEMBER: You can start over and become a part of the New Creation!!

If you're ready to make this commitment and become part of God's story, then don't wait another minute! **Have someone baptize you into Jesus as soon as you can!**

But it's very important to understand that Baptism is only the beginning; there is still so much to learn about being a part of the new creation. In the remaining 2 studies, we will look at what Jesus expects from His disciples, and how we work together as His **body**.

NOTES:

Matt. 7:21

Q#1: What is Jesus saying here?

- It takes more than saying the right things to enter the Kingdom; you have to do the right things! (*This is important to consider, since so many people have been taught all they have to do “to be saved” is say a prayer.*)

Matt. 6:33

Q#2: What does “seeking something first” look like?

- It is top priority. Everything else comes second.

Q#3: From our first study, we know what His Kingdom is; but what is “His righteousness”?

- “Righteousness” is the Greek word “**dikaïosune**” (*dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay*), and it means **doing what God requires, and what pleases Him.**

Q#4: What does Jesus promise those who make “seeking His Kingdom and righteousness” their first priority?

- The King will take care of you and provide everything you need, so you are free to focus on serving Him without worrying about providing for yourself.

Heb. 11:6

Q#5: What is faith?

- **Heb. 11:1** “*Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.*” (NIV)
- Having faith in God means having enough confidence in Him that you trust Him to do what He says He will do.

Acts 2:36-40

Q#6: What does it mean to repent?

- “Repent” is the Greek word “**metanoeo**” (*met-an-o-eh'-o*), and it means “**to make a decision for change.**”

Q#7: What is supposed to happen when you repent?

- When you repent, the way you **think**, AND the way you **act**, will BOTH change.
 - In **Acts 3:19**, Peter told people they should “*repent and return*”, which means they should *change the way they think, AND head in a different direction.*
 - Paul told people they should demonstrate their repentance by their deeds (**Acts 26:20**).
- When you repent, your life produces “*fruit of the Spirit*”, instead of “*acts of the flesh*” (**Gal. 5:19-23**).
 - When John the Baptist told people to repent, he told them to “*produce fruit in keeping with repentance*” (**Matt. 3:8**).

Q#8: What is baptism?

- “Baptized” is the Greek word “*baptizo*” (bop-teez’-o), and it means “*to dip or sink; to be totally immersed or covered over.*”

Q#9: What is supposed to happen when you get baptized?

- You are dying to your old way of life, and being buried with Jesus, so that you can be raised up to live an entirely new life (**Romans 6:3-4**).
- You are pledging allegiance to the King and His Kingdom, and you become a citizen of Heaven (**1Peter 3:21; Phil. 3:20**).
- You are clothed with Christ (**Gal 3:26-29**).
- Your heart is circumcised and cut free from the old way of being human (**Col. 2:9-15**).
- You are born again (**John 3:3**) and become a part of the new creation (**2Cor. 5:17**).

Q#10: Peter told them to repent and be baptized so that two things could happen. What happens when you repent and are baptized?

- You receive forgiveness of your sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Q#11: What would happen if you only did one or the other of these two commands?

- We aren’t told, so no one knows for sure, but why would anyone with a choice take a chance? If we are commanded to both repent and be baptized, why would we think either command was optional? Commands aren’t usually optional!

Q#12: What does it mean to have your sins forgiven?

- When God forgives our sins, He redeems us, and buys us back from our slavery to sin (**Col. 1:13-14; Romans 6:17**). Sin is what separated us from God and made us spiritually dead.
- With sin forgiven and taken away, we are reconciled to God, and we spiritually come back to life! (**Col. 1:21-23**)

Q#13: What is the gift of the Holy Spirit?

- The Holy Spirit is the personal presence of God; and the gift of the Spirit is His coming to live inside you (**1John 4:4; Rom. 8:9-11; John 14:16-17**).

Q#14: Why is the gift of the Holy Spirit so important?

- **Eph. 1:13-14** “*And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.*” (NIV)
- The Holy Spirit is God’s guarantee that He has accepted you, forgiven you of your sins, and has an inheritance waiting for you!
- In addition, the Holy Spirit empowers us to do the work that God has created us to do in His kingdom (**Eph. 2:10; 1Cor. 12:4-7**).