The Three Basic Doctrines:

Salvation, Water Baptism, Baptism in the Spirit

As a Christian, you should be able to teach a new believer about the three main events which should occur in their Christian lives: Salvation, Water baptism and Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Each of these topics below contain one or two main Scriptures and some questions and answers to help you master the basics.

**Doctrine #1 - Salvation**

**Q: Why does a person need to be “saved?”**

**A:*****Salvation* is needed so that a person can go to heaven when he dies.** The term “born again” in this verse means the same thing as “getting saved.” It is something God does for the unbeliever the moment he exercises faith in God. God removes the record of sins which he holds against the sinner and makes him “right” with God, *saving* him from the effects of his sin.

**John 3:3 *-*** *Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God."* NLT

**Q: How does a person get saved?**

**A:** **A person gets saved *by believing in God*.** God determines whether the person has believed, and He credits the payment Jesus made for our sins to the sinner’s account. The sinner does not have to understand anything about Jesus for this to work!! BUT, please note that salvation only occurs because of the finished work of Jesus!! This has been true whether during Old Testament times or New Testament times. In the Old Testament, Abraham was made righteous (saved) by believing in God’s promise that he would have children from a barren wife. This had nothing to do with Jesus! In another example, Jesus Himself declared a prostitute “saved” who simply anointed His feet with expensive ointment. She never prayed a sinner’s prayer! In the Old Testament period, God looked forward to the coming sacrifice of Jesus and credited its benefits to the Old Testament believer for any exercise of faith in Him, over any matter. It is the same today. In the New Testament era, when a person exhibits faith in Him, concerning any matter, God looks back to the accomplished sacrifice of Jesus and credits it to the believer’s account. **Romans 1:20** says that the creation is sufficient evidence presented to humans so that God holds them accountable to either believe or not believe in Him, just as it was in the Old Testament. A person does not have to be in a church, say a sinner’s prayer, sign a membership paper, or any such thing to be saved.

 Rom 1:20

 20 For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God. NLT

**Romans 10:9-10** teaches that it is with the heart that man believes, resulting in righteousness.

 Rom 10:9-10 If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved. NLT

As his knowledge grows, he will understand that he was saved by Jesus’ sacrificial death and resurrection. As he *confesses* that fact throughout his life, whether through prayer, or worship, or casting out a demon, or blessing, or getting baptized, or speaking in tongues, etc., “salvation” starts unfolding. Health, wholeness, healing, well-being, prosperity, etc., all come from “confessing” (agreeing with God) that Jesus is Lord.

**John 5:24 -** "*I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life.”* NLT

**Q: How do we minister to a person who is seeking to be saved or who is unsure about whether he is saved?**

**A:** **We ask them “Have you believed In God? Then we help them to understand whether or not they have believed in God.** Any of the simple acts mentioned above would have been sufficient to get saved. If they ever prayed to God, obeyed their conscience and did something right such as giving to the poor, volunteering out of love for God, worshipping, forgiving a debt, overlooking an offense, confessing a sin because of the fear of God, etc., they were saved at that moment! Sometimes people feel better if they make a profession or say a prayer. That is okay. *The most important step*, *however is to baptize them in water!*

**Doctrine #2 - Water Baptism**

**Q: Why does a person need to be baptized in water?**

**A:** **Baptism, not a “sinner’s prayer,” was the main public expression of belief in Christ**! The word for *forgiveness* (Greek word *aphesis*) means “liberty” or ‘freedom.” *Forgiveness* does not just look backwards at the past record of sin, which was cleared at the moment of belief, but it looks forward to the breaking of the bonds of sin over the believer’s life from the moment of baptism onward. Baptism will help a person overcome sin!

**Acts 2:38** *38 Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins, turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ to show that you have received forgiveness for your sins.*  NLT

Baptism has many other benefits which come from God’s large, inclusive package of salvation for the believer, referred to here as “new lives.” Peter said that as Noah and his family were saved by being inside the ark, we are protected from earthly chaos and misfortune by being baptized.

**Rom 6:3-4 -** *Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? 4 For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives.* NLT

**Q: How should we minister to a person who wants to be baptized in the name of Jesus?**

**A:** **Ask the person if he believes in Jesus. If he does, find some water deep enough to be immersed in. Stand beside him and lower him into the water and say “I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”**

**Doctrine #3 - Baptism in the Holy Spirit**

**Q: What is “the baptism in the Holy Spirit?”**

**A**: **It is a special experience with the Holy Spirit in which a believer speaks in a language he has not learned.** This is called “speaking in tongues” (v 6 “they spoke in other tongues and prophesied”). The experience is the doorway to all the rest of the spiritual gifts which the Holy Spirit intends for all believers (faith, miracles, healing, words of wisdom, words of knowledge, messages in tongues and the interpretation of tongues, discerning of spirits, prophecy, intercession, leadership, mercy, casting out of demons, hospitality, etc., etc.). There are many other counterfeit spiritual experiences in the world (fortunetelling, palm reading, séances, necromancy, astral projection, etc.), none of which is authorized by God, except the ones just mentioned above which are sponsored by the Holy Spirit. The baptism in the Holy Spirit helps the Christian to hear the true voice of God, not a counterfeit.

***Acts 19:1-7* -** *1 While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior regions until he reached Ephesus, on the coast, where he found several believers. 2 "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" he asked them. "No," they replied, "we haven't even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." 3 "Then what baptism did you experience?" he asked. And they replied, "The baptism of John." 4 Paul said, "John's baptism called for repentance from sin. But John himself told the people to believe in the one who would come later, meaning Jesus." 5 As soon as they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 Then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied. 7 There were about twelve men in all. NLT*

**Q: Who can receive it?**

**A:** **Only a believer can receive it** (v2 “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?). Sometimes it is the first experience which happens after a person has believed, sometimes it is second, after water baptism. The order doesn’t matter.

**Q: How does a person receive it?**

**A: A person receives the baptism in the Spirit by:** **1) asking Jesus to baptize him and 2) opening his mouth to speak, except not in a language he has learned.** They can do this themselves or we can help by laying hands on them and praying (v 6 “then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied”). The biggest obstacle to speaking in tongues is the idea that it is something that spontaneously, automatically happens to you. After the two initial outpourings (Day of Pentecost on the Jews and the gathering at the home of Cornelius on the Gentiles) the baptism was sought after, talked about, and ministered from one person to another. There are no other mentions in the Bible of it happening spontaneously. The believer simply does what the Bible says he can do. He is not making it up, neither is it a counterfeit of the devil.