

# Rabbit Shooter's Guide

## **Introduction**

WELCOME to your guide for shooting “rabbits.” If you have ever spent an entire evening in a Biblical discussion, and have felt that all you did was to chase around in circles, you need this simple, straight forward, true to the Bible guide to keep the discussion where it needs to be.

How did the “Rabbit Shooter’s Guide” get its name? When you are sharing the word of God with some poor lost souls, and they begin to feel the pressure from the sharp two-edged sword, they often frantically try to find some way to redirect the discussion so that the pressure is not on them. Invisible to the naked eye, but present in the room, are all sorts of “rabbit cages.” In these cages are “rabbits” with names like “Where did Cain get his wife?” and “What about the thief on the cross?” And when our lost souls begin to feel the pressure, they reach over and unlock the cage door of one of these “rabbits,” and you chase him in circles all over the living room. When you, breathless and exhausted, finally catch this “rabbit” and return him to his cage, your lost souls reach over and unlock the cage door for another “rabbit.” Two such “rabbits” in an evening will wear out any soul winner. So the secret is to walk into the living room, and immediately lock all the “rabbit cages.” And when you are ready, you reach over, unlock the door of the “rabbit cage,” and “shoot the rabbit” on the spot. No “rabbit chasing.” This way, you are able to keep the discussion on point, and thus help these souls held captive by Satan out of the entangled mess they have got themselves into. So, welcome to the “Rabbit Shooter’s Guide.”

The great issue in any person’s life is where he is going to spend eternity. Everything else is insignificant by comparison. So, while there are many interesting Biblical topics that can and should be discussed, the burning issue (pardon the expression) is each individual’s salvation. It must be remembered that the purpose of this guide is to help you keep the discussion on the appropriate Biblical topics, particularly the controversial “problem” of immersion for remission of sins, and to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. And the underlying motive is love for that other person’s eternal soul.

Remember this: he who asks the questions controls the discussion. So by learning what questions to ask, and in what order, you will be able to help many of Adam’s fallen race out of the quagmire of their sins, and into the grace of God’s eternal life. God bless you.

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## The Thief on the Cross

- 1. Always bring the subject to discussion of salvation**
  - a) Is there any subject more important than salvation? (Answer Will be “no.”) Let’s discuss how to be saved then.
  - b) Or (particularly with evangelicals, and “Pentecostals”, who want to talk about the Holy Spirit), “The Holy Spirit is for Christians, agreed? So how do you become a Christian?”
- 2. Hebrews 9:16,17 - to establish that the New Covenant began with Christ**
  - a) When does a man’s will take effect?
  - b) Explain origin of “last will and testament”
  - c) When did Christ’s will take effect?
  - d) What does “New Testament” mean?
  - e) Could Christ pass out forgiveness of sins while He was alive?
  - f) What happened when He died?
- 3. Mark 2:1-12 to show that Jesus had authority on earth to forgive sins**
  - a) Whose faith was it that Jesus saw?
  - b) Explain that many today go around saying, “My son, your sins are forgiven”
  - c) Ask Why Jesus healed the man who was sick
  - d) Jesus had authority to forgive sins where?
  - e) Which covenant was in effect here, old or new?
  - f) As long as Jesus was alive, He had authority to pass out forgiveness of sins to whomever He chose under such conditions as He chose.
- 4. Luke 23:39-43 to establish that the thief on the cross was forgiven prior to Jesus’ death**
  - a) Was the “good thief” forgiven?
  - b) Was Jesus alive when He forgave the “good thief”?
  - c) Which covenant was in effect when Jesus forgave the “good thief,” old or new?
  - d) Since the gospel accounts covered the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, but did not announce the terms of forgiveness under the new covenant, we will have to look to the book of Acts and the epistles to find out the terms of salvation under the new covenant.
- 5. Acts 2:36-38 - to show that repentance and immersion are necessary for forgiveness of sins under the new covenant**
  - a) Establish that Peter’s message on the day of Pentecost was the first time the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus was proclaimed
  - b) Establish that Peter drove the point home that the resurrection of Jesus declared Him to be both Lord and Christ
  - c) What did the people ask Peter and the other apostles?
  - d) What two things did Peter tell them to do?
  - e) Why were they to be immersed?
  - f) Can a person be saved without forgiveness of sins?
  - g) Can a person be saved without immersion for forgiveness of sins?
  - h) Romans 2:11 - Does God have the same plan of salvation for Gentiles as well as Jews?

### *Special problems:*

Believes word “for” means “because”

Believes immersion in Jesus’ name is “Spirit baptism”

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### Special Problems in Acts 2:38

Prospect believes word translated “for” [for the forgiveness of sins] means “because”:

**Background:** many of those who believe in being saved by “accepting Jesus into your heart” have been taught that immersion in Acts 2:38 “for” the forgiveness of sins actually means that a person is to be immersed “because” his sins have already been forgiven. The reasoning behind this is that as a person is thrown in jail “for the commission of a crime,” so also a person is immersed “for the remission of sins.”

1. **Matthew 26:28 - to establish that “for” means “for the purpose of”**
  - a) Why was Jesus’ blood shed?
  - b) Would you say that Jesus’ blood was shed “because” our sins were already forgiven?
  - c) What does the expression “for the forgiveness of sins” mean?
  - d) Does immersion in Jesus’ name in Acts 2:38 have the same relationship to forgiveness of sins as Jesus’ blood in Matthew 26:28?
  - e) Why is a person to be immersed?
2. **The Greek word *eis* (pronounced “ace” or “ice” - translated “for” or “unto” in most Versions in Acts 2:38)**
  - a) *Eis* has the meaning “into” or “for the purpose of” or “with a view toward”
  - b) *Eis* is not a “backward looking” preposition
  - c) More information available if necessary

**Prospect believes the immersion in Jesus’ name is “Spirit baptism”**

Short answer (may have to use longer section dealing with defining the immersion in the Spirit - Acts 10:47,48 - to establish that immersion in Jesus’ name occurs in water

- a) In whose name does this immersion occur, according to Acts 10:48?
- b) According to Acts 10:47, immersion in Jesus’ name (the name of the Lord) occurs in what element?
- c) According to Acts 2:38, immersion in Jesus’ name is for what purpose?
- d) Can a person have his sins forgiven without being immersed in Jesus’ name?
- e) Can a person have his sins forgiven without being immersed in water?

**Note:** Keep the discussion in Acts 10:47,48 to the subject of forgiveness of sins in Jesus’ name unless you are prepared at that point to launch into the entire subject of defining “immersion in the Holy Spirit.”

After dealing with special problems as they arise, return to the sheet entitled “The Thief on the Cross,” section 5e or 5f.

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## Defining Faith

**Background:** the individual believes that he is saved by “faith,” “faith alone,” or “grace alone.” His definition of faith excludes immersion, because he believes that immersion is a work which follows faith. His thinking is shaped entirely by a false interpretation of the text which says that a person is saved by faith through grace, and not by works (Ephesians 2:8,9).

1. **Establish the point that we need to let God define the meaning of His terms by usage**
  - a) We want God to define His terms, right?
  - b) I've heard of some churches that have their people climb a flight of 300 stairs on their knees for repentance. Would this meet the Bible's definition of repentance?
  - c) Why not?
  - d) So you want God to give His definition of repentance, and not allow men to arbitrarily assign a definition to it?
  - e) Why don't we take a look at some examples of conversion to see how God uses “salvation by faith?”
2. **Acts 16:25-34 - conversion of the Philippian jailer**
  - a) Was the jailer saved by faith?
  - b) Did he have to hear the word to be saved?
  - c) Does faith include the belief which comes from the preached word (you may need to see Romans 10:17 and I Corinthians 1:21 in addition)
3. **Acts 2:36-38 - conversion of 3000 on the day of Pentecost -establishing that salvation by faith includes repentance**
  - a) What did Peter tell these people to do?
  - b) Could they be saved without repentance?
  - c) Does salvation by faith include repentance?
4. **Acts 8:26-40 – Conversion of the Ethiopian Eunuch - establishing that salvation by faith includes confession that Jesus is Lord**
  - a) In verse 35, what did Philip preach to the Ethiopian?
  - b) According to verse 37, what did Philip require of the Ethiopian before he would immerse him? (If prospect wants to know why 37 is a “marginal verse,” explain that it was not in some of the early manuscripts, but its validity is established by the next scripture passage you are going to look at.)
  - c) Romans 10:9,10 - is confession with the mouth that Jesus is Lord required for salvation?
  - d) Does salvation by faith include the confession that Jesus is Lord, the Christ, the Son of the living God?
5. **Acts 22:1 - 16 - conversion of the apostle Paul - establishing that salvation by faith includes immersion**
  - a) Consider first Acts 22:1 - 10. Was Paul saved on the Damascus road? (Expect “yes” answer; if you get “no,” you’re already making great progress.)
  - b) Does salvation mean that a person’s sins are washed away?
  - c) When the voice said, “I am Jesus the Nazarene,” did Paul at that point then believe in the resurrected Christ?
  - d) Did Paul’s question, “What shall I do?” show that he was repentant (see Acts 9:9 for further evidence if necessary).
  - e) Did Paul confess with his mouth that Jesus was Lord, knowing of whom he was speaking, on the Damascus road?
  - f) Now consider verses 11-16. When were Paul’s sins washed away?
  - g) When was he saved?
  - h) Does salvation by faith include immersion?

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## Immersion into Christ (Short Form)

- 1. Establish that Romans 6 is talking about immersion in water**
  - a) Where in scripture does the Bible teach that immersion in water is a symbol of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ?
    - Option A - your friend answers correctly - Romans 6-Agree, and turn to Romans 6
    - Option B - your friend doesn't know, or won't say where simply mention that Romans 6 contains the most complete teaching in the New Testament on the subject of immersion, and that's where the symbolism is established, and turn to Romans 6
- 2. Drive home the symbolism of immersion in water**
  - a) Lightly note in verse 5 that the scripture is talking about being united (planted - KJV) with Christ in the likeness of Jesus' death
  - b) Note that immersion is described as a burial and a resurrection in verse 4 - the symbolism is clear
  - c) Then note that immersion in water is being described here (generally your prospect will agree, but if your friend doesn't agree, you will have to use *Immersion into Christ- Long Form*)
- 3. Immersion is INTO Christ**
  - a) Romans 8:1 - If a person is IN Christ, is he condemned? If a person is not in Christ, is he condemned?
  - b) Can a person be *in* Christ unless he has entered *into* Christ?
  - c) The most important practical question a person can ask is "How does a person enter *into* Christ?"
  - d) Where does the scripture describe how a person enters into Christ? (You may have to emphasize the point by asking for specific scripture using the exact words "into Christ.")
  - e) What does Romans 6:3 say? (Have the person read the verse out loud.)
  - f) According to Romans 6:3, how does a person enter into Christ?
  - g) We have already agreed that this passage in Romans is talking about immersion in water. Can a person be in Christ before he is immersed in water?
  - h) If necessary, draw a line on the floor or table, or whatever is handy. Label the left side "Outside of Christ." Label the right side "In Christ." Ask, "When does a person cross the line?"
- 4. Further emphasis (if you have been able to establish your point from Romans 6)**
  - a) Galatians 3:26,27 - We have become sons of God by what, according to verse 26?
  - b) How, according to verse 27, do we become sons of God?
  - c) And how do we enter into Christ?
  - d) Emphasize that Romans 6:3 and Galatians 3:27 are the only places in scripture which tell how to enter into Christ.

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## Immersion Into Christ (Long Form)

**Note:** Our purpose here is to define immersion in the Spirit as distinct from immersion into Christ. If the person is still arguing with you about whether immersion in Jesus' name is for forgiveness of sins, his thinking is still messed up, and he will have trouble allowing the scripture to define what it means.

- 1. Mark 1:8 - to show that John promised that Jesus would immerse in the Holy Spirit**
  - a) Who did John promise would immerse "you" in the Holy Spirit?
  - b) Is there enough information in this passage of scripture to determine who the "you" is, what the immersion in the Spirit will be, or when it will happen?
- 2. Acts 1:1 - 11 - to establish that Jesus promised that the apostles would be immersed in the Holy Spirit within a few days**
  - a) What is the reference to the "first account" and who wrote Acts?
  - b) Who was it that Jesus had gathered together?
  - c) What is the difference between a disciple and an apostle?
  - d) How many days was it after Jesus' resurrection that this gathering took place?
  - e) Who was it that Jesus promised would be immersed in the Holy Spirit?
  - f) When would this immersion occur?
  - g) According to the "two men in white clothing," all eleven remaining apostles were what kind of Jews?
- 3. Acts 1:12-15 - to establish that the "120" consisted of Jews other than Galileans**
  - a) Who was present in the room in addition to the apostles?
  - b) Would Mary and Martha (sisters of Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead) have been included in the "women" as well as Mary Magdalene?
  - c) Where were Mary and Martha from (see John 11:18)?
  - d) So Mary and Martha were what kind of Jews?
  - e) Were Mary and Martha from Galilee?
  - f) Were the 120 in the upper room all Galileans?
- 4. Acts 2:1-14, 32, 33 - to define the immersion in the Holy Spirit**
  - a) What was the day of Pentecost from a Jewish perspective (See Leviticus 23)
  - b) How many days after Passover was it until Pentecost?
  - c) Was Jesus resurrected at the close of Passover (was He killed during Passover week)?
  - d) How many days was it from Jesus' resurrection until Pentecost?
  - e) How many days was it from Jesus' ascension until Pentecost?
  - f) Does this fit the time frame of Acts 1:5, "not many days from now"?
  - g) What three things happened in verses 2-4?
  - h) All of those who so spoke were what kind of Jew?
  - i) Who was it that Peter defended as not being drunk?
  - j) Who was it in Acts 1 that Jesus promised would be immersed in the Holy Spirit within a few days?
  - k) In verses 32, 33, who was it that poured forth this?
  - l) Who did John the Immerser promise would immerse in the Holy Spirit?
  - m) Was this immersion both audible and visible?
  - n) Does this define what God means by immersion in the Holy Spirit?

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- 5. Acts 10:1 - 11:18 - To show that the second time the immersion in the Holy Spirit occurred, it occurred in the same manner as in Acts 2**
  - a) Were Cornelius and his friends and household the first Gentiles to be saved?
  - b) While Peter was preaching, what happened to the Gentiles?
  - c) Is it possible to understand what happened in Acts 10 without consulting Peter's recapitulation in Acts 11?
  - d) At least how many Jewish brethren went with Peter to Cornelius?
  - e) In Acts 11:15, what was the "beginning" to which Peter refers?
  - f) Who were the "us" at the beginning?
  - g) What does 'just as' mean?
  - h) What happened in Acts 10, according to Acts 11:15?
  - i) What did Peter call this event in Acts 11:16?
  - j) Does this define what God calls the immersion in the Holy Spirit?
- 6. Summary - to firmly establish that immersion in the Spirit is not the same as immersion into Christ**
  - a) What three things does immersion in the Spirit consist of?
  - b) Who sent the immersion in the Spirit?
  - c) Does immersion in the Spirit consist of both audible and visible elements?
  - d) How many times did immersion in the Spirit occur in the New Testament?
  - e) In Romans 6:3 and Galatians 3:27 are all Christians referred to as "immersed into Christ"?
  - f) Can immersion into Christ and immersion in the Spirit be the same immersion?
  - g) In Acts 2, why was the immersion in the Spirit poured forth?
  - h) In Acts 10, why was the immersion in the Spirit poured forth?
  - i) Once salvation was open to both Jew and Gentile, what further need was there for immersion in the Spirit?
  - j) Is there a continuing need for immersion into Christ?