

WATER BAPTISM

According to the New Testament

WHY BE BAPTIZED?

1. Because you want to follow Christ's example

"At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river." Mark 1:9

2. Because Christ commanded it

Jesus said, "Go then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey everything I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19-20

3. Because it shows you are a believer

"...many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized." Acts 18:8

4. Because obeying Christ's command shows you know Him

"We know that we have come to know Him, if we obey His commands." 1 John 2:3

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?

1. It is a symbol of Christ's burial and resurrection

"Christ died for our sins...he was buried...and he rose again." 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4

"For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ." Colossians 2:12

2. It is a symbol of your new life as a Christian

"When someone becomes a Christian, he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun!" 2 Corinthians 5:17

"By our baptism then we were buried with Him and shared His death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too might live a new life!" Romans 6:4

Baptism does not make you a believer; it shows that you already are one! Baptism does not "save" you. Only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring--it's the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart.

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2:8, 9

HOW ARE WE TO BE BAPTIZED?

1. Like Jesus was baptized - by being immersed in water

"As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water." Matthew 3:16

2. Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion under water

(Example) *"...then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water...." Acts 8:38,39*

3. The word "baptize" literally means "to dip under water"

The Greek word "baptize" means "to immerse or dip under water."

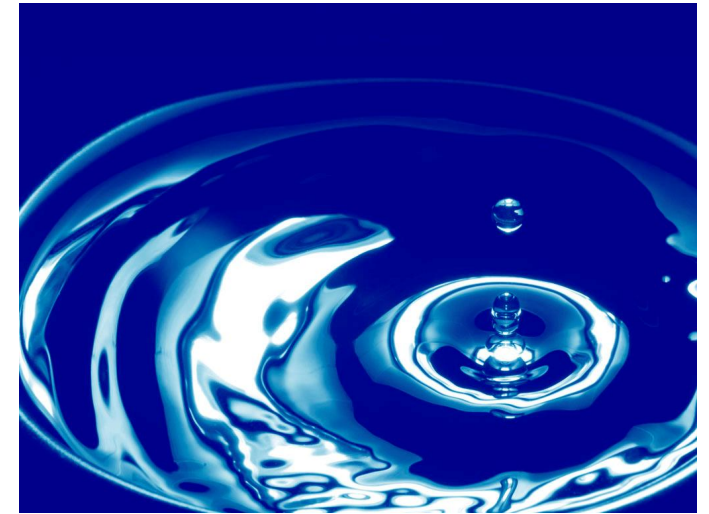
4. It is the best way to picture a burial and resurrection

The founders of denominations agree:

Martin Luther: "I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the word imports and the mystery signifies."

John Calvin: "The word 'baptize' signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church."

John Wesley: "Buried with Him, alluding to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church."



WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

Every person who has believed in Christ

"Those who believed and accepted His message were baptized." Acts 2:41

"But when they believed Philip as he preached the Good News...and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Acts 8:12

The one requirement for baptism is belief in Christ! We do not baptize children until they are old enough to understand and believe.

WHEN ARE WE TO BE BAPTIZED?

As soon as you have believed! You shouldn't delay.

"Those who believed...were baptized...that day!" Acts 2:41

"Then Philip began with the Scripture and told him the Good News about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water! Why shouldn't I be baptized right now?' Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' The official answered, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him." Acts 8:36-39 (paraphrase)

There is no reason to delay. As soon as a person decides to believe in Christ, he can and should be baptized.

WHAT ABOUT BEING BAPTIZED TWICE?

Our church believes baptism by immersion is the way Jesus was baptized. Therefore, we recommend rebaptism if you have not been baptized by immersion since you became a believer. It does not question the intent or the value of a prior experience, but simply reflects your desire to be obedient and follow Christ's example.

CAN MY FAMILY BE BAPTIZED TOGETHER?

Yes! If each family member understands fully the meaning of baptism, and each one has personally placed his or her trust in Christ for salvation, we encourage families to be baptized at the same time. The pastor will baptize one person at a time, but families can enter the water together.

WILL I HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING?

You may choose to share your conversion experience, and we encourage you to consider this, but you only have to say two words. At the beginning of the baptism service, the pastor will briefly explain the meaning of baptism. You will wait at the edge of the water for your turn to be baptized. The pastor will introduce you and ask you the question "Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?" You will reply "I do." He will then briefly lower you just under the water and quickly lift you out again. You will leave the water, dry off, and watch with the others.

WHAT SHOULD I BRING?

Bring a towel and dry clothes to wear after your baptism. For the baptism, we encourage women to wear dark slacks, jeans, or shorts and a blouse (not a t-shirt). Men may wear pants or shorts and a t-shirt. Changing rooms are usually available.

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