

What is baptism?

BAPTISM IS A SIGN OF OUR FAITH

Baptism has been described as an outward sign of an inward faith. Faith, belief, and trust in Jesus to forgive our sin is a very real thing. Baptism is a visible way of showing our invisible faith.

When Christians are baptised they are declaring to those present that they have faith in God, and that they have trusted Him to provide forgiveness of sin and the desire to follow Him with their life.

BAPTISM IS A SYMBOL OF A SPIRITUAL TRUTH

Baptism is a symbol of what happened when we became Christians. It is a visible sign of turning from our previous lifestyle and entering into a new relationship and new life given by God.

Turning from our old lifestyle—going down into the water symbolises that we have turned from our life of rejecting God and it has spiritually died.

IN THE SAME WAY, COUNT YOURSELVES DEAD TO SIN. ROMANS 6:11

Leaving our old lifestyle behind and burying it—being submerged symbolises our old life being spiritually buried.

WE WERE THEREFORE BURIED WITH HIM THROUGH BAPTISM INTO DEATH. ROMANS 6:4



Beginning our new life—coming up out of the water symbolises the beginning of the new spiritual life in relationship with God as one of His children.

WE WERE THEREFORE BURIED WITH HIM THROUGH BAPTISM INTO DEATH IN ORDER THAT, JUST AS CHRIST WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD THROUGH THE GLORY OF THE FATHER, WE TOO MAY LIVE A NEW LIFE. IF WE HAVE BEEN UNITED WITH HIM LIKE THIS IN HIS DEATH, WE WILL CERTAINLY ALSO BE UNITED WITH HIM IN HIS RESURRECTION. ROMANS 6:4-5

Why should a Christian be baptised?

TO BE OBEDIENT TO JESUS

Just before Jesus left the earth he gave a final command to his followers. He commanded them to go and encourage others to also follow Jesus, then to baptise them, and teach them all Jesus' commands.

THEREFORE GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS, BAPTISING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, 20 AND TEACHING THEM TO OBEY EVERYTHING I HAVE COMMANDED YOU.

AND SURELY I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, TO THE VERY END OF THE AGE. MATTHEW 28:19-20

Later we see the disciples carrying out these commands by baptising new Christians.



SO HE ORDERED THAT THEY BE BAPTISED IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST. ACTS 10:48

How should I be baptised?

By being immersed in water. This is the pattern used in the Bible and this best symbolises the spiritual realities that have taken place in a Christian's life.

TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

AS SOON AS JESUS WAS BAPTISED, HE WENT UP OUT OF THE WATER. AT THAT MOMENT HEAVEN WAS OPENED, AND HE SAW THE SPIRIT OF GOD DESCENDING LIKE A DOVE AND LIGHTING ON HIM. 17 AND A VOICE FROM HEAVEN SAID, THIS IS MY SON, WHOM I LOVE; WITH HIM I AM WELL PLEASED. MATTHEW 3:16-17

TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF THE FIRST CHRISTIANS

THOSE WHO ACCEPTED HIS MESSAGE WERE BAPTISED, AND ABOUT THREE THOUSAND WERE ADDED TO THEIR NUMBER THAT DAY. ACTS 2:41

BECAUSE OF THE CHALLENGE IT BRINGS

Making public our faith means that we have the challenge of keeping our commitment of living for Christ.



What baptism is not

BAPTISM DOES NOT MAKE US ACCEPTABLE TO GOD

In the Bible baptism is recorded as occurring soon after people became Christians. But the Bible doesn't teach that baptism makes us more acceptable to God. There is nothing we can do to earn salvation. Being baptised pleases God because we are being obedient to Him.

BAPTISM DOES NOT GET US READY FOR HEAVEN

The only thing that gets us ready for heaven is to be forgiven for our sins. This happens when we trust Jesus to forgive our sins. We can never be more ready for heaven than the moment when we first became a Christian.

THERE IS NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT THE WATER

The water you get baptised in is normal water from a tap and heated a little. There is nothing mystical or special about the water. Baptism is merely a symbolic act, although for you it will be significant in your life.

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BAP TISM

We believe the Bible teaches that on becoming a Christian and committing one's life in faith to Christ Jesus, Christians should be baptised as a public statement of their faith.

What is a Christian?

A Christian is someone who has entered into a relationship with God in the way that the Bible teaches, and this involves certain elements...

In faith we need to ask God to forgive us, and then enter into a new relationship with God as one of His family.

We must accept Jesus for who He is, the Son of God, the one who brought us salvation from sin.

We are saved through faith and by the grace of God. God's grace is necessary because we received something we didn't deserve. God's gift of grace is given to those who have faith in Him. This faith is a trusting belief in God to provide the necessary grace to overcome the penalty of our sin.