



Baptism at Gate City Bible Church

1. **How do I know if I'm ready for baptism?**

The short answer is that you are ready for baptism if you have put your faith in Jesus Christ for salvation and the forgiveness of your sins. The New Testament pattern is to repent, believe, and be baptized. In other words, the bible assumes if you have become a follower of Jesus Christ, you declare these things by being baptized. Baptism is the outward expression that the Lord Jesus instituted by His example to declare to others what we believe about how He saves us and that we have received Him and the salvation He provides. If you would like any clarification, reach out to Pastor Corey or one of the elders and start the discussion today.

2. **How do I prepare for baptism at Gate City Bible Church?**

- a) Complete this Baptism Packet. A hard copy is available in the foyer on Sunday morning if you are unable to print it at home. Review the "Reference Guide" below.
- b) Complete the "Gate City Testimony Worksheet" included in the Baptism Packet. It is best to have at least one other copy for you to keep, as pastors and elders will want a copy for review.
- c) Reach out to Pastor Corey or one of the elders to discuss further instructions and dates/times

3. **What if I'm afraid to speak during my baptism?**

An important part of baptism is that it is done before witnesses. It is a public confession of faith in Christ, not a private, personal spiritual ritual. For some people, the fear of speaking before a crowd of any size is the reason they have put off being baptized. We don't want this to be a barrier for anyone. In an effort to make this easier and for the sake of clarity, we will video record you sharing your testimony and then show this video during the baptism service. For outdoor services, we will show the videos before heading out to the location. For indoor services, we will show the videos before each corresponding baptism. This video process is preferable because you can do a retake if desired. You will have your testimony available to read during the recording; you are not expected to memorize it, or reiterate it "on the fly". The key to an effective testimony is to keep it clear, succinct, and simple.

4. **If I was baptized as an infant, or before I believe I was really saved, should I be baptized again?**

We believe the scriptures teach that baptism is for believers. To be baptized as a believer, a person would need to be able to give a clear testimony of saving faith in Jesus Christ. If you were baptized before truly understanding a saving faith in Christ, it is acceptable and may be of benefit to be baptized again. Not that baptism has a saving power in and of itself, but for your own spiritual journey knowing that you have taken this step in full understanding of what it means may have some benefit.

At Gate City Bible Church, we do not practice, nor endorse, infant baptism. An infant is unable to articulate an understanding of the gospel and therefore cannot participate in a believer's baptism.

If you have further questions on this matter, please reach out to leadership to further explore your personal circumstances.

5. What if my child or teen wants to be baptized?

Praise the Lord! Gate City Bible Church champions children and we love seeing them come to saving faith in Christ. We believe that Jesus cherishes children and draws them unto himself (Matt. 19:14). If you, as a parent, believe that your grade school child or teen is ready for baptism, please reach out to our pastoral staff so we can discuss next steps.

Reference Guide

The Practice of Baptism

1. **Baptism is full immersion into water.** The symbolism of baptism, that of dying to the old self, being buried with Christ, and being raised to new life in Christ (Romans 6:3-4) prescribes the act of full immersion in water.
2. **Baptism is an act of obedience to the Lord's command and follows His example.** While baptism itself has no power to save, it is an expectation of all believers (Acts 2:38, 22:16, Mark 16:16, 1 Cor 12:13, Acts 2:41, Romans 6:3-4, Galatians 3:27).
3. **Baptism is a symbol of what God has accomplished through Christ in the life of the believer.** Romans 6:3-11; Colossians 2:9-14; 1 Peter 3:21
4. **Baptism is a symbol of the washing away of sin.** Titus 3:5; Acts 22:16
5. **Baptism is a symbol of our entrance into the Body of Christ.** 1 Corinthians 12:12-13
6. **Baptism is a public act.** As believers, we seek to emulate Christ and follow His example. Jesus was not alone with John in a wilderness stream when he was baptized. There was an assembly of people there to witness it (Luke 3:21). When we are baptized, we are confessing publicly that Christ is our Lord (Matt 10:32).
7. **Baptism is only for believers.** Mark 16:16, Acts 2:41, Acts 8:12. While we do not discourage children from baptism, at Gate City we do not baptize infants or children that are too young to comprehend the gospel on a basic level or articulate an understanding of their salvation.

Assurance of Salvation

The believer must be able to answer these questions in the affirmative:

1. Do I understand my need for a savior? Do I trust in Christ's finished work on the cross and His resurrection for the forgiveness of my sins?
2. Is there evidence of sanctification by the power of the Holy Spirit in my heart?
 - a. fruit of the Spirit - Galatians 5:22
 - b. good works - Math 7:16-20, Ephesians 2:10
 - c. growing in maturity Hebrews 5:14, Ephesians 4:15, 2 Peter 3:18
 - d. believes and obeys scripture 1 John 2:4-6, James 1:22
3. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God - both fully God and fully man?
4. Do you renounce/turn your back on the works of the world, the flesh, and the devil in your life?
5. Do you intend, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to obey Jesus' teachings and to follow Him as the Lord of your life?

What will I need for the baptism service?

We will provide a special Gate City baptism t-shirt!

Bring or wear dark colored shorts or pants. Athletic shorts are generally more comfortable than jeans.

Bring a complete change of dry clothes - including a second set of ALL undergarments.

Bring a large towel.

Bring a plastic bag to carry home your wet clothes.

If it is an outdoor service, you may want to bring water shoes.

Gate City Baptism Testimony Worksheet

Today's Date:

Name:

Age (if under 18):

Email:

Phone:

The following designations are optional. If no one is selected, a member of our pastoral staff will fulfill these roles.

I would like the following person to assist in my baptism:

I would like the following person to pray for me afterward:

Testimony

Please explain how and when you came to know Christ as your Lord and Savior. Notes:

Focus your attention on what Christ has done and how He revealed Himself to you, and less on what you have done or why you need a savior. Not that this isn't important, but we ALL need a savior and have fallen short [Romans 3:23]. We want to keep the main thing the main thing which is a celebration of what Christ has done in your life.

Keep your testimony clear and concise, no more than three minutes if read at a slow speed is a good rule of thumb, but there are no hard lines. It takes the time it takes.

Please type your answers in a Word document and send it to Pastor Corey.

Before Christ: summarize your life before Christ in two or three words, feel free to give a brief explanation of why you chose those words

The Gospel: this is the turning point. Who shared with you and under what circumstances? When and how did you decide to put your faith in Christ?

Now: How has your life changed since meeting and putting your faith in Jesus?

Please call or email Pastor Corey with any additional questions you may have.



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