

# Baptism:

*Connecting people back to God!*



## Part 1: The Story You Were Made For

*Could your life be part of a bigger story than you ever imagined?*

In our culture, you might hear that religion is irrelevant or outdated. Yet deep down, most of us still wonder about meaning and purpose. Why am I here? Does my life matter? The truth is, **you were created by God on purpose, with a purpose.** Your life is part of a story God has been writing since the beginning of time. Instead of being an accident in a random universe, you belong in God's story. He invites you to come as you are into a relationship with Him and discover the "something more" you've been longing for.

**Q:** *Why should I consider Jesus or faith? I feel like I'm doing fine without religion.*

**A:** Jesus offers a fullness of life that nothing else can give. He said, **"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."** (John 10:10) In other words, there are things in life that drain and empty us, but Jesus came to give *true* life—life to the fullest. You might be doing okay, but without the source of life, there will always be something missing. Jesus wants to fill that gap with real hope, abundant joy, deep peace and exciting purpose.

**Q:** *Even when life is good, I sometimes feel empty. Why do I feel like something's missing?*

**A:** We all have a spiritual thirst that nothing in this world can fully satisfy. Jesus explained it like this: **"Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."** (John 4:13–14) Achievements, friendships, and fun are good, but they don't completely quench that deep thirst in your soul. Only a relationship with God can fill that God-shaped hole in your heart.

- **Reflect:** What parts of your life do you wish had more meaning or fullness? Where have you looked for fulfillment, and with what results?

- **Reflect:** Recall a time when you felt a sense of emptiness even though things were going well. What do you think you were really longing for in that moment?
- **Your Questions:** Write down any questions about purpose, God, or your own story that you still wonder about.

## Part 2: The Problem We All Face

*What if the biggest problem is not just the brokenness around us, but the brokenness within us?*

In every great story, there's a conflict or problem to overcome. When we look at the world, it's clear something is wrong. There's bullying, injustice, hurt, and hate. If we're honest, we also see problems in ourselves—we mess up, we hurt people, we fail to do what's right. The Bible has a word for this universal brokenness: **sin**. That might sound like a religious term, but it simply means falling short of God's goodness by going our own way. We *all* have sinned, and those sins separate us from God, who is perfectly holy and loving. You can feel the effects: guilt, shame, emptiness, and a sense that things aren't the way they're supposed to be. Recognizing this problem is the first step toward the solution. The good news is, God didn't leave us stuck in our mess.

**Q:** *I'm not a bad person. Do I really have a "sin" problem?*

**A:** You might be a pretty good person by human standards, but none of us is perfect. Scripture bluntly says **"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."**

(Romans 3:23) "All" includes me, you, and everyone. Even the kindest person has lied, hurt someone, or done wrong in some way. God's standard is 100% holiness, and *all* of us fall short of that. That's why we all need forgiveness. Recognizing our sin isn't about feeling like a terrible person—it's about being honest that we *do* need God's help and mercy.

**Q:** *Why does sin really matter? Can't I just try to do more good than bad?*

**A:** The problem is that sin isn't something we can just outweigh with good deeds. The Bible teaches that **"the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."** (Romans 6:23) In other words, what we earn from our sin is spiritual death—separation from God, who is the source of life. No amount of good deeds can erase the wrong we've done; we can't lift ourselves out of the pit. But notice

that verse also hints at hope: God offers a *gift* of eternal life through Jesus. We can't fix sin by ourselves, but God has provided a way (we'll get to that soon!). Sin matters because it's the core issue that keeps us from the full life God wants for us.

- **Reflect:** Where do you see brokenness and wrong in the world around you? Make a quick list. Now, consider your own life: in what ways have you fallen short or felt that internal brokenness?
- **Reflect:** Think of a time you felt guilty for something you did. How did you handle that guilt? What does that experience tell you about the need for forgiveness or change?
- **Your Questions:** Write down any questions you have about sin, right and wrong, or why the world is the way it is. What doesn't make sense to you about the idea of "sin"?

## Part 3: The One Who Changes Everything (The Guide)

*What if God wrote Himself into the human story to rescue us from our greatest problem?*

When we couldn't solve the problem ourselves, **Jesus changes everything for everyone**. At Victory Christian Church, we love to say that, because we believe no matter who you are or what you've done, Jesus can change your story. God's solution to our sin problem wasn't to leave us a self-help book or a list of rules—it was to *personally enter our story*. Christianity isn't about good people and bad people, it is about lost people and found people .... God's plan? A Divine Rescue! Jesus Christ is God in the flesh. He lived the perfect life we couldn't live, and then He took on the punishment for our sins by dying on the cross. It's like the Author of life wrote Himself in as a character to save the others. On the cross, Jesus paid the price for all our wrongs. But that's not the end: three days later, He rose from the dead, defeating death itself. Because Jesus died *for us* and rose again, we can be forgiven and reconnected to God. It's not about what we do; it's about what He **has done** for us. He's the guide and savior who can lead us out of our brokenness into a new life.

**Q:** *Why Jesus? Isn't it possible to find God in other ways or religions?*

**A:** Jesus isn't just one option among many; He claimed to be *the* way to God. He said, **"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."** (John 14:6) If that's true, it means we can't save ourselves or find ultimate truth apart from Him. Other religious leaders might give advice, but Jesus did what no one else did: He died for our sins and rose again. He doesn't just point to a path—He *is* the path to God. This can sound narrow, but think of it as a specific cure for a disease. If Jesus is who He says He is, then trusting Him is the sure way to be reconciled with God. The good news is that **He invites everyone** to come to Him.

**Q:** *Does Jesus really love me, even with all my sins and mistakes?*

**A:** Absolutely. The Bible assures us of God's incredible love: **"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."** (Romans 5:8) Think about that – Jesus didn't wait for you to clean up your act or get religious. He saw you at your worst and still chose to die for you. **"While we were still sinners"** means He loves you **as you are**, not as you "should be." He loves you so much that He gave His life to save you. So yes, no matter what you've done or how far you feel from God, Jesus' arms are open. You can *come as you are* with your baggage and brokenness. His love will meet you there, and His love is powerful enough to start changing you from the inside out.

- **Reflect:** What have you heard or believed about Jesus in the past? After learning about who He is and what He's done, has your view of Jesus changed? If so, how?
- **Reflect:** Consider the fact that Jesus died for you *before* you ever cared about Him. How does knowing *"Christ died for us while we were still sinners"* make you feel? What does it tell you about God's character and heart for you?
- **Your Questions:** Write down any questions or doubts you have about Jesus, His identity, or what His death and resurrection mean. What would you ask Him if you could?

## Part 4: Baptism – A New Beginning (The Plan)

*What if getting dunked in water isn't just a weird church ritual, but the start of a whole new life?*

It might seem strange at first, but in Scripture, baptism is never treated as optional or symbolic alone. **Baptism is a milestone moment for a follower of Jesus**—done by fully immersing someone in water, **just as Jesus modeled and commanded**. It's not merely an outward sign or act of obedience—it's the moment God has chosen for us to receive His grace. In the New Testament, baptism is how people expressed saving faith in Jesus. It's where we are united with Christ in His death and resurrection (Romans 6:3–4), where we receive the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). Think of it like a wedding ceremony—an outward act, yes—but one that marks the very beginning of a new life and a sacred covenant. Going under the water represents dying to your old self; coming up is being raised into new life with Jesus. It's not the water that saves—it's the power of Jesus at work in the moment of faith. Baptism is grace received, not works achieved. It's a tangible, unforgettable way of saying “yes” to Jesus' invitation. Just as a wedding ring doesn't make you married but shows you are, baptism doesn't earn salvation but shows the world (and yourself) that you **are** saved and committed to Christ. Jesus changes everything, and baptism is where we embrace that change openly.

**Q:** *Is baptism really that important? Can I be saved without being baptized?*

**A:** In the Bible, believing in Jesus and being baptized were tightly connected as part of the same response to the Gospel. Scripture records that every conversion experience in the New Testament that person was baptized. When the first people heard about Jesus and asked what to do, the apostle Peter answered: **"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."** (Acts 2:38) Baptism was not treated as an optional ritual—it was commanded for every believer. According to Scripture, baptism is where we experience the promised forgiveness of sins and the gift of God's Spirit. It's an act of obedient faith. So while it's Jesus' sacrifice that saves us (not our own work), He calls us to respond through faith, repentance, **and** baptism. If we truly believe, we will want to do what Jesus said. Belief and baptism go hand in hand, like two sides of the same coin in becoming a Christian.

**Q:** *I was baptized or christened as a baby (or long ago before I understood). Should I be baptized again now that I personally believe?*

**A:** Baptism in the Bible is always a personal decision made by someone **after** they come to trust in Jesus. A great example is in Acts: **"But when they believed Philip as**

**he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."** (Acts 8:12) Notice that belief came first, and then baptism as a response of that belief. If you were baptized as a baby, it was likely a meaningful moment for your family, but you weren't making that choice yourself. Now that you *do* believe and understand who Jesus is, your faith is your decision. Think of your earlier baptism as a beautiful hope or dedication, but now you get to affirm it with your own faith. This isn't disrespecting what your parents did—in fact, it can be seen as completing it, because now you're personally embracing Jesus. So if you were baptized before but didn't truly believe or understand, being baptized now that your faith is your own is a great step to take.

**Q:** *I want to follow Jesus, but I feel nervous and not "good enough" yet. Should I wait to get baptized until I'm more prepared or have my life together?*

**A:** You don't have to be "good enough" to come to Jesus—that's the whole point! Jesus makes us new; we can't clean ourselves up first. In the Bible, people didn't wait once they believed. They were encouraged to act quickly. **"And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name."** (Acts 22:16) If you know you need Jesus and you're ready to trust Him, there's no reason to delay. Baptism is not about having your life all fixed; it's about surrendering to the One who will *help* fix and heal your life. Feeling nervous is normal (hey, everyone gets anxious about the unknown). But courage isn't the absence of nerves—it's moving forward despite them. God honors that step of faith. The sooner you begin, the sooner you'll experience the joy and relief of knowing you've done what Jesus asks. Remember, *"Jesus changes everything for everyone,"* including you—**starting right where you are**. So take the plunge, and trust that He will be with you as you do.

- **Reflect:** What are your feelings about baptism right now? Are you excited, anxious, confused? Jot down why you feel that way. It's okay to be honest—God knows your heart.
- **Reflect:** If you decide to get baptized, what are you hoping will change or be confirmed in your life? For example, do you anticipate feeling closer to God, having a clean break from the past, or something else?
- **Your Questions:** Write down any remaining questions or concerns you have about baptism. Nothing is off-limits. Do you wonder about the logistics, the

meaning, or something you've heard? List those questions so you can discuss them with a mentor or pastor.

## Part 5: A New Life – The Journey Continues

*What if baptism is not a finish line, but the starting line of a whole new life?*

Baptism isn't the end of your spiritual journey—it's the beginning of a new chapter. This next chapter isn't about perfection—it's about transformation. At Victory we say, **"Come as you are... don't stay as you are."** You've come to Jesus just as you are, and He has accepted you by His grace. Now He invites you to grow and *not stay as you are*. The moment you come out of the water, you are **born again** — the Bible says you are a *new creation* in Christ. Your past is forgiven and washed away, and you have a fresh start with God. **Jesus changes everything for everyone**, and that means your identity has changed: you are now a beloved child of God, a follower of Jesus, and a part of God's family. You also have God's own presence within you, in the person of the Holy Spirit, to help you live this new life. Does that mean you'll never struggle or sin again? Not at all. Growth takes time. Just like a newborn baby has a lot of growing to do, you'll spend the rest of your life growing in faith, learning, and becoming more like Jesus. This is an exciting journey! Will you still wrestle with sin? Yes. But you won't be fighting alone. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is now working in you. So don't settle for surviving—**lean in, follow Jesus, and let the Holy Spirit lead the way**. Because from this point on, you're not just living—you're living *changed*. Jesus really does change everything for everyone... and that includes you.

**Q:** *Will I still struggle with sin or make mistakes after I'm baptized? What if I mess up?*

**A:** Yes, you will still face temptation and sometimes stumble – all Christians do. But your relationship to sin is now different. The Bible says, **"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"** (2 Corinthians 5:17) That means in God's eyes you have a new identity – the old you (defined by sin and guilt) is gone, and the new you (forgiven and empowered by Jesus) is here! You now fight sin *from* victory, not *for* victory. When you do mess up, remember that you belong to Jesus and there is no condemnation for those who are in Him (see Romans 8:1). Instead of hiding in shame, you can confess your sin to God and know He forgives you because of Jesus. **"New creation"** doesn't mean you become instantly perfect; it means Jesus set you free from being a slave to sin. At baptism you are promised God in you so now you have the power of God to overcome and the

freedom to get back up when you fall. God doesn't expect perfection... but He loves progress towards it. Think of it this way: before, you were fighting alone and bound to lose. Now Jesus fights with you and for you. So when you struggle, don't feel hopeless... You're on a growth journey. God's grace is sufficient, and each time you turn back to Him, you'll grow stronger.

**Q:** *How do I keep growing in my faith after baptism?*

**A:** Growth is all about staying connected to Jesus each day. He gave a great illustration: **"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."** (John 15:5) Think of yourself as a branch and Jesus as the vine or trunk. The branch doesn't have to force fruit to grow; it just needs to stay attached to the source of life. In the same way, your job is to "remain" in Jesus – to stick close to Him. Practically, that means developing simple habits like praying, reading or listening to God's Word (the Bible), and spending time with other believers who encourage you. These habits keep you connected to the life-giving power of Christ. Over time, you'll see the "fruit" – positive changes in your attitude, mindset, and actions – because *God is working in* you. Also, remember you're part of a spiritual family now. Staying involved in church or a Student Ministry will help you grow. Others can support you, and you can learn from people who've been following Jesus longer. In short, keep *showing up* with God daily, even in small ways. He'll do the heavy lifting of growing you. As Jesus said, apart from Him we can't do it – but *with* Him, you will thrive!

- **Reflect:** Envision yourself a year from now as you continue to follow Jesus. In what ways do you hope to see growth or change in your life? Are there habits or qualities you'd like to develop as part of your new life (for example: more patience, less anxiety, more honesty, etc.)?
- **Reflect:** Being a "new creation" means the old you is gone and the new you is here. What are some "old" things (attitudes, behaviors, labels) you want to leave behind? What "new" things do you want to embrace as part of your identity in Christ?
- **Your Questions:** Jot down any questions you have about living as a Christian going forward. Do you wonder how to handle certain challenges, or what to do in specific situations, or anything about God's promises for your future? Write those down so you can seek guidance and answers.

## Ready to Take the Next Step?

Your journey is just beginning, and you don't have to walk it alone. If you're reading this and you're **ready to take the step of baptism**, or if you still have questions and want to talk to someone, we're here for you! We'd love to celebrate with you, answer your questions, and support you as you move forward. Reach out to us anytime – the best way is to fill out Victory's baptism form.

Our team will connect with you and help in any way we can. Remember: *Jesus changes everything for everyone* – including **you**. We can't wait to see what Jesus does in your life as you say "yes" to Him. Come as you are... and get ready, because with Jesus, you won't stay as you are!

You were made for more than just belief.  
You were made for *movement*.  
Let's take that step—together.

We meet Sundays at 8:00, 9:30, and 11:00 a.m.  
**In person or online at [[www.victory.life](http://www.victory.life)]**