



BAPTISM GUIDE



*And now what are you waiting for?
Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name*

Acts 22:16

We're thrilled you are investigating this important aspect of the Christian faith, and we hope this packet will help you understand a little bit more about what baptism is, and make you feel prepared to take that step in your own faith journey.

Baptism is a celebration of your relationship with Jesus and your life with Christ. It is an opportunity to identify yourself as someone who has decided to follow Jesus. By being baptized, you are announcing to the world that you are choosing to leave your former way of life and entering into a new life with God. The practice of baptism is symbolic of this choice as you are immersed in the water, dying to the old way of life and coming out of the water, being raised to new life!

By getting baptized, you are not declaring that you are perfect, have it all figured out, or have reached 'super-Christian' status. In fact, you're saying almost the exact opposite. You are saying that you trust Jesus to rescue you from the destructiveness of sin and brokenness and are eager for him to transform you into the person He created you to be.

Your baptism is not a private affair because it is also symbolizes your entrance into the family of God. Our salvation in Jesus not only changes our relationship to God, but our relationship to one another. In Christ, we all stand on equal footing as brothers and sisters.

Whether you are a new follower of Jesus, or a veteran of the faith, your baptism should be a joyful, memorable experience. It represents a significant step in your relationship with God and with other believers, and it constitutes a strong statement to the world concerning who Jesus is to you and who you are to Him. So we ask everyone being baptized to also share a short testimony of who Jesus is to them and what difference He has made in their life. Don't worry, we'll walk you through it here in a bit!

So we encourage you to look forward with eager anticipation to our next baptism service. Invite friends and family to share in it with you. If you know friends or family who do not yet know Christ, take a step of faith and invite them along. God often uses the stories of people like you to draw others to himself.

Together in Christ,
The Pastoral Staff of Mountain View Church

WHY IS BAPTISM IMPORTANT?

As a disciple of Christ, it's important that we publicly stand with Him in celebrating our new life. That makes baptism a great first step for a new follower of Christ to take.

Matthew 3:13-17

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"

Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, 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. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

The greek word in the New Testament for baptism is *baptizo* (bap-tid'-zo). The literal meaning of the word is to wash, dip, IMMERSE, or submerge.

THERE IS GREAT POWER IN BAPTISM!

YOU ARE PUBLICLY STANDING WITH CHRIST

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. (Galatians 3:26-27)

YOU ARE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST'S DEATH

Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death... (Romans 6:3-4a)

For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin- because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. (Romans 6:6-7)

YOU ARE RAISED INTO NEW LIFE

...just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. (Romans 6:4b)

SOME COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT BAPTISM

What is the meaning of baptism?

It is an illustration of Christ's own burial and resurrection.

"Christ died for our sins... He was buried... and He rose again." — 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

It symbolizes my new life as a Christian.

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

Baptism doesn't make you a believer - it shows that you already believe. Similarly, baptism does not "save" you, only your faith in Christ does that. Think of it like a wedding ring. Baptism is the outward symbol of the commitment you make in your heart.

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

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

Who should be baptized?

Every person who has believed in Christ and decided to follow him.

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

"Simon himself believed and was baptized..." — Acts 8:13

"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

When are we to be baptized? What about kids?

As soon as you decide to follow Jesus! You shouldn't delay — ideally, baptism is the next step for new believers.

"Many of them believed... were baptized... that day" — Acts 2:41

Some churches practice a "baptism of confirmation" for children. This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. At Mountain View, we have a special celebration called "Child Dedication" for this purpose. In a "child dedication", parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his/her own personal decision to follow Jesus.

What if I was baptized as an infant? Should I be baptized again?

We encourage you to identify yourself as a follower of Jesus through baptism. If your first baptism occurred as a decision by someone else (i.e. your parents decided to have you baptized as an infant), then we would encourage you to be baptized again of your own accord. This decision does not devalue your prior experience, but simply reflects your desire to follow Jesus and be identified as one of his beloved sons/daughters.

Do I have to talk in front of people?

We understand that public speaking is one of the biggest fears of many people. However, we would encourage you to face that fear and share your story. It is one of the most meaningful parts of your baptism experience -- not only for you, but for those listening. You never know how God might use your story to change someone else's life. If you absolutely cannot share, you can have a friend or pastor read your story instead. We don't want you to not get baptized because of this fear.

Why be baptized by immersion?

Because Jesus himself was baptized that way.

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

The Greek word for baptism (baptidzo) literally means "to immerse, plunge, or dip under water".

It is a powerful symbol of burial and resurrection!

"By our baptism then, we were buried with Him and shared His death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead... so also we may live a new life!" — Romans 6:4

Christian leaders in the past agree:

Martin Luther: "I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the work 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, alludes to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church."

How to Prepare for Your Baptism



Step 1 - Signup to be baptized at aumsville.church/baptism (scan this code —>)

Step 2 - Meet with one of our pastors for prayer and to answer any questions you may have.

Step 3 - Write out and practice sharing your Testimony (details on next page)

Step 4 - Prepare your heart and grow your faith by reading and praying through the devotional at the end of this packet during the week of your baptism.

What to Wear/How to Dress:

When you fill out the above baptism form online, we ask for your t-shirt size. This is so we can supply you with a t-shirt for your baptism. It is yours to keep. Please wear it that morning.

For bottoms, please wear shorts or swimming trunks. For outdoor baptisms in the creek, water shoes are recommended but optional. Flip flops are not ideal as they tend to come off and float down stream.

Be sure to bring a towel and change of clothes for after your baptism.

What exactly happens in the water?

Once you are in position (either sitting in the tub or standing in the creek), the pastor baptizing you will ask you the following questions:

- (NAME), **have you put your trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?**
- **And is it your desire to follow Him all the days of your life?**

Then the Pastor will say “by your profession of faith, we baptized you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” and then you are quickly lowered beneath the water. When you come up, get ready to hear a big cheer from your spiritual family there to celebrate God’s grace with you!

Bring Some Friends

Your baptism is a great event to invite spiritually seeking friends and family to! Regardless of where they are in their relationship with God, they are often willing to come and support you in this significant moment and the Holy Spirit can use your baptism and all the other testimonies to speak to them in a powerful way. So don’t be shy in inviting others!

Take in the Moment

This is a significant step in your spiritual journey. Enjoy it as you reflect upon God’s goodness in your life. Thank you Jesus for what you did for my forgiveness and the gift of new life you offer!

SHARING YOUR TESTIMONY

Everyone has a story, and every story matters to God. Sharing how you can to faith in Jesus and what difference that has made in your life is one of the most powerful ways to impact others -- and it grows our faith every time we do it! So we ask everyone who is being baptized to share a short testimony. It doesn't have to be elaborate, and don't feel any pressure to embellish or compete with someone else's salvation story. Just speak from the heart! Set aside some time this week and write out what you want to say.

It can be helpful to organize your thoughts into three main sections:

1. **What was my life like before I chose to follow Jesus?** What sins did I struggle with? What was my emotional health like? How were my relationships doing?
2. **When did I put my trust in Jesus?** What happened that made me turn to him? Who helped me understand what Jesus had done for me? When did my need for him "click?"
3. **What is my life like now?** What difference does it make to know Jesus on a personal level? How has his love changed you? What do you wish everybody knew about this Savior and Friend you have?

Stories of Redemption

Preparing Your Personal Testimony

Before

- ① Before you met Christ, what were some of your needs, what was lacking, or what was missing in your life?

- ② What methods for improving your life did you try that didn't work?

How

- ① What were the circumstances that caused you to consider following Jesus?

- ② What has become your favorite Bible verse and why?

- ③ Share about how you trusted Christ and give a brief explanation of the gospel. John 3:16 is a great verse to use.

After

- ① Give an example of how God has met your needs—either physical or emotional—since you accepted Jesus.

- ② Share about what part of your relationship with God you're most grateful for today.



Going Public: A Baptism Devotional

(by NewSpring Church, with edits by Mountain View Church)

Day 1- What Changes When You Get Baptized?

Saying Jesus is Lord of your life changes everything.

Baptism is “going public” in saying that Jesus is Lord of your life.

When you asked God for help, healing, and salvation, you claimed the promise that He will never let you down. God stands by His promise to save you, change you, and stay with you.

God’s promise applies, no matter who you are or what you’ve done. Saying yes to Jesus is accepting the salvation He freely gives. Being “saved” by Jesus means you’ve been rescued. No more trying to live up to someone’s expectations, no more hiding in shame, no more attempts to fix your own life. God rescues you from all of that.

Going public is about showing on the outside how God is changing you on the inside. Every time God makes a difference in your life, it deserves a celebration. He is only getting started, and the best is yet to come.

Bible Passage: Romans 10:9-13

If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. 11As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.” 12For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Reflection Question:

What is one area of your life in which Jesus has brought change?



Day 2 - Does Being Baptized Mean All Your Problems Are Fixed?

When we get baptized, our problems aren't automatically fixed, but God promises to be with us and help us through them. Salvation doesn't fix all of our problems, but it equips us to face our problems. You publicly profess your faith when you are baptized. Then, you get to walk daily with Jesus as a continued "yes" to Him," affirming to God, yourself, and those around you that you have been made new. The difference now is that you aren't trying to build up yourself; you're built up by Jesus.

Just as you said "yes" to Jesus at the moment of salvation, you get to keep saying "yes" to Him. No matter what happens, we can have peace in Jesus, who promised us: "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

The God who saved you is the same God who sustains and rescues you (Isaiah 46:4). Sometimes we change in a moment, but often it takes time. A life with Jesus is a life of continual growth. It's a life of next steps. Be patient, trusting in God's perfect timing and provision.

Bible Passage: Colossians 2:6-7

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

Reflection Question:

Who do you know who has been following Jesus longer than you?

Make time this week to connect and ask them how they continue to grow in their faith.

Day 3 - What Does Baptism Mean?

No matter what's in our past, baptism is a mark of how Jesus has changed us. Baptism is a picture of death, burial, and resurrection. It means going public with our faith in Jesus and symbolizes that once we come out of the water, we are not the person we were when we entered it. We are no longer defined by our sin, but brought to new life with Jesus like He resurrected into new life.

Being baptized is not equal to salvation; it shows a picture of salvation. Think of it like the way a ring symbolizes marriage. If you take your wedding ring off, you are no less married. The ring simply shows the rest of the world you are married. You have been made new in your salvation, and baptism is a symbol to those watching—and to those you tell later—that you are no longer a slave to sin and death but are alive in Christ. Because of Jesus, everyone can live in freedom.

Bible Passage: Romans 6:1-11

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? 3Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4We 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. 5For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— 7because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. 8Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. 10The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. 11In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Reflection Question:

In your own words, how would you explain what baptism means?
Why do you want to be baptized? Share your story with a friend or family member today. If you haven't already, write your story down to share on the day of your baptism. You can always ask a pastor to read it and give you some feedback.

Day 4 - What's the Church's role in Baptism?

When you are baptized, people are going to celebrate. See, when you accepted Jesus' gift of salvation, God adopted you as His child. And the Church is a family of believers that wants to welcome you the same way a new baby is welcomed into this world by his parents.

Following Jesus isn't something we're meant to do alone. The church is here to encourage you, pray for you, and help you discover your next steps. As you surround yourself by others who love Jesus, your faith will grow. You'll see Jesus working in you and through you. It's OK if some of your family and friends don't understand your choices to follow Jesus and be baptized. As you keep taking steps in your walk with Jesus, those people in your life will see the changes God is making in you. One of the best ways to keep celebrating God's goodness is by sharing the story of how Jesus is changing you. Inviting friends and family to your baptism is a great way to let them in on what God is doing in your life. Who knows what might be stirred in their heart as they hear from you and watch you get baptized?

Regardless of your past or your present, you have a place where you belong. Through Christ, you have become a part of God's family and He's only getting started with you. Now that's worth celebrating. That's why the Church cheers!

Bible Passage: Ephesians 2:11-22

11Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (which is done in the body by human hands)— 12remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. 13But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

14For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, 15by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, 16and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. 17He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. 18For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

19Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, 20built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. 21In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. 22And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Reflection Questions:

How does belonging to God's people—the Church—change your perspective on who you are and how you interact with others in the church?
What about how you interact with people outside the church?

Day 5 - What Do I Do With My Doubts?

Am I really saved?

Does God really want me?

Did my baptism count?

It's normal after your baptism to face several of these questions. Our spiritual enemy, Satan, loves to play on our emotions when we are moving closer to God. We might get the feeling that we need to be baptized again. Many times we get that feeling because of some sin or doubt we're wrestling. We may feel like we can lose our salvation when we mess up, and therefore we need to start the whole process over.

However, that's not what salvation and baptism are about. Baptism is a one-time symbol of a one-time salvation. If your baptism came after you decided to follow Jesus, that was the right time to be baptized. It's a public expression of your faith in Jesus. If salvation depended on us, we would be in trouble. But by God's grace, it doesn't. Jesus brought spiritual cleansing for all through His death on the cross and resurrection from the tomb.

Taking steps with Jesus is a daily process. Doubts are a normal part of this process. Your baptism doesn't make you perfect or mean you have all the answers. But God does want to help you make progress and He's with you for the long haul.

Bible Passage: Deuteronomy 31:6-8

6 Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."

7 Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you must go with this people into the land that the Lord swore to their ancestors to give them, and you must divide it among them as their inheritance. 8 The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."

Reflection Question:

Do you have any doubts about God or your salvation?

Are you wrestling with a sin habit that's hard to break? Voice these to someone who has been following Jesus a little longer than you. How have they overcome doubt and sin in their life?

Day 6 - How Do I Keep Growing?

Following Jesus isn't easy, but it is simple. Your baptism is a public symbol of your decision to trust and follow Jesus. Now you get to see how that decision plays out in every part of your life.

Your #1 goal from this point forward is to listen to Jesus and do what He says. It's nothing fancy or complicated, but it's the best way to move forward. Reading the Bible, getting involved in a local church, and developing friendships with other Christians can help us grow in our relationships with Jesus.

It's a spiritual impossibility to follow Jesus and remain the same. As we listen to Him and do what He says, we will see how it's true that growing people change. The changes aren't from our own ideas or strength, but by the guidance of the Holy Spirit—the spirit of God living inside us. The Holy Spirit is the one who gives us the power to love and forgive others, to grow in faith, and to say no to sin and yes to Jesus. This kind of qualities will continue to show up more and more in our lives as we seek Jesus.

The truth is we won't have all the answers automatically. Our lives won't be cleaned up and easy instantaneously, but an easy life is not the point. A relationship with Jesus is the point. Going public in baptism is just the beginning of the changes God will bring us through.

Bible Passage: Galatians 5:16-23

16So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. 24Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Reflection Question:

How will you make sure you are hearing from Jesus on a consistent basis? What is your game plan for continuing to grow in your faith? Write it down.

Day 7 - Now What?

Salvation and baptism are milestones in your walk with Jesus. But what now? What do you do when your next step is just to make it through a regular day? Following Jesus on a daily basis can seem like a far-off goal that's hard to attain. God doesn't expect us to walk blindly through our days hoping we get it right. He has given us the Holy Spirit and His words in the Bible so we can know what He wants us to do.

The Bible teaches us how to follow Jesus. As we read it, we learn more about who God is, who we are, and how we can make decisions that obey Him. When we are walking in obedience, we most clearly see God's plan for our lives. He wants better things for us and the only way to get there is to follow His directions.

God is calling you to do good things. He uses the Bible, among many other things, to equip us to do what He's called us to do. The more we read His Word, the more we learn to live in connection with Jesus.

Bible Passage: 2 Timothy 3:14-17

14But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Reflection:

Commit to reading the Bible for a few minutes each day and ask God if there's something specific He wants you to do. If you're not sure where to start reading, check out some of the reading plans on the YouVersion Bible App or on Bible.com.

A great one for new follower of Jesus is called "What's Next?." You can find it by scanning this QR code....

