



Water Baptism

Water Baptism
is the public declaration
of your faith in Jesus Christ
as your personal Saviour
and Lord of your life.

Born to Grow

Matthew 28:19-20 *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (NIV)*

COMMAND -

Jesus commanded His disciples to make disciples of people. In response to Jesus' command, the early church was obedient. There is a two-fold application of obedience - the person being disciplined as well as the person discipling.

Jesus said, *'If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.'* The church leadership is responsible for the discipling of people. In obedience, the church encourages, inspires, and teaches people by grace to follow the teachings of the Lord, and water baptism is foundational.

Baptism is therefore not an optional extra. It is a basic part of the beginning of our Christian life and is a clear requirement of God.

Conditions for Baptism

Acts 16:31 *They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved - you and your household" (NIV)*

For a person to be baptized, he/she must have first believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Baptism is for those who believe that Jesus Christ died for their sins and have asked God to forgive them. A believer is a person who has been reconciled to God through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Baptism is not for infants or church goers, it is not done because it is a good idea or a family tradition, it is not done because others are doing it, or because you have come to a suitable age. Baptism is only for believers who confess that Jesus Christ is their Lord and Saviour.

The Bible only teaches a believer's baptism

Acts 2:38 *Peter replied, “Repent and be baptised, 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.” (NIV)*

When Peter spoke these words, people repented and they were immediately baptised. Today, people who have repented and are saved (by grace and faith) in Jesus Christ don't have the opportunity to immediately get baptised. What is important is that a person is saved first, and then gets baptised.

Peter told the people to “repent and be baptised”. Repentance refers to having a complete and deliberate change of heart. It means having turned away from independence and worldly ways, and surrendering to a life of committed obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. Peter is speaking of a commitment to live their lives from that moment on in separation to the world and its ways. It is a commitment to live in obedience to the Lord and as a person completely identified with Him and His ways.

A repented person will experience an inward change taking place. The reason for that change is that Jesus Christ has come to live in them on invitation. They have been born-again by the Holy Spirit, all their sins have been forgiven and they are children of God, and belong to the family of God. This should be the experience of every single person before they commit to water baptism.

Qualifications

There are only two simple qualifications for a person to be baptised. These are to repent and to believe (faith)

Repentance is necessary for baptism because baptism is an outward act that represents what is happening within. Without true repentance, baptism is a hollow sham and is offensive to God.

Belief (faith) means that a person who is being baptised is expressing their complete trust and faith in Jesus Christ. If a person does not have faith in Jesus, then again, their baptism is meaningless.

The Meaning of Baptism

Baptism comes from the Greek word ‘**baptizo**’, which means to be immersed, plunged, submerged.

Symbol of Forgiveness of Sin

John the Baptist was the first to use water baptism as the symbol of forgiveness of sin.

Matthew 3:6 says that the people “*were baptised by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins*”. In **Isaiah 1:18**, sin is described as a stain, and forgiveness is spoken of as “*cleansing*” and “*washing*”.

In baptism, just as dust is removed from the body by the action of the water, so the symbolic meaning is that the sins which stained your life are washed away by the blood of Jesus Christ who died for you. 1 John 1:7

Death, Burial and Resurrection

Death - Christ Died - I Died

Galatians 2:20 *I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. (NIV)*

The Apostle Paul describes the change Christ makes in your life by the statement - “you died to sin”. Because Christ died, you died. When you accepted Jesus Christ as your Saviour, your past was forgiven - you became dead to your past life. Baptism signifies this death.

**All that you have done wrong - sin - is dead. It’s over,
never more to be remembered, either by God or you,
it never happened.**

You are a new creation, the old you has died.

Burial - Christ was Buried - I was Buried

Romans 6:4 *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. (NIV)*

When you are baptised, you testify that you are dead and buried to your sinful life. When you are immersed, the water is like a grave to you. This signifies that you are 'Buried with Christ'.

It is important to bury your old sinful life. Since you are in Christ, you can no longer live the old way. In other words, the old is buried and you don't live the way you once did.

If you had stayed under the water, you would have certainly died, but the drama continues.....

Resurrection - Christ Arose - I Arose

Colossians 2:12 *Having been buried with Him in baptism and raised with Him through your faith in the power of God, who raise Him from the dead. (NIV)*

Jesus rose from the dead on the third day, and He is alive and lives forevermore. As you rise from the water, you signify that you are 'alive' in Him, you rise in the strength and power of Christ into a new and glorious life.

Christ makes His power and glory available to all who identify with Him. He will live His life through you. He has exchanged your old life for His new one that was raised from the dead.

This is amazing!! The new life that a Christian has is not just their old life brushed up a little bit, but it is the very life of Jesus Christ given into their innermost being.

Questions People Ask About Water Baptism

♦ Is it necessary for me to be baptised again?

Seeing that sprinkling is not baptism, you have never been baptised. Even if you have been 'immersed' as a baby or as an unsaved adult, that would not suffice. Repentance and believing **MUST** precede baptism.

Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38, Acts 8:36-37

♦ Were Babies ever Baptised in the New Testament?

Nowhere does the New Testament teach this.

♦ How soon after Conversion should Baptism take place?

According to the Bible, there was no delay in people receiving baptism. They may have understood more of its significance than we do today.

It is wise to know why we are baptised before we receive the ordinance of baptism.

Acts 8:36-38, Acts 22:16, Acts 10:47-48

♦ But surely Baptism is an optional matter, and can be left to the individual?

Water baptism is not essential to your salvation. However, it is essential to your obedience to Christ. Baptism is a command, not a choice.

John 14:15, Matthew 3:13-15, John 14:21 & 23, 1 Peter 2:21

♦ Does Baptism take the place of the New Birth?

No outward ceremony can take the place of the new birth. The new birth (**John 3:3**) precedes baptism. The new birth is a supernatural event.

Baptism is the event that shows its evidence to the world.

◆ Should I be Baptised in the name of a Church?

Matthew 28:19 tells us that we should be baptised “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”. This is the only formula that Christ has given to the church.

◆ Who should Baptise a Believer?

According to the New Testament, baptism was administered by any minister of the Church, or by any fellow believer.

Matthew 28:19, 1 Corinthians 1:14-17, Acts 8:12 & 36, Acts 9:17-18

◆ What should happen after I am Baptised in water?

According to the Apostle Peter, after you repent and are baptised, the gift of the Holy Spirit is promised to you. This gift must be earnestly sought.

Acts 2:38, Acts 2:1-4, Acts 10:45-46

◆ If I have received the Holy Spirit already, is there need to be Baptised in water?

Yes. At the house of Cornelius, when they had received the Holy Spirit, Peter commanded that they should be baptised in water.

Acts 10:44-48

Baptism is a very powerful and important event in the life of a Christian. It also points towards the tremendous victory of a full-on Christian life.

