



Scotts Hill Baptist Church

CHURCH QUESTIONS • WHAT IS BAPTISM? MATTHEW 28:19-20 • 8/2/2026

MAIN POINT

Christian baptism is an outward confession of an inward change that publicly identifies believers with Jesus Christ, His church, and the transforming power of the gospel.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What is a symbol or object that has special meaning to you? Why is it significant?

Why do symbols often communicate something deeper than words alone?

When you think of baptism, what words or ideas immediately come to mind?

Throughout life, symbols remind us of important realities. A wedding ring represents a covenant relationship, a flag represents a nation, and a jersey identifies someone with a team. In the same way, baptism is one of the two ordinances Christ gave His church. While the water itself does not save, baptism visibly proclaims what God has already done in the heart of a believer.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 28:19-20.

According to Jesus, what role does baptism play in making disciples?

Why do you think baptism is included in Christ's Great Commission?

Jesus' command makes baptism an act of obedience for every believer. Throughout the New Testament, those who trusted in Christ publicly expressed their faith through believer's baptism by immersion. Baptism does not save us, but it is the first act of obedience that identifies us as followers of Jesus.

What does obedience in baptism communicate about our trust in Christ?

Why is it important to distinguish between salvation by faith and baptism as an act of obedience?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ROMANS 6:3-4.

What does baptism symbolize according to these verses?

How does baptism picture both Christ's work and our new life in Him?

Baptism beautifully portrays the gospel. Going under the water symbolizes our union with Christ in His death and burial, while coming out of the water pictures His resurrection and the new life believers now have in Him. It is a visible testimony that our old life has died and that we now belong to Christ.

How should remembering your baptism encourage you when you struggle with sin or shame?

How does baptism remind us of the hope and transformation found in the gospel?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GALATIANS 3:26-28 AND ACTS 2:41.

According to these passages, what new relationship begins after someone places their faith in Christ?

Why do you think baptism is meant to be a public declaration?

Baptism not only identifies us with Christ, but also with His people. Throughout Acts, the pattern is clear: people believed the gospel, were baptized, and became part of the local church. Baptism is a public declaration of a new identity and a new family. Because of this, every baptism is a reason for joyful celebration as God's people witness His saving work.

Why is it important for our faith to be lived out publicly rather than privately?

How can our church celebrate baptisms in a way that highlights God's grace and the gospel?

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

If you have been baptized as a believer, how has your understanding of its significance grown through this study?

If you have trusted in Christ but have not been baptized, what is keeping you from taking that next step of obedience?

How does remembering your union with Christ encourage you to walk in newness of life this week?

In what ways can our small group better celebrate and encourage those who publicly profess faith in Christ?

Who in your life needs to hear the gospel so they, too, might one day publicly identify with Christ through baptism?

PRAYER

Close in prayer, thanking God for the salvation He freely offers through grace alone, by faith alone, in Christ alone. Praise Him for giving the church the ordinance of baptism as a visible picture of the gospel and a joyful testimony of transformed lives. Pray for those who have recently trusted Christ, asking God to give them courage to follow Him in believer's baptism. Ask the Lord to help our church celebrate every baptism as a reminder of His saving power and to continue proclaiming the gospel so that many more will come to faith in Jesus Christ.

COMMENTARY

| MATTHEW 28:19-20

Jesus included baptism in the Great Commission as an essential act of discipleship. Baptism is not the means of salvation but the believer's public response of obedience after placing faith in Christ. Throughout the New Testament, baptism consistently follows repentance and faith.

| ROMANS 6:3-4

Paul explains that baptism symbolizes the believer's union with Christ. Going beneath the water represents identification with Christ's death and burial, while emerging from the water pictures His resurrection and the believer's new life. Baptism visibly proclaims the transforming power of the gospel.

| GALATIANS 3:26-28; ACTS 2:41

Baptism publicly identifies believers with Christ and His church. In the book of Acts, those who believed the gospel were baptized and added to the local church. Baptism marks a new identity, a new family, and a new allegiance to the Triune God, making every baptism a cause for joyful celebration among God's people.