

## Why Do We Baptize People?

Message 3 of 5 in the series "Why Do We Do That?"

### A. Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize the people they disciplined.

"Jesus came and told his disciples, 'I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, **go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.** Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'" Matthew 28:18-20 (NLT)

### B. Baptism pictures on the outside how a personal relationship with Jesus changes us on the inside.

1. All who come to Christ have their sins washed away.

"When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. **He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit.** He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life." Titus 3:4-7 (NLT)

2. All who come to Christ have died to their old way of life and now live for Jesus.

"Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it? Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? **For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism.** And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was. **We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives.** We are no longer slaves to sin." Romans 6:1-6 (NLT)

3. All who come to Christ have the sure and certain hope of eternal life.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.** For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." John 3:16-17 (NLT)

### C. Baptism is a public declaration that we have surrendered our lives to Jesus as Savior and Lord.

"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. For 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." Romans 10:9-10 (NLT)

*Note:* Our relationship with Christ is meant to be personal but not private. "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever. **Has the LORD redeemed you? Then speak out! Tell others he has redeemed you** from your enemies." Psalm 107:1-2 (NLT)

**"Everyone who acknowledges me publicly here on earth, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven.** But everyone who denies me here on earth, I will also deny before my Father in heaven."

Matthew 10:32-33 (NLT)

### D. Baptism is a joyful celebration.

"So now **we can rejoice** in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God." Romans 5:11 (NLT)

"For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free... If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; **if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.**"

1 Corinthians 12:13a,26 (NIV)

"Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' In the same way, I tell you, **there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God** over one sinner who repents." Luke 15:8-10 (NIV)

### E. Baptism is a welcome initiation into God's family, the Church.

“Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. **God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ.** This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.” Ephesians 1:4-5 (NLT)

“**Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day**—about 3,000 in all. All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.” Acts 2:41-47 (NLT)

#### F. Three important “NOT’s” about baptism:

1. Baptism is NOT magic.

“**Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows.** But take heart, because I have overcome the world.” John 16:33b (NLT)

2. Baptism does NOT need to be repeated every time we recommit/rededicate our lives to Christ.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. **Point out anything in me that offends you,** and lead me along the path of everlasting life.” Psalm 139:23-24 (NLT)

3. Baptism at Centerpoint is NOT better than baptism in any other Bible-believing Christian Church.

“**This same Good News that came to you is going out all over the world.** It is bearing fruit everywhere by changing lives, just as it changed your lives from the day you first heard and understood the truth about God’s wonderful grace.” Colossians 1:6 (NLT)

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#### Connect Group Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize the people they discipled? (Matthew 28:19-20)
2. When were you baptized? Where? What did it mean to you at the time? What does it mean to you now?
3. Discuss the following spiritual truths baptism helps us picture:
  - All who come to Christ have their sins washed away. (Titus 3:4-7)
  - All who come to Christ have died to their old way of life and now live for Jesus. (Romans 6:1-6)
  - All who come to Christ have the sure and certain hope of eternal life. (John 3:16-17, 5:24)

How have you experienced these truths in your life?

4. What makes baptism a joyful celebration? (Luke 15:8-10, Romans 5:11, 1 Corinthians 12:13,26)
5. How does baptism initiate us into God’s family, the Church? (Acts 2:41-47, Romans 8:15-17,29-30, Ephesians 1:4-5) Why do you think some people want to be baptized but refuse to be a part of any church?
6. Read Psalm 107:1-2, Matthew 10:32-33 & Romans 10:9-10. Why are baptisms performed publicly rather than privately? Are you proud to be identified with Christ?
7. Discuss the following statements about salvation through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ:
  - We have been saved from the penalty of sin through Christ’s death on the cross. (1 Peter 3:18, Titus 3:4-7)
  - We are being saved from the controlling power of sin through the work of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 7:19-8:2, Galatians 5:16-25)
  - We will be saved from the presence of sin forever in Heaven, the home of our Father. (Revelation 21:3-5)

What are the consequences of embracing only one or two of these statements but not all three?

8. React to the following “NOT” statements about baptism:
  - Baptism is not magic. (John 16:33)

- Baptism does NOT need to be repeated every time we recommit/rededicate our lives to Christ. (Psalm 139:23-24)
- Baptism at Centerpoint is NOT better than baptism in any other Bible-believing Christian Church. (Colossians 1:6)