



WATER

BAPTISMS

“

We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead... we too may live a new life.

”

From the BIBLE (Romans 6 v4)

WATER BAPTISM

To be baptised is to be '*immersed*'. As demonstrated through the New Testament, it is to be '*immersed in water*'. The idea may sound strange, but it's rich with meaning and a very powerful symbolic experience.

Baptism is a celebration of what God has already done in you:

“He saved us, not because of the [right] 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.” *Titus 3 v5*

Baptism is commanded as a public declaration of what you believe:

“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 v38*

Baptism is an outward sign of our faith and intention to follow Jesus Christ, understanding that:

BAPTISM IS TO DIE TO YOUR OLD LIFE

Baptism signifies the death and burial of our old life—including our identity with the world and those addictions, motivations and desires within it.

“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...” *Romans 6 v4*

BAPTISM IS TO EXPERIENCE FREEDOM

As we go under the water, we die to and bury our old lives. Sin has dominated your life and led you to do things that were destructive. After baptism, you have died to that power. Therefore, you are no longer a 'slave to sin' but instead you are free to choose what or who will lead your life!

“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. For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin...” *Romans 6 v6-7*

BAPTISM IS TO START A NEW LIFE

Just as Jesus died and rose from the grave to a new life, so too you will rise out of the water into a new life! We are 'born again' within the 'body of Christ'. Christ has given us a new life, a new identity: we are loved, accepted, and important to God—this means there can and will be an end to all sadness, despair, regret, bitterness, independence, loneliness and fear. And just as sure as Jesus conquered death, you can trust that death has no power over you. It has been defeated!

“And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him...”

Romans 6 v8-9

BAPTISM IS JUST THE BEGINNING

By no means are we saying we're good enough, know everything and have it all sorted. In fact the opposite is true—we have an awareness that the life we lived wasn't with and for God—whereas now we're choosing to turn to God for His guidance and His help.

Baptism is more about celebrating the beginning of a new way of life and looking to God to complete what He and you are starting together. God has always had a plan and a purpose for you. He's just been waiting for you to get in the right place to tell you!

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” *Jeremiah 29 v11*

BAPTISM IS A REASON TO CELEBRATE!

All we can do is celebrate that God has done all this for us! We were dead, but now we are alive!

“So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus.” *Romans 6 v11*

That's why we declare it publically and invite friends and family - we have much to celebrate and many people to celebrate with!

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHRISTENING AND BAPTISM?

Christening is where the person is too young to decide for themselves whether they want to follow Christ, and so the decision is made by their parents. Baptism in contrast, is when the individual has made their own decision to follow Christ. Christening is when water is sprinkled over the child, whereas Baptism is when you are entirely immersed.

DOES IT HAVE TO BE FULL IMMERSION?

The truth of spiritually dying and rising into a new life with Jesus is represented by baptism. That is why we immerse. We do not sprinkle. You cannot sprinkle somebody with a little bit of water and say 'You are dead'. All you can say is 'You are wet'! The act of full immersion is saying 'Your old life is dead and buried'. When you come up out of the water, it represents the new reality of the resurrected life. The act of baptism is saying, 'Here you are, you are a new creation in Christ, now walk it out'.

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTISED?

Anyone who has heard the gospel about Jesus Christ, accepted it, and has decided to follow Jesus should be baptised!.

"When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?' Peter replied, '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 v37-38

WHEN AM I READY TO BE BAPTISED?

If you've accepted Jesus as your 'Lord & Saviour' then you are ready. Jesus' disciples were baptised as soon as possible.

"And as they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?' ... both went down into the water, and Philip baptised him." Acts 8 v35-38

HOW DO I GET BAPTISED?

Come along to a preparation class —and ask questions! Email Richard to find out when these are richard@thevineyardchurch.co.uk

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