

BAPTISM GUIDE

We are so excited that you are considering baptism. We have created this resource to help you better understand this very important step in the life of a new believer. Please take a moment to read through it. We look forward to celebrating your baptism with you in the near future!

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT BAPTISM?

The specific act of baptism first appears in the Gospels with John the Baptist. In fact, in the ancient world, no other form of baptism predates John's gospel account. So the evidence suggests that John the Baptist did it first. John the Baptist was the cousin of Jesus and the one who baptized him.

I baptize with water those who repent of their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I'm not worthy even to be his slave and carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

MATTHEW 3:11 NLT

One day Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan River.

MARK 1:9 NLT

IF JESUS IS SINLESS, WHY IS JESUS BAPTIZED BY JOHN THE BAPTIST?

John's baptism is one of repentance (Acts 13:24). Since Jesus is sinless, He is not, nor would He ever be, in need of repenting from sin. Therefore, Jesus' baptism was a public association with a lost people. In being baptized, he identified himself with the people who desperately need the forgiveness that can only come from him.

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

Perhaps you've come from a church background that baptizes infants, or one that requires baptism in that particular church, or perhaps you haven't even considered who gets baptized. Regardless of where you fit in, examining what the Bible tells us about who should be baptized is important in answering this question.

Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day – about 3,000 in all.

ACTS 2:41

But now the people believed Philip's message of Good News concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. As a result, many men and women were baptized.

ACTS 8:12

In the three cases we observe that those who heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ as our Savior, and believed were baptized. They were conscious about what they were doing.

If you have made a decision to follow Christ, baptism is your next step.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR BAPTISM?

There are only two requirements for baptism according to Scripture:

1. Belief in Christ
2. Repentance from sin

In short, only a believer in Jesus Christ—someone who has turned from disobedience to God and surrendered his or her life to Jesus as Lord and Savior—can rightfully be baptized declaring the work of the Lord in transforming his or her life.

WHY BAPTISM?

Baptism represents Christ's death, burial and resurrection. By means of our baptism, we are confessing publically that we believe in Jesus and have decided to live a new life following Him.

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.

ROMANS 6:2-4 NLT

WHY BAPTISM BY IMMERSION?

We baptize by immersion because that is the method we see in the Bible when baptism takes place. The word used for baptism is the Greek word *baptizo* which has the following meanings: to dip repeatedly, to immerse, to submerge, to cleanse by dipping or submerging, to wash, to make clean with water, to wash one's self, bathe.

Five different writers of the New Testament used *baptizo* to describe the event:

After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water.

MATTHEW 3:16 NLT

One day Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan River.

MARK 1:9 NLT

One day when the crowds were being baptized, Jesus himself was baptized. As he was praying, the heavens opened.

LUKE 3:21 NLT



At this time John the Baptist was baptizing at Aenon, near Salim, because there was plenty of water there.

JOHN 3:23 NLT

Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.

ACTS 8:36-38 NKJV

IS BAPTISM NECESSARY?

You may be asking yourself whether getting baptized is even necessary, after all, you've already made a decision to accept Jesus as your Savior. So, why should you be baptized?

Baptism is a symbolic way of declaring the fact that the Lord Jesus has saved your life. You are publicly declaring that you have chosen to obey Christ as a forgiven and redeemed child of God.

IF I WAS BAPTIZED AS A BABY/CHILD, SHOULD I GET RE-BAPTIZED?

That decision is entirely up to you. As you learn about baptism and its biblical meaning, you can determine whether getting baptized again as an adult is the right step for you.

WHAT IF I DON'T KNOW IF I'M READY?

Maybe you think you need to get your life in order before you publicly declare your faith through baptism. However, the Bible makes clear that repentance and turning to God are all that's needed before choosing to be baptized.

Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins."

ACTS 2:38 NLT

The truth is that you are ready to be baptized as soon as you understand the purpose for it.

CAN MY CHILD BE BAPTIZED?

Check out our Action Kids Baptism Guide for next steps for your child.

