

BAPTISM

A Biblical Perspective



**DOXA
CHURCH**

BAPTISM A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

Why is baptism such a big deal for Christians? What does dunking people in water have to do with God? This is a quick look/study into the act of baptism that will take you through the: who, what, when, where, why and how of baptism.

Baptism is a ritual that has been practiced for thousands of years in every culture of people who profess faith in Jesus and trust him for salvation. With a proper understanding of baptism, we will see an incredibly meaningful event that occurs in the life of a Christian that reminds us of the connection we have to God through Jesus.

If you are ready to be baptized, go to: doxamadison.com/baptism

If you have more question or would like to talk with a staff member, please contact your connection group leader, Rob Warren (rwarren@doxamadison.com) or any of the rest of the Doxa Church staff.

A PLACE TO START (4 CRUCIAL QUESTIONS)

As you begin this overview of Baptism, we must start by acknowledging that baptism is for those who declare themselves Christians. In considering this, please ask yourself the following 4 questions:

1. Do I believe that Jesus is God?
2. Do I believe that sin in my life keeps me from God?
3. Have I asked Jesus to forgive my sins, bringing me to God and guaranteeing me eternity with him?
4. Have I committed to follow Jesus for the rest of my life?

If you have answered “Yes” to these 4 questions, you are ready to be baptized! Lets continue through this booklet and look at what Baptism is all about!

If you were unable to answer “Yes” to all of these questions or are unclear on what you believe about them (or have questions), we would love to talk with you more before you pursue baptism. A great next step for you would be to contact a staff member or leader whom you know.

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

The Bible presents baptism as an outward sign of an inward faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

Read: Romans 6:3-4

These verses refer to our spiritual baptism into Christ. According to Paul in Romans, what two events in Christ's Life are represented through water baptism?

The believer being baptized is immersed beneath the water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, which represents the believer's death to sin and the burial of their old life, and then emerges out of the water, representing the believer's resurrection to a new life in Christ Jesus.

Baptism is the sign and seal of membership into the community of God through faith in Jesus. We believe that baptism is for all people who believe, and is a sign and public declaration that a person has dedicated their life to Jesus Christ.

WHY BE BAPTIZED?

One reason to be baptized after we trust Christ for salvation is simply that Jesus commands it.

Read: Matthew 28:19; James 1:22-24

Jesus and the apostles commanded that Christians be baptized, which explains why we see baptism consistently practiced throughout the early church in the book of Acts.

Do you have to be baptized to be saved?

Read: Romans 1:16; Acts 16:31; Ephesians 2:8-9

What is it that saves us and restores our broken relationship with God?

Salvation is solely a gift given by God to those whose faith rests in the grace of God to forgive their sins through the death and resurrection of Jesus. The apostle Paul did not mention baptism for salvation, but simply said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus" (Acts 16:31). Likewise, Jesus promised the un-baptized thief who died on the cross next to him, "today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). Someone can be un-baptized and yet be a Christian who is destined for heaven.

Nonetheless, even though one can be a Christian without being baptized, a Christian should be baptized. Not being baptized does not stop someone from being a Christian, but a Christian should be baptized as Jesus commands it.

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

The consistent view of the New Testament is that someone first believes in Jesus and then is baptized as a sign of this declaration and commitment. There is no biblical evidence that points to the reverse order occurring, where someone, such as an infant, is baptized and then later believes in Jesus. Below is support from the New Testament for this position:

1. Read: Matthew 3:2; Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3.

John the Baptist required people to repent of their sin before they could be baptized.

2. Read: Acts 2:3-41; 8:12; 9:18-19; 10:44-48; 16:14-15, 29-36; 18:8; 19:1-7; 22:16.

Every baptism in the New Testament only occurs after repentance of sin and faith in Jesus.

3. Read: Galatians 3:27

Baptism is set-aside only for those who have come to faith in Jesus

4. Read: Romans 6:1-10

Baptism shows personal identification of the believer with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, which comes through faith.

5. Read: Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38

Jesus and his apostles gave the command for disciples to be baptized as a sign of the discipleship relationship.

WHO SHOULD PERFORM BAPTISMS?

Read: Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 2:5-9

Jesus points to every believer (disciple) having the responsibility to teach and baptize others. Likewise, the apostle Peter gives us the truth that we (Christians) are a kingdom of priests, in which every believer has the responsibility and duty to teach the gospel and baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

WHEN SHOULD SOMEONE BE BAPTIZED?

Read: Acts 2:41; 8:35-38; 9:17-19; 16:32-33

The consistent witness of the New Testament is that a believer should be baptized as soon as he/ she believes. There is no need for a “waiting period.”

WHERE SHOULD SOMEONE BE BAPTIZED?

Read: Acts 8:36-38; Matthew 3:5-6

We believe that a person can be baptized any place where there is enough water. The Scriptures of the New Testament show us that wherever there was enough water, people were baptized. This means that baptisms can occur anywhere.

THE NEXT STEPS

1. If you have not already done so, express your desire to be baptized to either your Group leader or one of the staff members and fill out the baptism form at: doxamadison.com/baptism. Once you have completed the baptism form, a staff member will contact you with details around getting baptized.
2. Next, prepare your “God Story” (or testimony). At the time of your baptism, you will briefly (1-3 minutes) tell your story as to how you became a Christian and why you’re being baptized. The next section will help you think through and articulate your “God Story”. Once you complete your God Story, review it with your Connection Group leader prior to the baptism service.

GOD STORY GUIDE

Before Christ

Before you came to faith in Jesus, what was your life like: your actions, attitudes, feelings, relationships, etc? (if you became a Christian as a child, go on to the next question).

What caused you to begin considering Jesus?

What were the steps/ actions (events in your life) that took place as you searched for answers about God?

Conversion / Coming to Jesus

What realization did you come to that led you to surrender your life to Jesus?

Specifically, how and when did you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior?

Your life now as a Christian

How has your life changed since you put your trust in Jesus?

