

WATER BAPTISM

Why should I consider getting baptised?

1. Following Christ:

In order to understand the reason for being water baptised, it is important to carefully consider what the Bible says about it: Jesus Himself was baptised. He was not a sinner, yet He humbled Himself in obedience to identify with us and give us an example to follow.

9 "At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 As Jesus was coming up out of the water, He saw heaven open and the Spirit descending on Him like a dove. 11 And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." Mark 1:9-11 (NIV '84)

You are my Son – Confirming Identity
Whom I love – Words of Affection
With you I am well pleased – Words of Affirmation

2. An Act of Obedience:

Water baptism is an act of faith and obedience to the commands of Christ.

19 "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV '84)

3. A Public Declaration:

Baptism declares that you are a follower of Jesus Christ. It is a public confession of your faith in, and commitment to, Jesus Christ. It is the next step after salvation through repentance and faith and is an important foundation for the Christian life.

38 Then Peter said to them, repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ." Acts 2:38

What is the meaning and significance of baptism?

1. Move From Death to Life:

Baptism is a symbol of Christ's burial and resurrection. Our baptism identifies us with Christ's death on the cross, His burial in the tomb, and His resurrection from the dead.

12 ...having been buried with Him in baptism and raised with Him through your faith in the power of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having cancelled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; He took it away, nailing it to the cross." Colossians 2:12-14 (NIV '84)

2. A Brand New Life:

It is a symbol of your new life as a Christian. We bury the 'old life' and we rise to walk in a 'new life'. Baptism is like a wedding ring; it is the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart, a commitment that is lived out on a daily basis. It is a statement to everyone who sees it that you have trusted Christ for your salvation and that you have surrendered your life to Him.

17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" 2 Corinthians 5:17

4 "We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." Romans 6:4 (NIV '84)

Baptism does not make you a believer; it shows that you already are one! Baptism does not 'save' you; only your faith in Christ does that.

8 "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. 9 Not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2:8,9

3. A Blessed Life:

In baptism, the believer has the triune name of the triune God placed upon them, 'Father, 'Son & Holy Spirit'.

The Gospels tell us to baptise believers "... in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Matthew 28:19 (NIV '84).

Baptism confirms our position 'in Christ' and affirms the blessings of the Father on us as children of God.

4. A New family:

Baptism also connects us to the 'body of Christ', His people on the earth. In baptism there is a real sense of being joined with other believers, not just participating in an individual act of our own spiritual journey.

13 "For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body..." 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 (NIV '84)

How are we to be baptised?

As per the example of Jesus – by being immersed in water. The word "baptise" comes from the Greek word "baptizo" which means "to immerse or dip under water".

16 "As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water..." Matthew 3:16 (NIV '84).

Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion under water. The book of Acts shows us that this was the norm for every believer.

38 "And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. 39 When they came up out of the water ..." Acts 8:38,39 (NIV '84).

Who should be baptised?

Every person who has made the decision to believe in Christ. When Paul writes to the believers in Rome, he assumes that all of them have been baptised (Romans 6). The one and only requirement for baptism is belief in Christ!

"Those who accepted his message were baptised...." Acts 2:41 (NIV '84).

"But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised, both men and women." Acts 8:12 (NIV '84).

We only believe in baptising children when they are old enough to understand what it means and have made a personal declaration of their belief in Christ Jesus as their personal Lord and Saviour.

When are we to be baptised?

Believers in the New Testament were baptised as an immediate response to salvation. As soon as a person decides to believe in Christ, scriptures calls us to be baptised, however, there is no specific timeframe given in scripture.

"Those who accepted his message were baptised...." Acts 2:41 (NIV '84).

"Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they travelled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him." Acts 8:35-39 (NIV '84).

Can I get baptised again?

Believers Baptism is an once-off event as a sign of having accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. In scripture we do not read of being baptised a second time. However, often people feel that they need to get baptised again. There is no scripture foundation for getting baptised again and often they only need to understand assurance of salvation, which means you don't need to be baptised again if you were baptised after you accepted Jesus as Lord and Saviour. (1 John 3:1, Rom 8:15-16)

The below may be helpful guidance to "re-baptism":

- If you were "baptized" as an infant or a young child without understanding repentance, salvation or baptism.
- If you got baptized out of obligation, or peer pressure, and not because of sincere repentance toward God and faith in Christ.
- If you did not understand true repentance and salvation when you were baptized.