

BAPTISM

What is the meaning of baptism?

Baptism is a public demonstration of your faith in Jesus as your savior. It is an outward expression of the inward work Jesus has done in your life by dying on the cross for your sins and rising from the dead. Baptism is like a wedding ring - it's the outward sign of the commitment you have made in your heart. (see Ephesians 2:8-9)

Baptism illustrates Jesus's death, burial, and resurrection. As 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 says, "Jesus died for our sins ... He was buried ... and He rose again," we see the inward, spiritual significance of baptism mirrored in Colossians 2:12 which says, "For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Him."

As a symbol of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, baptism also symbolizes your new life as a Christian. 2 Corinthians 5:17 tells us, "When someone becomes a Christian, they become a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away, and a new life has begun!"

We know also that as Paul taught in Romans 6:4, "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Jesus was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life!"

Who should be baptized?

Every person who has put their trust in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Being baptized does not make you a Christian. Only your faith in Jesus Christ does that. A Christian is someone who has realized that their sin separated them from God. They have given up all efforts to reach God through good works or religious activity. They have concluded that Jesus's death on the cross for their sins is the only means of salvation and reconciliation between them and God. If you have come to that point in your spiritual journey, then you are ready to be baptized. (Acts 2:41; 8:12-13).

Why should I be baptized?

Being baptized is your first step in a life of following Jesus and His calling on our life. Baptism is commanded by Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20 when He told His disciples, "Go then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you."

Jesus's disciples also taught that all believers should be baptized as Jesus commanded them to (Acts 2:38, Mark 1:9). Jesus said in John 14:23, "If you love me, you will keep my commands." Choosing to be baptized is an act of love and obedience to Jesus.

Why be baptized by immersion?

The word "baptism" means "to dip under the water." Baptism by immersion simply means dipping a person completely under the water and raising them back out again, as opposed to other methods of baptism such as sprinkling with water. We know that Jesus was baptized this way as it says in Matthew 3:16. In fact, every baptism we see in the Bible was by immersion. For example, Acts 8:38-39 says, "... then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water ..."

As many founders of the Christian church and various major denominations have agreed, baptism by immersion also best symbolizes a burial and resurrection. (see Romans 6:1-11). Martin Luther, the founder of the Lutheran denomination said, "I would have those who are baptized to be entirely immersed, as the Word imports and the mystery signifies." Also, John Calvin, the founder of the Presbyterian denomination said, "The word 'baptize' signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church."

What about children?

All instances of baptism in the Bible followed an individual's decision to trust Jesus alone for their salvation (Acts 2:41; 8:12; 10:47-48). The Bible shows no example of baptism when the person did not request it. At Redemption Church, we wait until the child is old enough to believe and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them. When a child makes a decision to follow Jesus, we gladly baptize them.

If you have not been baptized as an adult, though you may have been baptized as a baby, the full meaning and significance of baptism has yet to take place in your life. We strongly encourage you to be baptized as professing follower of Jesus.

What are my next steps?

Pray to Jesus and ask Him what your next step of faith should be. If you would like to get baptized, please let us know by filling out a connection card with your information and mark the box that says you would like to be baptized. You can turn in your connection card in the offering box at the information table. We have baptism services regularly throughout the year, and we will let you know when the next baptism will be. We would love to talk more with you about any questions you may have.