



I. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?

1. It illustrates Christ's burial and resurrection.

"Christ died for our sins... He was buried... and He rose again." --I Corinthians 15:3-4

"For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ." --Colossians 2:12

2. It illustrates my new life as a Christian.

"When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun!" --2 Corinthians 5:17

"By our baptism then, we were buried with Him and shared His death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead... so also we may live a new life!" --Romans 6:4

Baptism does not make you a believer - it shows that you already believe. Baptism does not "save" you, only your faith in Christ and through His power does that occur. Baptism is like a wedding ring – it is the outward symbol of the commitment you make in your heart.

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

II. WHY BE BAPTIZED BY IMMERSION?

1. Because Jesus was baptized that way.

"As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water." --Matthew 3:16

2. Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion.

"...then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water..." --Acts 8:38-39

The Greek work "*Baptizo*" means, "To immerse or dip under water." It symbolizes a burial and resurrection!

John Calvin... "The word 'baptize' signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church."

III. WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

1. Every person who believes in Christ.

"Those who believe and accepted His message were baptized..." --Acts 2:41

"Simon himself believed and was baptized..." --Acts 8:13

"But when they believed Philip as he preached the Good News...and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." --Acts 8:12

2. At City Lights, we wait until our children are old enough to believe and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them.

Some churches practice a "baby dedication" for children. This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. The parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his or her own personal confession of Christ.

IV. WHEN SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

As soon as you have believed.

"Those who believe[d]...were baptized...that day!" --Acts 2:41

"Then Philip began with the scripture and told him the Good News about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water, and the man said, 'Look, here is water! Why shouldn't I be baptized right now?' Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' The man answered, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' So they went down into the water and Philip baptized him." --Acts 8:35-38

There is no reason to delay. As soon as you have decided to receive Christ into your life, you can and should be baptized. If you wait until you are "perfect", you'll never feel "good enough!"

V. CAN MY FAMILY BE BAPTIZED TOGETHER?

Yes! If each family member fully understands the meaning of baptism, and each one has personally placed his/her trust in Christ for salvation, we encourage families to be baptized at the same time! It is a wonderful expression of commitment. Young children who wish to be baptized are asked to meet with our Lead Pastor prior to doing so.

However, it is important to remember that baptism is a personal statement of faith, not a family tradition. It is usually not wise to delay your baptism while waiting on other family members to accept Christ and follow Him, particularly children. This puts an undue pressure on them, and delays your obedience.

VI. WHAT SHOULD I WEAR WHEN I AM BAPTIZED?

Women should wear shorts and a top, preferably not white, which will preserve modesty. Men, may wear a swim shorts and t-shirt. Bring a change of clothes, a towel, and a plastic bag for your wet articles of clothing. We provide changing rooms.

VII. WILL I HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING?

We ask everyone getting baptized to do a pre-recorded video. This is a simple, low pressure way of telling your story in front of the entire church body without having to stand in front of them under the spotlights. After your video, we will proceed with your baptism. Then you can leave the pool, dry off, and watch the others. Later you will be mailed a certificate of baptism. We encourage you to invite all your relatives and friends to attend your baptism!