



Instructions on Water Baptism



Congratulations on your decision to trust Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior! You now have the privilege to publicly identify with Him through water baptism. Parents, if your child is being baptized, please walk him or her through this information.

THE POWER OF IDENTIFICATION

Water Baptism is a public declaration of your personal faith in Jesus.

The Greek word for "baptism" means "**to dip**" or "**to immerse**". This immersing **identifies** the believer with Jesus in a radical and public way. Even Jesus was baptized, that is, immersed publicly in water, for the purpose of identifying with the message and ministry of John the Baptist (Luke 3:21-22).

John's baptism of Jesus Christ "*fulfilled all righteousness*" (Matthew 3:13-17). This means that baptism was the right thing for Jesus to do; therefore, baptism is the right thing for us to do. It is necessary to note that Jesus' baptism didn't "save Him"; it simply identified Him. **Water Baptism does not and cannot save any of us**, but rather, it identifies us with the One who saves us by His blood—Jesus Christ.

The early church used baptism as the **first public act of identification** with being a follower and disciple of Jesus Christ. Baptism usually occurred immediately after one's profession of faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 2:41, 8:34-39, 10:47, 16:14-14, 16:30-33).

As a result, water baptism identifies new Christians with:

1) The Gospel of Jesus Christ- The gospel means "good news". The good news is that God made a way for humans to be forgiven and saved from the penalty of our sin by sending His Son Jesus Christ to die on the cross in our place (John 3:16, Romans 5:8). According to I Corinthians 15:3-4, the gospel encompasses the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. By going into the water we identify with Jesus' death. By going under the water we identify with Jesus burial in the tomb. By coming out of the water we identify with the resurrection of Jesus from the grave.

When a person asks Jesus Christ to save him/her from their sins, they receive the gift of eternal life (Romans 6:23). That person, who made a personal, spiritual decision, should get baptized as a public declaration of his/her faith in Jesus. Parents, be sure to speak with your children to make sure they grasp the gospel for themselves.

How and when did you ask Jesus Christ to be your Lord and Savior?

2) New Life in Christ- Romans 6:1-4 tells us that we died with Christ and were raised to walk in a new lifestyle. We are now a new creation (II Corinthians 5:17) with a new dependence on the Spirit of God (Galatians 5:16). Water baptism shows the seriousness of breaking from one's old way of life and committing to Jesus. To get baptized in the early church era was a major commitment because many Christians were persecuted or even killed because of their profession of faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

How has Jesus Christ changed you into a new person?

3) The Triune God- Jesus encouraged His followers to make disciples from every nation. He told them to baptize these new converts "*in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit*" (Matthew 28:19-20). By being baptized under this pronouncement, the new disciple identifies himself/herself with the one, true, and living God.

One primary teaching of the Christian faith is that God is one in essence yet plural in Person. The Godhead is comprised of three distinct, co-equal Persons (II Corinthians 13:14, Ephesians 2:18). This glorious and incomprehensible truth about God is called the "trinity".

There are many instances throughout the Bible where the plural nature of God can be seen (Genesis 1:26). One time in particular was when Jesus was baptized. The Father spoke from heaven and the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus like a dove (Matthew 3:16-17).

Do you believe God eternally exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

4) The Local Church - In the New Testament, whenever people professed faith in Jesus Christ and were baptized, they assimilated into local assemblies of believers (Acts 2:41, 8:35-38). The local church provided sound teaching, loving accountability, spiritual covering, and encouragement for the newly baptized believers. This is still very vital for spiritual growth and development. All Christians need spiritual leaders to teach them and look out for them (Hebrews 13:7, 17). Christians also need other brothers and sisters of all ages, races, and cultures to love, worship, and serve God with.

Are you an official member of a local church?

A FINAL ILLUSTRATION:

A **wedding ring** is a symbol that shows everyone that a person is married. The ring doesn't make that person married because the vows accomplish that. The ring simply **identifies** the person as being married. Water baptism is like a spiritual wedding ring. It doesn't make you a Christian but it publicly shows everyone that you are in a committed relationship with Jesus Christ!

ON THE DAY OF YOUR BAPTISM:

1) Please show up at The Grove by 6:00 pm on the scheduled Wednesday. The Grove is located at 274 Mallory Station Road in Cool Springs.

2) You will be fitted with a robe to wear and given instructions on where to change clothes. Please wear appropriate clothing or swimwear underneath. Towels will be on hand for you to dry off with. Baptisms occur at 6:30 pm and are followed by STBC's Christian Education classes. Please encourage your family and friends to be on time.

3) You will receive a baptism certificate signed by Pastor Chris.

Please submit your responses to the questions on the Questionnaire on The Hub or contact Akilah Brooks akilahbrooks@att.net or the church office info@stbch.org for more information.