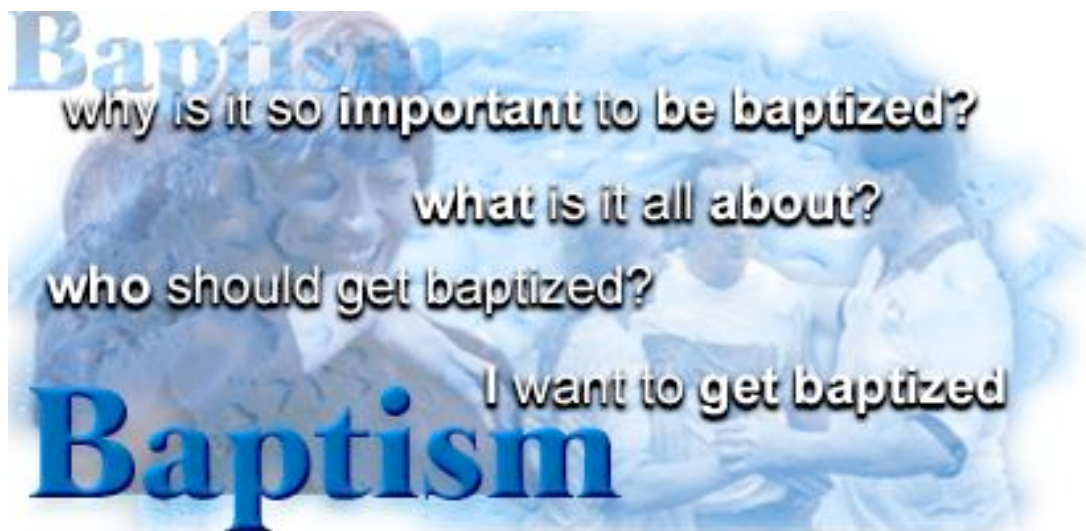


The Church Next Door



Moving People Closer to God



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I. WHY BE BAPTIZED?

1. To follow the example set by Jesus.

“At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.”
(Mark 1:9)

2. Because Christ commanded it.

Jesus said, “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)

3. It shows that I am a believer.

Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. 8 Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized.
(Acts 18:7)

4. It demonstrates that I really do *know* Christ.

“We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands.” (1John 2:3)

II. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?

1. It illustrates Christ's Death and Resurrection.

“3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance : that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures”
(1Cor. 15:3-4)

“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.”
(Colossians 2:12)

2. It illustrates my new life as a Christian.

“16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”
(2Cor. 5:16)

Baptism does not make one a believer, it shows that you already are one! Baptism does not “save” an individual, only faith in Christ. Baptism, like a wedding ring, is a visible and outward symbol of a commitment one has made in their heart. “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)

III. 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. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. (Matthew 3:16)

2. Every baptism in the New Testament was by immersion.

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, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. (Acts 8:38)

3. The word *Baptize* means “to dip under water.”

The Greek word *baptizo* means “to immerse or dip under water.”

4. It symbolizes a death and resurrection.

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)

The Founders of denominations agree:

Martin Luther... “I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the word imports and the mystery signifies.”

John Calvin... “The word ‘baptize’ signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church.”

John Wesley... “Buried with Him, alluding to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church.”

The oldest known baptismal font is found in southern Israel in the Negev (Desert Region). Designed to immerse the individual while making the sign of the cross while kneeling and using a minimal amount of water. Picture taken by Doyle Jackson in 1991.





Staircase leading to a cistern at Qumrân. Purification by means of a ritual bath was an important part of the life of the covenantal community. (W. S. LaSor)

Other historical evidence indicates that baptism by immersion has its roots in the Jewish “mikvah”. A ritual bath deemed necessary before going before God. 1st century Judaism reveals that one entered as one individual and exited as another prepared to serve in God’s presence. This picture comes from The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (W. B Erdmans: 1992) page414,

IV. WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

1. Every person who has believed in Christ

“41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.” (Acts 2:41)

12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. 13 Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw. (Acts 8:12-13)

Some churches practice a “baptism of confirmation” for children. This ceremony is seen as a covenant between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. By having their child ‘baptized’ the parents are promising to raise their child in the *faith until that child is old enough to understand and make his own personal confession of Christ*. This custom began about 300 years after the Bible was completed.

The baptism of the New Testament is a “*baptism of confession*.” The purpose was to confess publicly your personal commitment to Christ. We feel it is important for every believer to be baptized in the New Testament way as Jesus commanded, even though you may have been ‘confirmed’ as a child.

V. WHEN SHOULD YOU BE BAPTIZED?

1. As soon as you have believed.

41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. (Acts 2:41)

35. Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. 36 As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" 38 And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. (Acts 8:35-38)

Baptism should be the natural next step when it is apparent to you that you have a relationship with God.

2. Can my family be baptized together?

Yes! If each family member understands fully 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. The New Testament shares how the whole household of Cornelius was saved and baptized.

44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.

Then Peter said, 47 "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." 48 So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days. (Acts 10:44-48)

3. What Should I wear when I am baptized?

Women should wear shorts and a top or a "muumuu" style dress rather than a swim suit. It is best to have a plain white t-shirt over the top of your outfit. Men may wear a swimsuit and a white t-shirt. Bring a change of clothes, and a towel. We will provide a plastic bag to put your wet things in and a white smock to go over the top of your clothes. We also provide changing rooms.

4. Will I have to say anything?

NO. At the beginning of the service, Pastor Doyle will briefly explain the meaning of baptism. You will wait at the edge of the pool for your turn to be baptized. You will be introduced, asked if you have accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. Then you will be lowered under the water and prayed for by the pastor. We encourage you to invite all your friends and relatives to attend your baptism.

Introduction

Baptism has always played an important part in Judaism. The temple priests were required to purify themselves with water before performing their duties. Naaman, the Syrian, was cleansed from leprosy by immersing himself seven times in the Jordan. The Essenes, Jewish sect, practiced ritual immersion for cleansing, and Judaism today still enjoins ritual immersion in water (the Mikvah). John the Baptist immersed those who returned to God in repentance, and even Jesus Himself was baptized as an act of obedience to the Father. In the New Testament, baptism is an essential step and was usually carried out immediately after one believed in Jesus. Jesus said, "He that believes and is baptized in water shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). God's way of salvation is still the same: first, believe; then be baptized. Believing in Christ produces an inward change in our hearts; being baptized in water is an outward act of obedience by which we testify of the change that has taken place in our hearts. By this act, we make ourselves one with Messiah in His burial and in His resurrection; we are separated from the old life of sin and defeat; and come out of the water to lead a new life of righteousness and victory, made possible by God's power in us. The Scriptures in this study explain very carefully how, when and why we must be baptized.

Memory Work: Romans 6:4

(Review daily Joel 2:28-29)

1. What reason did Jesus Himself give for being baptized? (Matthew 3:15)

2. How did the Holy Spirit show that He was pleased with the baptism of Jesus? (Matthew 3:16)

3. What did God the Father say about Jesus when He was baptized? (Matt. 3:17)

4. Did Jesus go down into the water to be baptized? (Matt. 3:16)

5. If a person wishes to be saved, what did Jesus say he should do after believing the gospel? (Mark 16: 16)

6. What did Jesus tell His disciples to do to people before baptizing them? (Matt. 28:19)

7. To whom did Jesus send His disciples with this message? (Matt. 28:19)

8. What does Jesus expect people to do after being baptized? (Matt. 28:20)

9. What did Peter tell people to do before being baptized? (Acts 2:38)

10. How many people did Peter say should be baptized? (Acts 2:38)

11. How did the people act who gladly received God's Word? (Acts 2:41)

12. What did the people of Samaria do after they believed Philip's preaching? (Acts 8:12)

13. After Cornelius and his friends had been saved and had received the Holy Spirit, what did Peter command them to do next? (Acts 10:44-48)

14. What did the Philippian jailer and his family do after believing Paul's message? (Acts 16:29-33)

15. What did the disciples at Ephesus do after believing Paul's message? (Acts 19:4-5)

16. (a) Write down three conditions a person must fulfill in order to be baptized.

(1) (Acts 2:38)

(2) (Mark 16:16, Acts 8:12)

(3) (Matt. 28:19)

(b) Is an infant capable of fulfilling these three conditions? _____

17. Through what two experiences do believers follow Messiah Jesus when they are baptized? (Rom. 6:4, Col. 2:12)

1. _____

2. _____

18. After being baptized, how can a believer answer God's requirements for righteousness? (1 Peter 3:21)

19. How does Paul say believers should live after being baptized? (Rom. 6:4)

20. Is there any difference between believers of different races being baptized? (Gal. 3:26-28)

21. Mention two pictures of water baptism found in the Old Testament and referred to in the New Testament.

(1) (1 Cor. 10:1-2, Ex. 14:21-22)

(2) (1 Pet. 3:20-21, Gen. Ch. 6 & 7)

Memory Work: Romans 6:4

Write out this verse to help you memorize it.
