

BAPTISM FAQ

The significance, meaning, and purpose of baptism

If you are considering being baptized but still don't know enough to be sure, this FAQ will hopefully answer your questions and allow you to make an informed decision about this important step in your relationship with Jesus.

Q: WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER GETTING BAPTIZED?

A: SIMPLE OBEDIENCE TO JESUS.

Jesus himself was baptized. He was not a sinner, yet he humbled himself in obedience to identify with us and give us an example to follow. Water baptism is an act of faith and obedience to the commands of Christ. *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, 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

A: IT IS A PUBLIC DECLARATION OF FAITH

Baptism 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 Christian life. *Then he said, "Go into the world. Go everywhere and announce the message of God's good news to one and all. Whoever believes and is baptized is saved; whoever refuses to believe is damned."* Mark 16:16 MSG

A: BAPTISM CONNECTS US TO THE "BODY OF CHRIST"

The Body of Christ is everyone who has given their life to God. When you make Jesus the Lord of your life you are automatically spiritually baptized into that Body by the Holy Spirit. *"For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body."* 1 Corinthians 12:12-13. Water baptism is an outer act of an inward fact. There is a real sense of being joined with other believers in baptism, not just participating in an individual act of our own spiritual journey.

Q: WHAT IS THE MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF BAPTISM?

A: BAPTISM IS A SYMBOL OF CHRIST'S BURIAL AND RESURRECTION.

Our entrance into the water during baptism identifies us with Christ's death on the cross, His burial in the tomb, and His resurrection from the dead. *"Going under the water was a burial of your old life; coming up out of it was a resurrection, God raising you from the dead as he did Christ. When you were stuck in your old*

sin-dead life, you were incapable of responding to God. God brought you alive – right along with Christ! Think about it! All sins are forgiven, the slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ's cross." Colossians 2:12-14 MSG. 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 promise that has to be followed through and lived out daily. The ring is a symbol of the commitment to your spouse, baptism is the symbol; of your relationship with Jesus. The lack of a ring does mean you're not married just as 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. "For it is by grace, you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2:8,9

Q: HOW ARE WE TO BE BAPTIZED?

A: SUBMERSED IN WATER JUST LIKE JESUS

The word "baptize" comes from the Greek word "baptizo," which means "to immerse or dip underwater." *"As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water." Matthew 3:16. Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion underwater. The book of Acts shows us that this was the norm for every believer. "Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water..." Acts 8:38,39*

Q: WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

A: EVERY PERSON WHO HAS DECIDED TO BELIEVE IN CHRIST.

When Paul writes to the believers in Rome, he assumes that they have been baptized (Romans 6). The one requirement for baptism is belief in Christ! *"Those who accepted his message were baptized." Acts 2:41. "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." Acts 8:12.*

A: CHILDREN WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIFE TO THE LORD CAN BE BAPTIZED.

At Victory Life Church we believe that children should only be baptized when they are old enough to understand the commitment they have made. Maturity levels vary in children as does the appropriate age for them to be baptized.