

Spirit Life Church Guide to Baptism

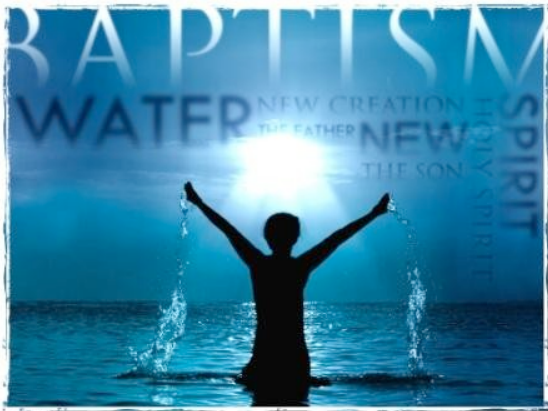
BAPTISM
GO DEEP. GET WET. NEW LIFE.

Dear Believer,

You may be wondering if you should be baptized in water.

Baptism is for those who have now come to a place where they have repented of their sin and believe with all their heart in the Lord Jesus Christ. We see this clearly both from the teaching and the example of the New Testament.

"Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. ... Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may."



Why should I be baptized?

Because you want to follow Christ's example: "At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river." - Mark 1:9

Because Christ commanded it: "Jesus said, 'Go then, to all people everywhere and make them My disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.'" - Matthew 28:19-20

Because it shows you are a believer: "... many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized." - Acts 18:8 Because obeying Christ's command shows you know Him: "We know that we have come to know Him, if we obey His commands." - 1 John 2:3

What is the meaning of baptism?

It is a symbol of Christ's burial and resurrection: "Christ died for our sins... he was buried ... and rose again. " - 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

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

It is also a symbol of your 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 also we might live a new life!" - Romans 6:4

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. Baptism is like a wedding ring. It's the outward symbol of the commitment you, have made 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

How are we to be baptized?

IMMERSION VS. SPRINKLING

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

Every baptism in the Bible appears to be by immersion under water. Many Christians may hold to different modes of baptism (i.e. sprinkling, pouring, or immersion).

THE BELIEVER'S BAPTISM

As a church, our pastors have decided to accept believer's baptism regardless of the mode. In other words, the bottom line on baptism is baptism after a person has committed his or her life to Christ. In the case of infants, we practice a dedication ceremony similar to infant baptism only it is a dedication as we see in the life Jesus. As a church, however, we will practice baptism by immersion. "...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

A CASE FOR IMMERSION

The Greek word "baptizo" literally means, "to immerse or dip under water." It is the best way to picture a burial and resurrection. The founders of denominations agree: "I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the Word imports and the mystery signifies." - Martin Luther

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

"Buried with Him alluding to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church." - John Wesley

Who should be baptized?

Every person who has made a decision to believe in Christ should be baptized. "Those who believed and accepted His message were baptized." - Acts 2:41

"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

When are we to be baptized?

As soon as you have believed! You shouldn't delay. "Those who believed... were baptized... that day." - Acts 2:41-47

“Then Philip began with the Scripture and told him the Good News about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they come to some water, and the eunuch 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 eunuch answered, I believe that Jesus Christ is 'the Son of God.' Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.” - Acts 8:35-39 (paraphrase)

There is no reason to delay. As soon as a person decides to believe in Christ, he/she can and should be baptized.

What about being baptized twice?

Our church recommends you be baptized again if you have not been baptized since you become a believer. It doesn't devalue a prior experience but simply reflects your desire to be baptized as an outward symbol of your new life in Christ. Every Spirit Life Church member should be baptized since he/she trusted Christ.

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.

Will I have to say anything?

No. At the beginning of the baptism service, the pastor or his assistant helping with the baptism will briefly explain the meaning of baptism and the process. You will wait on the platform for your turn to be baptized. The pastor will introduce you, ask if you have made a decision to follow Christ and then briefly lower you just under the water. Then you will leave the water, get your towel dry off and watch with the others. If you wish to give a short testimony, you are welcome to do so. Simply speak to the pastor or baptism coordinator prior to the weekend you will be baptized.

I'm ready to be baptized. What do I do?

We hold baptism ceremonies during the Sunday morning service. Keep an eye on the bulletin or website for upcoming dates or contact, Pastor Tom Wilke at 414-355-5500 x. 11.