

WHAT ABOUT BAPTISM?

Different views concerning the subject of baptism have existed for hundreds of years. The best way to resolve any doubt, disagreement or difficulty is to turn to the Bible and conduct your own research.

Why be baptised?

1. Because you want to follow Christ's example. "At that time Jesus came from Nazareth, in Galilee, and was baptised by John in the Jordan." Mark 1:9
2. Because Jesus commanded it. Jesus said "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19-20.
3. Because it shows you are a believer. " ..many of the Corinthians who had heard Him believed and were baptised." Acts 18:8.
4. Because obeying Christ's command shows you know Him. "We have come to know Him if we obey His commands." 1 John 2:3.

What is the meaning of baptism?

1. It is a symbol of Christ's burial and resurrection: "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised." 1 Corinthians 15:3,4 "Having been buried with Him in baptism and raised with Him through your faith and the power of God who raised Him from the dead." Colossians 2:12.
2. It is a symbol of your new life as a Christian: "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" 2 Corinthians 5:17. "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 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 is the outward symbol of the commitment that you made in your heart. "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.

How are we to be baptised?

As Jesus was baptised by being immersed in water. "As soon as Jesus was baptised, He went up out of the water." Matthew 3:16. As the first Christians were baptised. (example) .Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptised him. When they came up out of the water .." Acts 8:38,39. The word "baptise" literally means "to dip under water". The Greek word "baptizo" means to "to immerse or dip underwater".

What does baptism illustrate?

It is the best way to picture a burial and resurrection. The founders of church denominations agree:

Martin Luther *"I would have those who are to be baptised to be entirely immersed, as the word imports and the mystery signifies."*

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

John Wesley *"Buried with Him, alluding to baptising by immersion according to the custom of the first church."*

Who should be baptised?

Every person who has made the decision to believe in Christ. "Those who accepted His message were baptised." Acts 2:41. "When they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised, both men and women." Acts 8:12. "Simon himself believed and was baptised." Acts 8:13. The one requirement for baptism is belief in Jesus Christ! We do not baptise children until they are old enough to understand and believe.

When are we to be baptised?

Baptism should take place soon after you have believed. There should not be a long delay. "Those who accepted His message were baptised that day!" Acts 2:41. "Philip told the eunuch the good news about Jesus. As they travelled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptised?" Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptised him." Acts 8:36-39. There is no reason to delay. As soon as someone is firm in their belief in Jesus, they can and should be baptised.

Will I have to say anything?

The important question about baptism is "Do you declare your faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord?" Some will want to share their story of how they came to faith in Christ but this is not essential. At the beginning of a service, the Pastor will briefly explain the meaning of baptism to the friends who have been invited. The Pastor will introduce you, briefly lower you under the water and promises not to leave you there! God will bless you as you demonstrate your faith in Christ.

Practical matters: If you are considering being baptised, please speak with one of the Church leaders. They will invite you to the next baptismal enquiry class, which gives you the opportunity to find out more and to ask any questions. Should you want to proceed, a date will be arranged. Bring a towel and a hair-dryer (if desired). Appropriate clothing should be worn for your baptism and you will obviously need to bring a change of clothing.