



*inspiring people to say 'yes' to Jesus*

# WHAT IS BAPTISM?

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### **We demonstrate Loving by...**

Loving each other in God's love through spiritual, emotional and practical action. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. John 13:34-35

### **We demonstrate Inspiring by...**

Spurring one another on, applying our gifts of service, inspiring others to express their Spiritual gifts. Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Hebrews 10:24



### **We demonstrate Going by...**

Going and making disciples, inviting people into a relationship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. Matthew 28:19-20

### **We demonstrate Living by...**

Devoting ourselves to Christ's way of living with other believers, through authentic discipleship. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:42



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## WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Baptism is the symbolic act of saying yes to God's invitation to completely belong to him through Jesus. It is a public declaration of a person's faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. A follower of Jesus is immersed in water in response to the demonstration of Christ's baptism in Matthew 3, and the command of Christ in Matthew 28 to "*make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*".

Baptism by total immersion in water symbolises:

- the believer's identification with Christ in death, burial and resurrection,
- the forgiveness of sins,
- and the believer's dedication to live and walk in new life following Jesus.

Baptism is a visual and symbolic demonstration of these things, representing and signifying our own former way of living has been put to death, we are released from the slavery of sin, and we now live with Christ.

The Greek word *baptizō* means "to immerse or dip under the water."

Baptism by immersion graphically portrays the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We honour Him best in baptism by immersion.

Baptism also expresses the heart of the Christian life; to die to sin and to the self so we can have new life in the Spirit. When we attain the gift of salvation we gain a command over the old nature.

When a person becomes united with Jesus Christ by faith, God regards that sinful old nature as having died when Jesus died on the cross. Because a believer is also united to Jesus in His resurrection, as far as God is concerned, that person no longer has to be under the power of the old sinful life. God has given the believer a new life.

In baptism we declare the death of our sinful nature and acknowledge that God has given us a new life at the core of our being.

## WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTISED?

### To follow the example set by Jesus

At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus himself was baptised by John. This was a significant turning point for Jesus and the Heavenly Father affirmed him.

*Matthew 3:13-17*

*<sup>13</sup>Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. <sup>14</sup>But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" <sup>15</sup>Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. <sup>16</sup>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 alighting on him. <sup>17</sup>And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."*

### To obey Jesus' command

The last command Jesus left with his disciples is known as the "Great Commission". In it we see the command of Jesus to make disciples, and to baptise them.

*Matthew 28:19-20*

*<sup>19</sup>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, <sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.*

### It demonstrates that I am a believer

As the apostles shared the good news of Jesus with people, we read that those who **believed** were also baptised as a sign of their belief. A testimony to God and to other people.

*Acts 2:41*

*<sup>41</sup>Those who accepted his message were baptized.*

*Acts 18:8*

*<sup>18</sup>...many of [those] who heard Paul believed and were baptized.*

## WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?

*1 Corinthians 15:3-4*

<sup>3</sup>... Christ died for our sins ... <sup>4</sup> he was buried, ... [and] he was raised on the third day.

*Colossians 2:12*

<sup>12</sup>For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead.

### in baptism we identify with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection

Paul's teaching shows us that through baptism, we identify with Christ's death, burial and resurrection. It is also symbolic of us dying to our old self – or giving up our old way of living the way we think we should live, and taking on new life – living the way God calls us to live.

*Romans 6:3-7*

<sup>3</sup>Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup>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.**

<sup>5</sup>For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. <sup>6</sup>For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— <sup>7</sup>because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

### Going under the water symbolises dying to my sin

Living our own way apart from God, or even trying to earn credit with God through our own means, is called sin. The act of repenting means to turn away from sin.

This isn't a promise that you will now live perfectly. It is saying you are changing direction from walking towards sin, or living our own way, and now walking towards God and living his way.

Going under the water in baptism symbolises the act of **dying to** our old life, and burying our sin.

*Colossians 3:5*

<sup>5</sup>Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature.

### Coming out of the water symbolises our new life with Jesus

Coming out of the water in baptism symbolises being resurrected to **new life** with Jesus.

Through repentance, we now choose to live following God. We are no longer a slave to sin. We are now children of God.

*2 Corinthians 5:17*

<sup>17</sup>Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: **The old has gone, the new is here!**

*Colossians 3:1-3*

Since, then, **you have been raised with Christ**, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. <sup>3</sup>For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

## Baptism is an outwards sign of an inner commitment

Baptism is a response to God's love. Baptism doesn't make you a Christian. It is a symbolic **outward** act that reflects your **inner** ongoing commitment to Jesus. You don't need to be baptised to be saved. We are only saved by our faith and trust in Jesus, acknowledging him as our saviour and Lord, and receiving the new life he offers us.

*Ephesians 2:8-9*

<sup>8</sup>For it **is by grace you have been saved, through faith**—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup>not by works, so that no one can boast.

## WHO SHOULD GET BAPTISED?

Anyone who believes in Christ, and wants to follow him with their lives can be baptised.

*Acts 2:41*

<sup>41</sup>Those who **accepted his message were baptized.**

*Acts 8:12*

<sup>12</sup>But **when they believed** Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, **they were baptized**, both men and women.

Baptism is more like an initiation than a graduation.

It isn't something we do when we've "made it", or only once we have become "perfect" or "good enough". If you wait until then, you will never be ready! Being a Christian is not about being perfect, but about choosing to follow Jesus with our lives.

We see people in the Bible being baptised as soon as they **believed** in Jesus.

*Acts 16:30-33 (Paul and Silas share the gospel with their jailer)*

<sup>30</sup>[The jailer] then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" <sup>31</sup>They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." <sup>32</sup>Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. <sup>33</sup>At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then **immediately he and all his household were baptized.**

*Acts 8:35-38 (Philip sharing the gospel with an Ethiopian man)*

<sup>35</sup>Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

<sup>36</sup>As they travelled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. **What can stand in the way of my being baptized?**" <sup>37</sup>Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." The eunuch answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." <sup>38</sup>And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and **Philip baptized him.**

## WHAT NEXT?

If you are interested in learning more about baptism, or if you have a desire to get baptised, please let one of our pastors or elders know! We'd love to walk that journey with you.

We would meet up together go through what we call Baptism Unpacked. This is just a short get together where we go through the information in this booklet and more, to ensure you understand what baptism is and to hear your story of your journey of faith in Jesus.

We would then organise a date for your baptism and make the preparations for it together.



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