

# Baptisms

FOLLOWING IN JESUS'S STEPS

# BAPTISM INFORMATION

We are excited that you are considering being baptised as a believer in Christ.

Our hope is that this booklet will help you understand:

- What baptism is and what it is not
- The significance of baptism and why we do it
- What to expect on the day of your baptism + what you need to do

We would like to encourage you to set aside some time to talk about baptism with the people you live, work and laugh with—what it is, why we do it and what it looks like. We encourage you to invite them to be part of your day.

## WHAT IS BAPTISM?

### **Romans 6:3–4**

*All of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into His death. 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.*

### **Colossians 2:12**

*Having been buried with Him [Christ] in baptism and raised with Him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.*

As the church, baptism is a celebration and symbol that marks the day we publicly recognise that we have become a new creation in Jesus. The Bible says we are baptised into Jesus. In being baptised, we are publicly declaring and demonstrating the faith that we already have in Jesus.

The practical experience of Baptism involves being fully immersed in water (going completely under) and coming up out of the water. There are various other things that are typically involved in a baptism that you will see in a Baptist church, like personal testimony, worship and prayer.

## WHAT'S SIGNIFICANT ABOUT BAPTISM?

In being Baptised we are lowered into the water, which is like the burial of Jesus. When we are raised up out of the water, it is like the resurrection of Jesus. Each of us is raised into a new life. By getting baptised, you are saying that your old life is gone and your new life is here. That new life is one that is found in Jesus, surrendered to Him as your personal Lord and King.

### **Six statements that explain the meaning of Baptism**

1. In baptism, I identify myself with Christ's death, burial and resurrection.  
"For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives." Romans 6:4 (NLT)
2. When I go down under the water, I publicly renounce the sinful core of my being. I agree that it is fit only to be buried. "So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus." Romans 6:11 "Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature." Colossians 3:5
3. Coming up out of the water I acknowledge the new life which God gave me when I believed. if anyone is in Christ, "Therefore, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" 2 Corinthians 5:17 "I have come that you might have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10

4. When I leave the water I declare my intention to live by the beliefs and values of the kingdom of Christ. “Since then you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things about, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things about, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.” Colossians 3:1 – 3
  
5. In baptism I declare my dependence on the presence of the Holy Spirit to live a God-directed life. “God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.” 1 John 1:5 – 7 the truth. But if we walk in the light, “...those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God”. Romans 8:14
  - a. The Holy Spirit has been given to everyone who believes; to help, guide and empower me as I live my life
  - b. The ministry of the church is to help me to develop the disciplines I need to do this
  
6. As I leave my baptism I give myself to the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ in the world. “Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God.” 1 John 1:5-7 “God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.” 1 Peter 4:10

## WHY BE BAPTISED?

### **Matthew 3:13-15**

*Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all righteousness. " Then John consented.*

### **Matthew 28:19-20**

*"Therefore 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. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age. "*

### **Acts 2:38**

*"Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. "*

- To show my love and obedience to the Lord
- To please God
- To show others that I am on God's side
- To personally declare and demonstrate God's way of salvation
- To demonstrate that at the core of my being, I have been changed by Jesus
- To confirm my commitment to Jesus Christ

We baptise because Jesus modelled it, making it part of His ministry and part of our mission. Simply put, we baptise because Jesus commanded us to; however, there is also purpose and wisdom in that command. Baptism provides a decisive, public way of taking a stand that Jesus has saved you, and that you're going to follow Him all the days of your life.

## DOES BAPTISM SAVE YOU?

### Ephesians 2:8–10

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

We are saved solely by God’s grace that is given to us through the death and resurrection of Jesus. We can’t do anything to save ourselves; our salvation is not a result of our works. We are only accepted into God’s kingdom because of His gracious favour.

However it is clear that God wants our total commitment to a life of following Jesus and the example that He set for us while he was on earth. We are called to obey his commands and to do good works; baptism being one of them. So like all the other ‘good works,’ we are baptised not in order to be saved, but because we are saved. Just because a Christian is not yet baptised, this does not mean they are not a Christian. In being baptised, we show others that we are followers of Jesus, committed to Him and His way of life.

## WHAT BAPTISM ISN’T

- Baptism is NOT an indication of being spiritually mature
- By being baptised you are not saying to others that you have reached a certain level of maturity or faith or head knowledge that then qualifies you to be baptised.
- Baptism is NOT an indication of being a ‘good’ Christian
- By being baptised you are not saying to others that you have proved to be a ‘good’ follower of Jesus.
- Baptism is NOT a saving sacrament that makes you right in God’s sight or wash away original sin

- Baptism is NOT a ritual that brings about success and does NOT guarantee a trouble-free life
- Baptism is NOT a substitute for your personal faith or a way of manipulating divine favour from God

We want to see everyone who comes to faith in Jesus be baptised.

## WHAT HAPPENS AT THE LOCAL CHURCH AS A PART OF YOUR BAPTISM?

There are a number of things that are usually involved in a baptism service. These are:

- Personal Story (testimony)
- Worship
- Prayer
- Public profession in the baptismal
- Baptism

Below is a guide on how you might like to write your testimony:

- Pray first! Ask God what he wants you to include.
- Keep your testimony between 3-5mins. Most people average 100 words per minute when speaking in front of a group.
- There are some brief sections to address in a testimony:
  - Give a brief picture of your life and attitudes before you began following Jesus.
  - Tell the story of how you came to see your need for Him + how you came to place your trust in Him
  - Share how your life has been impacted by the decision to follow Jesus
  - What Jesus has done and is doing in your life. Tell something about now, and how God has led you to take this step of baptism.

- Do not focus simply on the negative things from your past. A testimony is primarily a declaration and a celebration about where Jesus has you now, rather than who you were.
- Do not embellish your story. It can be easy to think that including every bad thing possible will be better. The best thing that you can do is tell the truth. If you do have a rough background, be very careful and pray about what is wise to include and exclude. If you need guidance, feel free to ask one of the pastors.

#### **TIPS FOR SPEAKING IN FRONT OF A GROUP**

- Remember to hold the microphone up. Don't be scared of it. A good option is to rest the microphone on your chest.
- Speak clearly. Feel free to project your voice. The sound person will change the volume according to how you speak.
- Speak slowly. It can seem up the front like you are speaking really slowly when in reality you are speaking at a reasonable pace.
- If you get emotional, feel free to take a moment to regain yourself. It is a perfectly normal thing, however don't force it.
- Pray as you are walking up.
- Practice reading your testimony several times.
- Don't be afraid to read word-for-word what is on your page. It takes years of practice to be able to move away from this so read word-for-word rather than stammering and saying "um" a lot.
- Allow the Holy Spirit to do the work. He is the one that can change people's lives through what is said. Remember your baptism is also an opportunity for others to hear the good news of who Jesus is! The person in the pool with you will ask you a question:
  - "Do you confess Jesus as Lord and choose to follow Him all the days of your life?"
  - You will say "yes." Then they will say, "On your confession of faith I now baptise you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit." Then they will baptise you, getting you to cross your arms, submerging you backwards or forwards under the water and then lifting you back up again.

## I'VE MADE THE DECISION TO GET BAPTISED. WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

Firstly, that's exciting news! Here's a checklist with things to complete:

- Who you'd like to baptise you (can be someone other than a pastor if there is a significant person in your faith journey, however we also emphasise having a pastor in the waters with that person)
- Confirm your baptism date & time
- Invite family and friends
- Write Your Testimony (ask for help if needed)
- Choose a worship song you'd like to use (usually a song a has significance to you)
- Choose someone to pray for you (this person will also hold your towel and support you by being next to the baptismal when you're baptised)

## WHAT TO BRING ON THE DAY

A couple of things to remember:

- Check with your pastor about when to arrive on the day.
- Get your pastor to confirm the point in the service when you will need to be ready to come on stage
- Wear suitable clothing (that won't go see-through when wet).
- Don't forget to bring a change of clothes, a towel, and a (plastic) bag to take your wet clothes home.

## PERSONAL REFLECTION

### Romans 6:1–14

*What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? 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. 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. 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— because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.*

*Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.*

*In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.*

1. How are Christians joined with Christ?
2. Why are Christians joined with Christ?
3. By what power was Christ raised from the dead?
4. What does this passage say about Christ's life after death?
5. What did you learn about your identity in Christ?
6. What did you learn about baptism in this passage?

## Colossians 2:9–15

*For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self – ruled by the flesh was put off when you were circumcised by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.*

*When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*

1. What does this passage say about the Christian's relation to sin?
2. What does this passage say about faith?
3. What did Christ accomplish? What does it mean for Christians?

## MY TESTIMONY

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