

Today is a special day because we are gathering **outside the normal walls of our Church** building

The Church is the people of God, gathered together through faith in Jesus Christ

We are sharing food, enjoying fellowship, strengthening relationships, and celebrating the family God has created among us

Baptism communicates that same truth

Baptism is not merely a “**religious ceremony**” that takes place inside of a Church building

It is a public declaration that a person has placed their faith in Jesus Christ and now belongs to Him and to His people

Today, as we gather around tables, **share a meal, laugh together, and enjoy fellowship**, we are reminded that salvation brings us into a new life and a new family

Baptism begins with Faith in Jesus Christ

He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.
Mark 16:16 NKJV

Baptism is closely connected to salvation, but baptism does not create salvation

Plainly stated, we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.
Ephesians 2:8 NKJV

The **water does not wash away our sin**. The **blood of Jesus washes away our sin**

Baptism is the outward testimony of an inward transformation

It tells others, “I have trusted Jesus Christ as my Savior. My sins have been forgiven. My life now belongs to Him.”

In the book of Acts, people first heard the gospel, believed in Jesus, and then were baptized

Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. Acts 2:41 NKJV

Notice the order: They **received the Word**, they **believed the gospel**, **they were baptized**, they were **added to the fellowship** of believers

Baptism is **not about pretending** that we have everything figured out

It is about publicly declaring that we have placed our faith in the One who does

A person does not have to be **perfect before being baptized**. Baptism is for people who recognize that they need Jesus and have trusted Him for salvation

Baptism identifies us with the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus

Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Romans 6:3 NKJV

Baptism presents a beautiful picture of the gospel

When a person is lowered beneath the water, it pictures the death and burial of Jesus

When the person is raised out of the water, it pictures the resurrection of Jesus and the new life He gives

Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Romans 6:4 NKJV

Baptism says: "My old life has been buried with Christ." "My sins have been forgiven through Christ." "My new life has begun because Christ has risen."

Jesus does not simply improve our old life. He gives us a new life

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV

Baptism is the public picture of that transformation

Baptism is an act of Obedience

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19 NKJV

Jesus commanded His followers to make disciples and baptize those who believe

Baptism is not merely a Church tradition. It is an act of obedience to Jesus Christ

Jesus Himself was baptized, not because He had sinned

But to **fulfill righteousness and publicly identify with the Father's plan**

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. Matthew 3:13 NKJV

When Jesus was baptized, **the Father expressed His approval**

And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Matthew 3:17 NKJV

Baptism is one of the first steps of obedience in the Christian life

It does not mean that we will never struggle or fail again

It does mean that we have decided to follow Jesus openly and unashamedly

Some people delay baptism because they are waiting until they feel more spiritual, more knowledgeable, or more worthy

But obedience should not be postponed until we feel completely prepared

Baptism is not a graduation ceremony for mature Christians.

It is an early step of obedience for those who have placed their faith in Christ.

Today, we are not hidden inside a building. We are gathering publicly as the people of God.

Our fellowship, kindness, generosity, conversations, and conduct should openly reflect Jesus

The same faith we profess in baptism should be visible in the way we live.

Baptism calls us to walk in Newness of Life

Even so we also should walk in newness of life. Romans 6:4 NKJV

Baptism does not merely look back to the moment we were saved. It also points forward to the life we are now called to live.

The word “walk” speaks of our daily conduct

Baptism declares that our direction has changed

We once lived for ourselves. Now we live for Christ.

We once followed the patterns of the world. Now we follow the Word of God.

We once belonged to the kingdom of darkness. Now we belong to the kingdom of God’s Son

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is.
Colossians 3:1 NKJV

Baptism should be followed by a life that increasingly reflects Jesus

This **does not mean instant perfection**

However, it means a new direction, a new identity, a new purpose, and a new source of strength