



Baptism

OUR FOCUS

To lead people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the reason and the purpose behind everything we do. Therefore, we genuinely believe that Jesus is worth following. Because of that, we want to see you get connected to what God is doing through Christ's Church.

Here at Christ's Church, we focus on leading people to be fully devoted followers who will lead others to become fully devoted followers. As disciples, we are all learning to submit every aspect of our lives to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Jesus wants to work in every area of your life, but we know it can be hard to let Jesus have control. Because of that, we want to partner with you and help you grow in your faith.

A fully devoted follower of Jesus is growing in the three rhythms of discipleship—*pursuing God, connecting with disciples, and unleashing impact on the world around them.*



NEW LIFE STARTS WITH BAPTISM

We want you to experience a completely new life because of Jesus—a life that is free from the guilt and shame of your sin. A life focused on God's goodness and his love for us. But you might wonder how you experience the new life that Jesus offers.

It starts with surrendering your current life. That is why baptism is a cool picture of Jesus in our life. Baptism is when you, yourself, decide to submit your life to Jesus and accept a new life from him. As you are lowered under the water, you symbolize your current life is dying. Then, as you rise back out of the water, you symbolize your new life being made alive with Jesus.

Whether you have been baptized before or not, every Christian needs to be reminded of the power found in a new life in Jesus. When a person surrenders to Jesus and confesses their sins, Jesus' strength and power can be seen in their life.

There is no area of your life that Jesus doesn't want to transform. That can be a scary thought, but it is worth it. Following Jesus is a life-long process because it takes time for God to teach us to trust Him in every single part of our lives. Turning away from our sinful actions and desires is not just a one-time thing; repentance and turning to Jesus happens daily. Jesus didn't just come to earth to save us from sin so that we could live happy lives doing whatever we wanted.

When Jesus saved us from our sins, he earned the right to be Lord of our lives.

For some of you, if you've never taken an intentional step to say, "I want to start following Jesus," we want to help you do that. Many questions and controversies have arisen over baptism. The purpose of this section is to primarily look at what the Bible says regarding the practice of baptism. This study aims to put aside human interpretations and traditions and focus on what scripture says.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE WORD –BAPTISM

The word "baptism" is a transliteration of the Greek word "baptizo." That means that the Greek letters were simply changed into English letters. So everywhere you read "baptism" in the New Testament, it is the Greek word "baptizo" or one of its forms. The issue with transliteration is that it doesn't convey the meaning of the word that a translation would. So to understand what baptism means, one must start with the actual definition of the word "baptizo." Here are how different Biblical resources define "baptizo."

- To dip in or under water Liddell and Scott
- To plunge, to sink, to dip, to immerse Arndt and Gingrich
- The person was immersed in water Kitto Encyclopedia
- Immersion Smith's Dictionary

Read Mark 1:4-11

- *Does baptism by immersion sound like the baptizing that John did in the Jordan River?*

WHY SHOULD A PERSON BE BAPTIZED?

In each of these Scriptures, why is a person baptized?

- *Mark 1:4-11*
- *John 3:22-36*
- *Acts 2:37-39*

- *Romans 6:1-14*

- *Galatians 3:26-27*

- *Colossians 2:6-15*

- *Titus 3:3-7*

- *Considering those Scriptures, how does baptism resemble Jesus' death?*

- *Considering those Scriptures, how does baptism resemble Jesus' burial?*

- *Considering those Scriptures, how does baptism resemble Jesus' resurrection?*

WHO GETS BAPTIZED?

The first time the good news (gospel) of Jesus is publicly communicated is recorded in Acts 2:37-41. Go ahead and read it.

- *According to the text, what was the response of the crowd?*
- *What does cut to heart mean?*
- *When the people were ready to respond to Christ, what did Peter tell them to do? (v.38)*

A CLOSER LOOK AT REPENTANCE

Repentance can be defined in a couple of different ways. The Hebrew word for repentance can be translated as "to turn around and go in the opposite direction." The Greek word for repentance can be translated as "to radically change one's thinking" (Lexham Bible Dictionary). Repent is a verb. It implies action, not passiveness.

When a person surrenders to Jesus and confesses their sins, the Holy Spirit's strength and power can be seen in their life as God transforms them from the inside out. The Holy Spirit is our counselor that guides and teaches us how to follow Jesus. It is the same power that Jesus depended on, which rose him from the dead. And that is the same power that God gives to those who believe and trust in him. So following Jesus is learning to live in a way that lets the Holy Spirit lead you.

- *Why does a person need to repent? What does a person repent of?*

- *How does Ephesians 2:1-10 describe someone's life separated from God?*

Turning away from our sinful actions and desires is not just a one-time thing; repentance and turning to Jesus happens daily. To say "yes" to Jesus, you must say "no" to other things. Honestly, we are heading in a direction that leads us towards looking more like Jesus, or we aren't.

Following Jesus means turning away from the things that pull us away from God and turning back to him—realigning our heart and life to God. For so many of us, we have a hard time focusing on God because we let the things of this world distract us from God.

Unfortunately, we have let good things, and sometimes bad things replace God. That is called idolatry, and it is a sin. Anytime we put something above God or allow our hearts to be controlled by something or someone other than God, that is a sin. That is why our actions or how we live our life reveals who or what controls our heart.

In each of these Scriptures, how is the action of repentance demonstrated?

- *Luke 15:11-32*

- *Luke 19:1-10*

- *Acts 8:26-40 - The Ethiopian Eunuch*
- *Acts 10:1-48 - The First Gentiles*
- *Acts 16:11-15 – Lydia*
- *Acts 16:25-34 - The Philippian Jailor*
- *Considering your study and prayer, what is God telling you to do? What is holding you back from getting baptized (if anything)?*

WHAT'S NEXT AFTER BAPTISM?

Baptism is often explained as the end goal for a believer; however, we find in the Bible that baptism is only the beginning.

Following Jesus is way more than just a list of rules. It is more than just a checklist to mark off once you read your Bible or after you pray. Following Jesus involves every area of your life and letting him control every area. The good news is that following Jesus is a relationship with him.

Following Jesus is learning to live in a relationship with Jesus because he is real. He was a real person that lived and breathed

2000 years ago. Jesus walked this earth, but sometimes we can forget that Jesus is still alive today. After he was crucified, God raised him from the dead, meaning he is still alive today.

He doesn't want you just to follow his example, but he wants you. He wants to know you, and you to know him. Then, he wants to work in your life, heart, and mind to become more like him both inside and outside.

Your new life and your new identity in Jesus change how you live. The more that you follow Jesus, the more you should look like Jesus. The process of looking like Jesus and living like Jesus takes time, but we should be growing in his image every day.

For Christians, Jesus is our goal. When Jesus is our goal, it means letting God have control of our hearts. God wants to work in your life and give you a new heart to experience new desires. So those habits of sin you struggle with and can't seem to overcome, Jesus wants to replace those desires with a passion for him and his kingdom.

That is why being part of God's family is so important. When we start following him, God gives us a family to surround us and help us find our identity in Jesus. You can't be a child of God separated from the family of God. You can try, but it will be more complex, and you will miss out on other ways God works in this world. Faith in Jesus is supposed to be personal but never private.

Read Matthew 28:16-20

- *What does Jesus tell us, as his followers, to do?*

The last command that Jesus gave His disciples before ascending into heaven was to make disciples. He wanted His followers to teach others what it looked like to be entirely devoted to Him. The command to make disciples applies to all Christians of all ages. Jesus wants to work in our heart so that we start seeing other people as worthy of the same things God has given to us. We are called to teach people what it looks like to be fully devoted to Jesus so that the good news of Jesus Christ can also transform them.

Read Acts 9:1-19

- *What lessons can we learn from this story when somebody gives their life to Christ?*

Though we may not all have an experience like Saul, God initiates a relationship with us and calls us to respond in obedience to the truth we have received.

- *According to 2 Corinthians 5:14-20, how does a new identity in Christ change how we live?*

- *What are some key things that we need to be able to communicate to people as we make disciples (fully devoted followers of Jesus)?*