



Water Baptism

Baptism is a gift from God that symbolizes our association with Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. It is the next step after a person has trusted in Christ, and is a declaration of repentance and forgiveness of sins. It is important to understand that this forgiveness is through faith in Christ, not through the act of baptism. Instead, baptism is an outward sign of an inward transformation that has been given by our Lord.

Baptism symbolizes our dying to the old life and rising to the new. The grace which baptism makes available is that of the atonement of Christ, which makes possible our reconciliation with God.

In the Old Testament, baptism is said to have signified purity or cleansing from sin, and devotion to God. In the New Testament, however, the significance of baptism is expanded upon as John the Baptist was sent by God to spread the news of the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ. John was directed by God (John 1:33) to baptize those who accepted his message. John's baptizing is called "a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins." (Mark 1:4 NIV). Those baptized by John acknowledged their sins and professed their faith that through the coming Messiah they would be forgiven. Therefore, New Testament baptism is said to represent the forgiveness and cleansing from sin that comes through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and an outward acknowledgment of this belief.

Scripture References

John 1:29-33 (NKJV)

The Lamb of God

(Matt. 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21, 22)

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.' 31 I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."

32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. 33 I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'

Mark 1:4 (NKJV)

4 John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

Matthew 3:13-17 (NKJV)

John Baptizes Jesus

(Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21, 22; John 1:29–34)

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. 14 And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?"

15 But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him.

16 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The New Testament records that Jesus was baptized by John (Matthew 3:13-17). Jesus then instructed His disciples to teach and baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). In Acts 2:38-41, Peter called on his listeners "to repent and be baptized."

As was the custom in the New Testament, baptisms are usually held in a public place. A public baptism ceremony provides an opportunity for those outside of Christ to see Christians professing their faith. The baptism may be in a river, the sea, or any other body of water. Some churches have baptisteries built into their church buildings. However Baptisms can also be held privately where there is a body of water and the inward desire to follow after Jesus. Wherever the baptism is held, the water is to be clean, room temperature, and about waist deep.

The Eunuch's Baptism

Acts 8:26-39 (NKJV)

Christ Is Preached to an Ethiopian

(cf. Is. 53:7, 8)

26 Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert. 27 So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, 28 was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. 29 Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot."

30 So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

31 And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. 32 The place in the Scripture which he read was this:

"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;

And as a lamb before its shearer is silent,

So He opened not His mouth.

33 In His humiliation His justice was taken away,

And who will declare His generation?

For His life is taken from the earth."

34 So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?" 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.

36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?"

37 Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may."

And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

38 So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. 39 Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.

Here the Scriptures provide an example of someone who was in a state of being drawn to baptism after hearing the Gospel of Jesus explained to them. It was not planned or scheduled. The eunuch's willingness to make this prompted decision was expressed when he said "here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Belief in the Lord Jesus as the Son of God is the focal point of one's decision to be baptized. If someone has such a desire to be baptized, it is the Spirit of God that is drawing them to do so and we will make every effort to provide the opportunity for baptism.

Baptism Sunday Format

- Candidates are to provide their full name for their baptism certificate.
- Candidates are also to provide their T-Shirt Size
- We ask that all candidates arrive at least 30 minutes before the beginning of service. There you will be directed to an area where you can change into your baptism attire (T-Shirt  and knee length shorts ) Once changed, you will be directed to your seat for the worship service.
- After Opening Worship, we will transition to a short Word and then we will transition to the Baptism Service.
- We will ask each candidate to give a brief testimony and their profession of faith in Jesus.
- After which the Pastor will give instructions to candidates as they approach the baptismal pool when called.
- After you have been positioned in the assigned posture, the Pastor will say
- "[First Name] Based on your profession of faith, I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."
- You'll be asked to pinch your nose and hold your breath as you are immersed in water and quickly brought up by the Pastor/Minister/Assistant(s)
- The church will provide baptismal certificates at the end of the baptismal service.

What's Next?

- Your journey as a Disciple of Jesus Christ begins. Our Pastor or a member of our Discipleship Team will make contact with you to discuss establishing times to meet for teaching and discipleship.
- A decision to follow Jesus without discipleship can leave a new candidate with excitement, enthusiasm

but new unanswered questions and a lack of preparation for this new walk with Jesus.

- Establishing a discipleship connection is critical for your spiritual growth and real life application of God's Word.
- You are welcomed into a community of Christ followers who are being disciplined to be more like Jesus and we are committed to spreading His Gospel throughout the World through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Sign up for your first discipleship class today!