



We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead... we too may live a new life.

THE BIBLE (ROMANS 6 V4)

Baptism



WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Baptism is an outward sign of an inward truth: that we have 'died' to our old life and decided to trust and follow Jesus. Faith is an invisible, intangible thing that needs to be expressed in action. We can show people what they cannot see: that our faith is in Jesus. We must become a follower of Jesus Christ before we can think about being baptised.

At Waypoint Church we see Baptism as an important spiritual marker, but it does not make us Christians or automatically members of a worshipping community. We would normally expect you to have been part of Waypoint Church community for at least a few months before taking this step and to have gone through an Alpha Course or The Discipleship Way. This is to ensure you know and understand what it means to be a follower of Jesus and that Waypoint Church is the right worshipping community for you.

CONSIDER CAREFULLY:

When we baptise people, we ask them the following questions:

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Saviour?
Do you turn away from everything you know to be wrong or sinful?
Do you promise to follow Jesus Christ all the days of your life?

If you can say Yes to each of these, then read on to find out more.

WHY GET BAPTISED?

To be baptised is to be 'immersed'. As demonstrated through the New Testament, it is to be 'immersed in water'. The idea may sound strange, but it's rich with meaning and a very powerful symbolic experience.

Baptism is a celebration of what God has already done in you:

"He saved us, not because of the [right] things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit." Titus 3:5

Baptism is commanded as a public declaration of what you believe, it also follows Jesus' own model of obedience to Father God:

"Repent and be baptized, 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." Acts 2:38

"But Jesus said, "It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires." So John agreed to baptize him". Matthew 3:15

Baptism is an outwards sign of our faith and intention to follow Jesus Christ, understanding that:

BAPTISM IS TO DIE TO YOUR OLD LIFE

Baptism signifies the death and burial of our old life—including our identity with the world and those addictions, motivations and desires within it.

"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

BAPTISM IS TO EXPERIENCE FREEDOM

As we go under the water, we die to and bury our old lives. Sin has dominated your life and led you to do things that were destructive. After baptism, you have died to that power. Therefore, you are no longer a 'slave to sin' but instead you are free to choose what or who will lead your life!

"We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin..." Romans 6:6-7

BAPTISM IS TO START A NEW LIFE

Just as Jesus died and rose from the grave to a new life, so too you will rise out of the water into a new life! We are 'born again' within the 'body of Christ'. Christ has given us a new life, a new identity: we are loved, accepted, and important to God—this means there can and will be an end to all sadness, despair, regret, bitterness, independence, loneliness and fear. And just as sure as Jesus conquered death, you can trust that death has no power over you. It has been defeated!

"And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him..." Romans 6:8-9

BAPTISM IS JUST THE BEGINNING

By no means are we saying we're good enough, know everything and have it all sorted. In fact the opposite is true—we have an awareness that the life we lived wasn't with and for God—whereas now we're choosing to turn to God for His guidance and His help.

Baptism is more about celebrating the beginning of a new way of life and looking to God to complete what He and you are starting together. God has always had a plan and a purpose for you. He's just been waiting for you to get in the right place to tell you!

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

BAPTISM IS A REASON TO CELEBRATE!

All we can do is celebrate that God has done all this for us! We were dead, but now we are alive!

"So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus." Romans 6:11

That's why we declare it publicly and invite friends and family - we have much to celebrate and many people to celebrate with!

PREPARING FOR THE DAY

PREPARING SPIRITUALLY:

Baptism is a very special event in the journey as a follower of Jesus, when you get to make a public declaration of faith in front of family and community by doing something Jesus Himself did at the beginning of His earthly ministry. In the weeks leading to your baptism, you may want to read again through one of the Gospels, or follow a devotional plan. Check out YouVersion App for a devotional for people preparing for baptism.

INVITE PEOPLE ALONG:

Your baptism is a fantastic opportunity to invite friends and family along to celebrate with you and see something of your faith. You may be surprised at how many people may be interested in your story, respect your decision and want to support you.

WRITE YOUR TESTIMONY:

People love listening to personal stories and there is power in hearing how Jesus has changed and transformed a person's life. Telling your story will encourage others and show how God is personal and works uniquely in each person's life.

Try to write it down, ask the questions of:

1. What was my life before I met Jesus?
2. How did I meet Jesus and what happened next?
3. What is my life like now?

Get input from other friends in the Church and try to whittle it down to about 2-3 minutes.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT THE SERVICE?

WHO WILL BAPTISE ME?

One of the leadership team will be in the water to baptise you and to ask you the baptism questions. For safety we have two people in the water, so for the second person you may want to ask your Supporter (if you have one) or another person who may have been significant in your becoming a follower of Jesus.

WHAT DO I WEAR?

Please do not wear white clothing, as it becomes transparent when wet! Women are usually best off wearing a swimsuit under their normal clothing. Trousers, leggings or shorts and a dark coloured t-shirt often works well: skirts have a tendency to float.

Men often wear shorts and a dark coloured t-shirt. You will need to bring a towel and change of clothes. We will have a beach tent available for privacy to get changed in afterwards.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE SEA?

The baptisms will be towards the end of the service and you will have had opportunity to share your testimony earlier on. At the point of your baptism you will be asked to enter the sea with the two people assisting in the baptism. You will be asked the baptismal questions, then you will be directed in the process of the baptism. Due to being in the sea the normal process so we don't have to go in too deep, is for you to place your hand across your chest – you can hold your nose closed if you want. Then a hand will be placed on your crossed arms and one on your back. You will almost sit then be gently pushed back and under the water and back up again. It is an unusual feeling to be baptised, so please relax and allow yourself to be directed. Once you come up out of the water you can go back to shore to change and re-join the celebration worship.

FAQs

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHRISTENING AND BAPTISM?

Christening is where the person is too young to decide for themselves whether they want to follow Christ, and so the decision is made by their parents. Baptism in contrast, is when the individual has made their own decision to follow Jesus. Christening is when water is sprinkled over the child, whereas Baptism is when you are entirely immersed.

DOES IT HAVE TO BE FULL IMMERSION?

The truth of spiritually dying and rising into a new life with Jesus is represented by baptism. That is why we immerse. We do not sprinkle. You cannot sprinkle somebody with a little bit of water and say 'You are dead'. All you can say is 'You are wet!' The act of full immersion is saying 'Your old life is dead and buried'. When you come up out of the water, it represents the new reality of the resurrected life. The act of baptism is saying, 'Here you are, you are a new creation in Christ, now walk it out'.

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTISED?

Anyone who has heard the good news about Jesus, accepted it, and has decided to follow Jesus should be baptised!

"When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?' Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, 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.'" Acts 2:37-38

WHEN AM I READY TO BE BAPTISED?

Jesus' disciples were baptised as soon as possible. Normally we would encourage you to do an Alpha Course or The Discipleship Way just so you know what you're signing up to, but as soon as you are ready to commit fully to Jesus as 'Lord and Saviour' then you're ready to be baptised. It's about making a choice and commitment, it's not about being perfect!

"And as they went 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?' ... both went down into the water, and Philip baptised him." Acts 8:35-38

HOW DO I GET BAPTISED?

First chat to your Connect Group Leader to find out more. When you are ready to move forward come along to a preparation class —and ask questions!



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