



Water Baptism

Your consideration to be water baptized is a powerful and public outward expression of an inward work being done by God, with your permission. The act of water baptism is, essentially, a way of communicating to God... "I Belong To You!" ... to Satan... "I Don't Belong To You!" ... and, to The Church... "I Belong With You!"

As you prepare your mind and heart for this important and exciting faith-step, may this tool give you a better understanding of water baptism, as outlined in the New Testament.

Why be Water Baptized?

- Jesus commanded it. He instructed His disciples to "therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).
- Jesus was baptized. We are reminded to follow His example (Mark 1:9-11).
- Water baptism is a symbolic burial, by which the Christian publicly declares they have died, and are now beginning a new life in Christ.
- Water baptism is a statement of faith: my old life is behind me...I'm a new person.
- Water baptism is a sign of repentance. Repentance means change—a change so drastic the old person is "buried".
- Water baptism is a sign of obedience and humility (1John 5:2-3).

Five Facts About Water Baptism

1. Baptism is not Salvation *"Yet to all who receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God."* John 1:12

Your entrance into the kingdom of God and being saved from the consequences of sin comes to you by way of believing and receiving Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. This is done by a choice of your will to believe that Jesus Christ is the earthly expression of God, who died on a cross as a substitute for your sin. His resurrection from the grave is an example of God's triumph over death and His ascension into heaven speaks of the eternal life we can expect as a people "on the way" to a heavenly home. To receive Jesus as your Savior means to follow Him with a faith to live in such a way to obey His direction for our lives. Water Baptism is the beginning of this journey of faith and obedience, but the work of salvation has been done by Jesus on the cross and is accepted by faith.

2. "Adult" Baptism is the Biblical Pattern

To be baptized, christened or sprinkled as a baby or child is fine, and shows that your parent(s) cared for you. But the biblical pattern for water baptism is to be mature enough to understand the concept of being a sinner that needs salvation and willing to "believe, receive, repent and obey."

3. Baptism is obeying the Commands of Jesus *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing 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."
Matthew 28:19-20

We are commanded, as Christians, to be disciples of Jesus. This means to be an imitator/follower of Christ. Jesus Himself was baptized and commands those who are following Him to do the same. Also, in the text above, Jesus mentions, "to obey everything I have commanded you." Obedience is an important key to understand as you begin to live a life that God can bless. Jesus explains to the disciples that, "*whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by the Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.*" *John 14:21* Your obedience to the word of God and to His leading you will bring a blessing to your life. Showing your love for Jesus through obedience expresses your love for Him, His leadership over your life, and His promise is to love and reveal Himself to you. Consider your water baptism to be a practical faith-step in your relationship with God as you begin a new life of obedience to Him.

4. Baptism can begin new Degree of Spirit-Filled Life

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."
Matt. 3:13-17

When Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River, by the prophet John, the Holy Spirit descended on Him in the form of a dove when he arose from the water. As a disciple (follower/imitator) of Jesus, we can expect the same installment of His Holy Spirit and power for a new anointing. This comes by way of a new level of surrender and a new level of control by the Holy Spirit to lead and guide our lives. Just as it was for Jesus, we can receive an enabling for service and empowerment for serving God's purposes. Luke 11:13 tells us to "ask" for the Holy Spirit, and Ephesians 5:18 commands us to "be being filled" (regularly) with Him. We encourage you to "ask" and "be filled" on a regular, ongoing basis.

5. Baptism Celebrates the Death of Your "Old Self"

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. *Romans 6:4*

In a public way, through baptism, we are saying "no" to sin, and "yes" to a new life with Jesus. In essence, being lowered and raised from the water symbolizes the death and resurrection of Jesus. The lowering into the water represents the death and burial of the "old self" (without Christ), just as Jesus was crucified, put to death and buried. The raising up from the water represents the New Life in Jesus, just as He conquered death and hell by rising from the dead. Through the resurrection of Jesus, the grip of sin and death has been removed for all who step into this new life Him. Baptism is not the final step in following Jesus. In contrast, it is a beginning step in a new relationship between you and God. Baptism is your outward expression of God's inward work in your life. As you continue your journey in Christ, allow your baptism to be a definite point where "the old is gone and the new has come."

You are to be congratulated for your desire to obey the commands of Jesus as it relates to water baptism. May it be a memorable day for you and your loved ones.

Other Scriptures on Water Baptism:

- Jesus' Baptism – Mark 1:1-11
- The Baptism Command – Mark 16:16
- The Gift of the Holy Spirit – Acts 2:38-39, 8:14-17
- Symbolism of Baptism – Romans 6:1-14
- Believers Challenge After Baptism – Colossians 3:1-14