

The Ordinance of Baptism



What is Baptism?

Baptism is the obedient response to the Word of God by professing believers, involving the outward sign of full immersion in water, signifying the inward work of God in the heart.

As a commandment of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (and scripturally the practice of the Apostles and the early church) baptism, likewise signifies the entrance of new believers into the Body of Christ and Kingdom of God.

The term “Baptism” [transliterated from the Greek word “Baptizo”] means to be completely whelmed (covered) or totally immersed.

[Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 6:3-4]

What is the Purpose of Baptism?

It is the visible declaration that, in Christ, a believer has become a new creature and has passed from death in sin unto life. This is a picture of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[Romans 6:3-4]

Who Should be Baptized?

Those who profess repentance from sin towards God and give a biblical profession of faith - in obedience to and according to scripture alone (by grace alone though faith alone in Christ alone, for God’s glory alone), are the only proper subjects for Believer Baptism.

[Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 8:36-38]

Why Should a Believer be Baptized?

Because Baptism is a command of God to all true believers, it is therefore required of all true believers to obey. For obedience is the answer of a good conscience towards God.

[1Peter 3:21; 1John 5:3]

When should a believer be Baptized?

A true believer should be Baptized at the earliest opportunity.

[Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 8:36-38]

Frequently Asked Questions...

- Question:** *Who may perform a baptism?*
Answer: *Because biblical elders bear the responsibility of rule and oversight over the flock of God, an elder will be involved in the performing of baptism.
[I Timothy 3:4,5; Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 5:1-4]*
- Question:** *What if a physical infirmity prevents a full immersion baptism?*
Answer: *In the event of physical infirmity which prevents full immersion baptism, an alternative form of baptism may be accepted.*
- Question:** *Will alternative forms of baptism be accepted?*
Answer: *The acceptance of any alternative form of baptism will be at the discretion of the elders; each case will be considered individually.
[Hebrews 13:17]*
- Question:** *What if baptism is not circumstantially possible?*
Answer: *Based upon scripture's example of the thief on the cross, when a profession of faith and the end of earthly life are too close to allow time for baptism, baptism is not required.
[Luke 23:39-43]*
- Question:** *Must a vocal profession of faith be made prior to (or during) a baptism?*
Answer: *A vocal profession of faith must be made to an elder before a baptism may be scheduled. A vocal profession of faith made just prior to immersion is also necessary as an outward witness.
[Acts 8: 36-38]*
- Question:** *In whose name(s) are we to be baptized?*
Answer: *We are baptized once in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.
[Matthew 28:19]*
- Question:** *Are there reasons why a request to be baptized may be denied?*
Answer: *The elders reserve the right to deny a request for baptism, based upon a lack of evidence of conversion in the person baptism.
[Hebrews 13:17]*
- Question:** *What is the distinction between the baptism of the Holy Spirit and water baptism?*
Answer: *The baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs when God's Holy Spirit affects the beginning of spiritual life in a believer (as described in Romans 6:4). Water baptism is the outward obedient act that follows.
[Romans 6:4; I Corinthians 12:13; Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:36-38]*
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