

When it comes to the subject of baptism, there are a few questions that keep coming up. In an effort to provide you with the information you need to understand this important ordinance of the church, we offer these simple answers.

1. Why Should I be Baptized?

A. To follow the example set by Christ.

"At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river." (Mark 1:9)

B. Because Christ commanded it.

Jesus said, "Go then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19-20)

C. It demonstrates that I really am a Believer.

"We know that we have come to know Him, if we obey His commands." (1 John 2:3)

2. What is the Meaning of Baptism?

A. It illustrates Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

"Christ died for our sins. . . He was buried... and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)." "For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ." (Colossians 2:12)

"By our baptism then, we were buried with Him and shared His death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead... so that we may live a new life!" (Romans 6:4)

B. It illustrates my new life as a Christian.

"When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun!" (2 Corinthians 5:17)

"By our baptism then, we were buried with Him and shared His death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead... so that we may live a new life!" (Romans 6:4)

C. Baptism doesn't make you a Christian.

Only your faith in Christ does that.

Baptism is like a wedding ring; it's the outward sign of the commitment you have made in your heart. (see Ephesians 2:8-9)

3. Why be Baptized by Immersion?

A. Because Jesus was baptized that way.

"As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water." (Matthew 3:16)

B. Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion. For example *"...then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water..." (Acts 8:38-39)*

C. The word "baptize" means "to dip under water."

D. It best symbolizes a burial and resurrection. (see Romans 6:1-11)

E. The founders of the major denominations agree:

- **Martin Luther** (founder of Lutheran denomination): "I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the word imports and the mystery signifies."

- **John Calvin** (founder of Presbyterian denomination): "The word "baptize" signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church."

- **John Wesley** (founder of Methodist and Wesleyan denominations): "Buried with Him" alludes to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church."

4. Who Should Be Baptized?

Every person who has believed in Christ should be baptized. A Believer is someone who has realized that personal sin has separated him or her from God and has concluded that Jesus Christ's death on the cross for personal sin is the only thing that can bridge the gap back to God.

A Believer is someone who has decided to trust Christ alone for his or her salvation and to follow Christ as Lord and God forever. If you have come to that point in your spiritual journey, then you are ready to be baptized. (Acts 2:41; 8:12-13)

5. What About Children?

The New Testament shows no example of baptism when an individual did not request it. All instances of baptism followed an individual's decision to trust Christ alone for salvation (Acts 2:41; 8:12; 10:47-48). At LifeSpring Church, we wait until the child is old enough to personally trust in Christ and understand the meaning of baptism before we baptize them.

All children must complete the eight week class, **"I'm a Christian Now"** before they may be baptized. This class is offered several times a year on Sunday mornings.

Some churches practice baptism of infants. This custom began in the 4th or 5th century AD. With this view, the child's baptism is a sacrament of salvation and initiation into the Body of Christ. However meaningful for the parents, we do not believe that this is New Testament baptism; therefore, we do not practice it. LifeSpring Church offers its members a similar, nonbaptismal opportunity for parents through its Parent/Baby Dedication, conducted semi-annually.

As the purpose of baptism is to publicly confess one's personal commitment to Christ, we believe that every person should be baptized after trusting Christ, even though many of us were baptized as infants.

In the Bible, we find parents bringing children to Jesus.

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He held them and prayed for them and told us to welcome them. But he did not baptize them, and he did not tell anyone else to baptize them. So it seems more biblical to wait until after a personal decision to trust Christ has been made by the child. If baptism signifies salvation (as the Bible teaches), only people who have intentionally received salvation should experience baptism.

If you have not experienced believer's baptism, even though you were baptized as an infant, the full meaning and significance of baptism has yet to take place in your life. We strongly encourage you to be baptized as a professing believer in Christ. Your Heavenly Father will "smile" on your obedience, just like he did with Jesus on his baptism:

"And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.'" (Matthew 3:16-17)

6. When Should I be Baptized?

As soon as you have believed.

"Those who believed were baptized that day!" (Acts 2:41)

"Then Philip began with the scripture and told him the Good News about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water, and the man said, 'Look, here is water! why shouldn't I be baptized right now?' Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' The man answered, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' So they went down into the water and Philip baptized him." (Acts 8:35-38)

Does this mean it has to be immediately? No, what the Bible is trying to teach is that baptism should follow your decision to become a Believer. There is no reason to delay. If you wait until you are "good" enough, you will never feel ready for baptism.

Remember, though, that children must complete the class, "I'm a Christian Now," and teens and adults must complete the booklet, "Welcome to the Family."

7. When does LifeSpring Church have Baptismal Services?

LifeSpring Church's baptismal services are scheduled throughout the year. Most are in the Chapel. Baptismal services are announced well in advance. Check your church calendar or our web page for exact dates. If you have any special needs, please contact one of the pastors.

8. What Do I Wear?

You can wear shorts along with a LifeSpring baptism t-shirt that we will provide and which is yours to keep. It is a good idea to bring a towel and a change of clothes if desired.

9. How Do I Register?

A. To register for our next baptism service, visit our Baptism page at lifespringchurch.com and fill out our "Next Step" form.

B. Part of the registration process involves writing a paragraph or two describing how and when you decided to trust Christ for your salvation (in other words, your personal testimony). We feel this is helpful for you to recognize the difference Christ has made in your life.

If you have any questions that are not answered above or if you would like to talk to a pastor, call **(402) 202-4546** or email us at mail@lifespringchurch.com.



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Frequently Asked Questions About



BAPTISM