
What does the Bible Teach about Water Baptism?

There are five questions usually asked about water baptism. Let's see how the Bible answers these questions:

■ *Who should be baptized?*

1. Those who have repented from their sins, and have a personal faith in Christ (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 8:36-37).
2. Those who have committed their lives to be disciples of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19-20; Note the qualifications for becoming a disciple in Luke 14:26-27).
3. Examples from the bible. In every case those who had placed their faith in Jesus Christ were baptized. The day of Pentecost (Acts 2:37ff), the new Christians at Samaria (Acts 8:12), The Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:35-38, The Apostle Paul (Acts 9:17-18), Cornelius and his company (Acts 11:17-18; Acts 10:47-48), the Corinthians (Acts 18:8), the Ephesians (Acts 19:1-5).
4. Household baptisms: Stephanas (1 Corinthians 1:16, 16:15), the Jailor (Acts 16:31-34), Crispus (Acts 18:8), Lydia (Acts 16:14-15). In each of these cases, all of the household members first placed their faith in Christ for salvation, then were baptized. Infants cannot do this. There is not one instance of infant baptism in the bible.

■ *How should we be baptized?*

1. By immersion in water.
 - a) "Baptism" from the Greek "Baptizo" means literally "to dip", to "plunge under", "to immerse".
 - b) Examples in the bible showing immersion under water can be found in...
 - John 3:22-23 (John the Baptist).
 - Mark 1:9-11 (Jesus).
 - Acts 8:38-39 (Ethiopian Eunuch).
 - c) Must be symbolic of Burial and Resurrection (Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12).
2. In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - a) "In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19). This is symbolic of our identification with God.)
3. For circumcision of the heart.

In the Old Testament, circumcision was an outward symbol of identification with God's people. God made an everlasting covenant with Abraham and sealed it with the sign of circumcision. In the New Testament, the outward symbol becomes Water baptism (Colossians 2:11-12)

■ *Where should we be baptized?*

Wherever there's enough water (John 3:22-23).

■ *Why should we be baptized?*

1. Because the Lord commanded us to (Matthew 28:18-20).
2. Because it shows we have a clear conscience before God (1 Peter 3:20-21).
3. Because it is a testimony to the world of the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 6:3-4).
4. Because it is symbolic of burying the "old person" (Romans 6:4-7).
5. Because it is a testimony to Satan's defeat (Colossians 2:12, 15).
6. Because it is a public acknowledgement of repentance and faith in Christ (Matthew 10:32-33).
7. Because it is a testimony to the oneness of true believers in Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13).
8. Because it shows our willingness to accept God's purpose for our lives (Luke 7:30).

■ *When should we be water baptized?*

1. "Now" (Acts 22:16).
2. Because Biblical examples: in each case there was no delay...
 - Acts 2:41
 - Acts 8:12
 - Acts 8:35-37
 - Acts 9:17-18
 - Acts 10:48
 - Acts 16:30-34
 - Acts 19:4-5
3. As soon as you have repented from your sin and received Christ as your Savior (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 8:36-37).

PREPARATION FOR BAPTISM

A. Testimony

Begin to ask the Lord now to guide you in what He would have you to say in your testimony. Some things that you should include in this are:

1. How and /or where you came to know Christ.
2. A Bible verse that has become meaningful to you.
3. What this step in your life means to you.
4. An area of your life that you desire to grow in as you commit your life to Him.

B. Clothing

In regard to what to wear – you can come to church dressed in what you will have on in the baptismal tank.

Men – you should wear water washable pants, sports shirt, and bring a towel and a dry change of clothes.

Women – you can wear or bring a swimsuit over which we will supply a baptismal gown to put on. Also bring a change of clothes, towel, etc.

C. Arrival Time

30 minutes prior to service.

D. Spiritual Preparations

1. Take time to search God's Word on baptism. One suggestion might be to read and meditate on Romans 6.
 - a. Romans 6:1-11 (the meaning of baptism)
 - b. Romans 16:12-23 (how this should affect the way I live)
2. You may want to fast all or part of the day as an expression of devotion to the Lord and after the baptism service plan on a celebration meal with family.
3. That evening after all of the activity, spend some time being quiet before the Lord reflecting on all that He has done for you.

E. Invitations

This is a great and important in your Christian life. A public declaration of your faith in God! Don't forget to invite those people who are important to you that you wish to share this event with.

F. Encouraging Words

Choose someone special (parents or close friend) and ask them to be prepared to give you a verse of Scripture while you are in the tank just prior to being baptized.