

BAPTISM

Leaving old behind
and starting
something **new**

Baptism is the
outward symbol
of the inward
commitment



What is Baptism

Water Baptism is a symbol

of leaving old ways behind and starting something new, moving towards passionate commitment to Jesus. When you invited Jesus to be the leader of your life, your sins were forgiven; now you are publicly saying that Jesus has done this for you. In a symbolic sense you are burying your sins in the water, and coming out of the water completely separated from them; it is the outward symbol of the inward commitment you made to trust Jesus as a new believer. Colossians 2:12 says, "For you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ."

The New Testament sets the pattern for our understanding of baptism.

It is full of stories of people who came to know Jesus, recognized their need for forgiveness, invited Him to lead their life and to "prove it" they were baptized. Jesus modelled it for us: "Then one day, Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and was baptized by John there in the Jordan River." Mark 1:9

Jesus later instructed all believers to be baptized:“Jesus said, ‘All authority on heaven and on earth has been given to Me. 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...’” Matthew 28:18-20

Baptism is also a positive growth experience for the entire church. The church exists so that people can be reached, grown, and built up in Jesus. Hebrews 10:24-25 tells us that we are to gather together to encourage and spur one another on. By witnessing your baptism, other believers will be encouraged in their own faith as you give testimony to what God has done in your life. This encouragement will continue as they help you grow and see you grow in your new found relationship.

Baptism is not a level up

AS You consider baptism, remember that eternal life and forgiveness of sins comes only through Jesus and his death on the cross John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” Because of your faith and belief in Jesus as the leader of your life you have eternal life right now. I John 1:9 says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” Because you have confessed your sin to Jesus, he has forgiven you, and at this moment – even before water baptism – you have eternal life and forgiveness of sins..

Baptism is simply your obedience to something Jesus asked us to do. I John 2:3 says, “We know that we have come to know Him if we obey His commands.”

Who should be baptized?

Every person who has made Jesus the leader of their life.

The Bible shows us that “Those who believed and accepted his message were baptized.” Acts 2:41. Both men and women (Acts 8:13) and on some occasions whole families made decisions and were baptized.

The one requirement for baptism is belief in Christ. For that reason, we do not baptize children until they are old enough to make a personal decision to believe in Jesus and understand the step of baptism.

How should I be baptized?

The Greek word “baptizo” means to literally immerse or dip under water; it is the picture of a burial and resurrection. Again, we want to do things the way Jesus did, “As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water.” Matthew 3:16. The baptism seems to show that this is the way baptisms were done, for example with Philip and a man who had just invited Jesus into his life: “Then both Philip and the Eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came out of the water...” Acts 8:38-39

At SunRidge, we have chosen this method of “immersion” to try and stay as close to the Biblical pattern as we can.

Personal Study

Here are some passages that talk about baptism, we encourage you to take some time and do your own reading and reflecting

Matthew 3:6 - John the baptist

Matthew 3:13-16 Jesus' baptism

Matthew 28:19 - Jesus' command to be baptized

John 3:22 and John 4:1,2 - Jesus' disciples baptize

Acts 2:38, 41 - Day of Pentecost

Acts 8:12 - Samaritans baptized after Phillip preached to them

Acts 8:36 - Ethiopian Eunuch baptized as soon as accepted Jesus

Acts 9:18 - Saul's baptism

Acts 10:47 - The Gentiles of Cornelius' house baptized after Peter preached the Gospel to them

Acts 19:5 - the people of Ephesus baptized after Paul brought the Gospel to them

(This is not a complete list of the instances of baptism in the New Testament)

When should I be baptized?

As soon as you have invited Jesus to be the leader of your life! You shouldn't delay! This is what the Bible says, "Those who believed...were baptized...that day." Acts 2:41 "Then Philip began with a Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they travelled along the road, they came to some water, and the Eunuch 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 official answered, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' Then both Philip and the Eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him." Acts 8:36-39

There is no reason to wait.

Baptism is not a sign of "having arrived" but rather the sign that you "have begun."

What if I was baptized as an infant?

Some church traditions baptize infants and we realize this is a special time for the family to bring their children before God, and something that becomes a treasured memory. At SunRidge we parallel that tradition with something we call “Child Dedication.” Child dedication is a family’s commitment towards a young child to raise him/her with godly values. It is also a time for the church family to witness that commitment and to pray for that family. The child has not, at that point, made any kind of decision to be in a relationship with God, and some day they will need to make that personal choice. No one can do it for them at any point in their life. One day, they will either choose to follow Him, or choose another direction.

The New Testament teaches that once the decision is made to follow Jesus, the decision can also be made to be baptized. That is why we call our baptism “Believer’s Baptism”. The New Testament teaches this, showing people making decisions, turning away from their sins and then being baptized.

We understand there can be a lot of emotion around this topic and we certainly don’t want it to become a reason for someone not to attend SunRidge. Any and all are welcome! When a person wants to move ahead in their spiritual journey though, the Bible teaches that one of these steps is Believer’s Baptism

We can honor the faith steps our parents took to dedicate us to Jesus and as Believer’s we can now publicly declare through Believer’s Baptism that we are pursuing our relationship with Him.

How do I “sign-up” to be baptized?

1. Your Story: Take the insert included in this brochure and spend some time thinking about your own story. We think it is beneficial to you now and in the future for this to be thought through and expressed clearly.

When you have written your thoughts out, hand this paper in to the office or put it in the offering and we will be in touch with you about your baptism.

2. Your Video: Baptism encourages the whole church people who haven't made the decision yet to invite Jesus into their lives are encouraged by stories like yours. People who have been Christ-followers for a long time are encouraged to see how God is at work. For this reason, we sit down with people like you who want to be baptized and make a video of your story. A lot of people don't like to stand up in front of a crowd, and this is a very nonthreatening way to get your story out. Some stories are short, some are longer...but they are all meaningful.

3. Invitations We provide invitations for your use. Make sure you invite as many friends and family members as you can to make this event as public a celebration as you can!

The Baptism Day

What to bring & wear

Bring a towel and a change of clothes. Wear a swim suit with a cover-up or a T-shirt and shorts.

What to do

As we get ready for your baptism day, we will fill you in on “the details” of when to get ready and what you need to be aware of.

Most important of all, allow yourself to relax and experience this great moment, this next step in your spiritual journey.

My Story

Please take some time to share about how you became a Christ-Follower and why you want to be baptized. Hand this page in to the office or to the Connect Centre.

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

1) WRITE OUT A BRIEF STORY ABOUT WHY, HOW AND WHEN YOU PRAYED TO INVITE JESUS TO BE THE LEADER OF YOUR LIFE.

2) WHY DO YOU WANT TO BE BAPTIZED?

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