

What is the purpose of baptism?

The Scriptures make it clear that once you are in Christ Jesus, you should be baptized. The motivation behind being baptized is simply to obey the Lord's command. There are two main reasons why the Lord commands baptism:

1. *An outward symbol of an inward (heart) change.*

After you have placed faith and trust in Christ alone, you belong to Him. According to Matthew 28:18-20, the believer is required to publicly testify about what Christ has done. It's like a wedding ring; the ring worn on the treasured bride's finger is a symbol to the world: "This girl is taken; loved by and devoted to her husband."

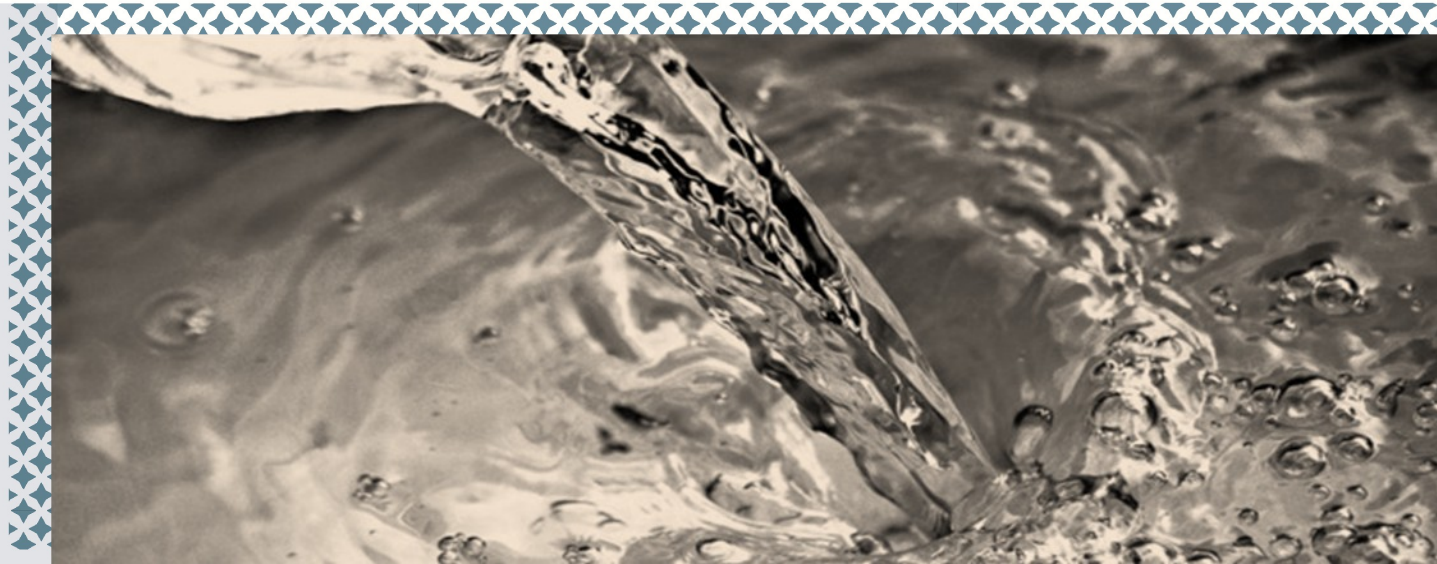
Likewise, baptism symbolically celebrates your new identity in Christ. It shows the world that you are loved by, and devoted to, Jesus Christ. It's a "ring" which is meant to symbolize the covenant that has been entered into with God on the basis of Christ's work.

2. *Public identification with Christ.*

In the United States this doesn't sound like a big deal. It's almost assumed that everyone goes through a religious ritual like baptism. But in the history of the church, and around the world today, baptism is no small milestone. It's a public identification of a new status of relationship with Jesus Christ that could result in unemployment, family disharmony, persecution or death. It's a big deal.

What type of baptism do we practice?

We practice baptism by immersion. This means that you are dipped beneath the water. This method seems to fit the biblical description of baptism the best. Whenever people were baptized, they "went down into the water" (Acts 8:38, Matthew 3:6) and were "dipped" (the word baptism really means "to dip") into the water.



The picture of baptism is made most clear when one is immersed. Immersion symbolizes dying to yourself, and identifying with Christ's death for you on the cross at Calvary. The moment beneath the water symbolizes Christ's burial. Emerging from the water symbolizes the reality of your new life in Christ, and your hope in the resurrection of Christ to deliver you from the power of death. (See Acts 8:36-39 and Romans 6:1-11). The whole body "dies," "is buried," and "is raised" with Christ."

Our baptism process

We hold baptism services as needed, but typically at least once per year in the summer on a Sunday afternoon. We hold education classes on baptism periodically throughout the year.

The classes are designed to clearly present what the Bible teaches about baptism. As the Scriptures are understood, believers can then answer the question, "Should I be baptized?"

Each candidate for baptism will give a brief public account of their faith in Jesus Christ. If you are like most of us, this can be scary! So the next step is a second, one-hour class which will help each candidate give a clear and concise account of their faith in Jesus Christ. This second and final class usually takes place the morning of the baptism service.



Who can be baptized?

We encourage every person who trusts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior to be baptized. While baptism cannot provide or complete one's salvation, it is an important step of obedience.

- Children: As a child grows and can make a mature profession of faith in Jesus Christ, we encourage each one to be baptized.
- New believers: As someone new to faith in Christ understands what the Scriptures teach about baptism, we encourage each one to be baptized.
- Growing disciples: Maybe you have a genuine faith in Christ Jesus, but have not had the opportunity to be baptized. Or possibly you simply realize that your time to be baptized is now.

We strongly encourage all believers to be baptized once they have clearly embraced the good news about Jesus (Acts 8:35-39).



Evangelical Free Church

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:4

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Baptism



at the eFree Church

Go therefore 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