

The Meaning and Importance of Water Baptism

Icebreaker: Tell about your favorite picture and how it came to be your favorite.

1. What is the basic meaning of the word “baptize”?

From sermon: Baptism = Greek = *baptizo* = dunk, plunge, immerse, dip.

2. Why do you think John baptized?

John 1:29-31 (NIV) 29 *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’ 31 I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”*

Acts 19:4(NIV) 4 *Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.”*

3. Why do you think Jesus was baptized?

Pastor's comment: Jesus was baptized. **Jesus being God did not need to be saved.** So baptism clearly does not save but is the visible "Hey everyone, watch this demonstration of what God has done inside me!"

Matthew 3:13 *13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. 14 But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" 15 Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented.*

4. When Jesus was baptized, in what ways did God show his approval and purpose?

Luke 3:21-22 *When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened 22 and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."*

John 1:29-34 *29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' 31 I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel." 32 Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. 33 And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' 34 I have seen and I testify that this is God's Chosen One."*

5. How does the Great Commission instruct disciples to be baptized? If you believe Jesus is your Lord, is baptism meant to be an option that we can choose or not choose? Why?

Matthew 28:19-20 *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, **20**and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

6. How is baptism a symbol of Christ's death and resurrection?

Romans 6:3-4 *Or don't you know that **all of us** who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? **4**We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*

7. What is the proper pattern for baptism and belief? Would it be proper to baptize someone before they believe?

Acts 8:36-38 (NIV) *36 As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?" 38 And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.*

Acts 10:44-48 (NIV) *44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, 47 “Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.” 48 So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.*

Mark 16:16 *Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.*

8. Why do you think Jesus gave us the command to be baptized? What does baptism demonstrate to the world at large?

9. What should be the reason people are willing to be baptized?

10. How does the refusal or neglect of some to be baptized have an effect on the church?

11. Is a baptism valid before God when the person has not yet come to faith? What do you think such a person should do in the event that they do come to faith?

12. What is an experience of baptism you have had?

Should I get baptized? Things to consider:

- I was baptized as a baby. There are no examples of baby baptism and all baptism are after a profession of faith. **You should be baptized.**
- I was sprinkled after a profession of faith. You do not need to be baptized. Although we immerse for the reasons given, **it is the profession of faith and identification with Christ that matters.**
- I was baptized, but now realize it was not as an honest profession of faith and allegiance to Jesus Christ. Sometimes children are baptized more because the family expects it rather than an honest faith. **You should be baptized.**
- I have believed in Jesus's saving work on the cross as my Lord and Savior, but have not been baptized yet. **You should be baptized.**