

BAPTISM

WHAT CHRISTIAN BAPTISM IS

- Christian baptism is immersion in water in submission to the authority of Jesus Christ. It is an act of obedience that commits one to a life of obedience. (**Matthew 3:16, John 3:23, Acts 8:26-39**)
- It is a command to be obeyed. (**Matthew 28:18-20**)
- Christian baptism symbolizes the cleansing from sin; a washing away of the old. (**Acts 22:16**)
- It reflects the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus and the one being baptized. (**Romans 6:3-4, Colossians 2:12**)
- Christian baptism symbolizes the new birth by which one becomes a new creature in Christ. It is the beginning of a new life. (**John 3:1-8, 1 Peter 3:21, 2 Corinthians 5:17**)
- Christian baptism is that act which initiates the Christian into fellowship. (**Acts 2:36-41, 1 Corinthians 12:13**)

WHAT CHRISTIAN BAPTISM IS NOT

- It is not a guarantee of salvation. Apart from faith and repentance, baptism is ineffective. (**Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 Peter 3:21**)
- Baptism is not the end. Just like a marriage is not the end of a relationship, but the beginning of a new union, baptism is the beginning of one's new life, united with God through Christ by the power of the Spirit. It is the start one's life under the lordship of Jesus and living for God. This does not mean that all problems will go away, it just means you and God will be working on things together. (**Galatians 3:27, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 6:3-4**)

WHY SHOULD A PERSON BE BAPTIZED?

- Jesus was baptized. (**Matthew 3:13**)
- Jesus said, "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved." (**Mark 16:16**)
- We are commanded by our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ, to make disciples, which includes baptizing people and teaching them to obey Christ. (**Matthew 28:18-20**)
- The apostle Peter told believers to "Repent and be baptized... for the forgiveness of your sins." (**Acts 2:38**)
- Baptism is an appeal to God for a clean conscience and a new beginning. (**1 Peter 3:21**)
- Baptism demonstrates our obedience and willingness to come under the Lordship of Christ. (**Matthew 3:15, 1 John 2:4**)
- In baptism, you receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (**Acts 2:38**)

WHY BE BAPTIZED BY IMMERSION?

- Because Jesus was baptized that way. (**Matthew 3:16**)
- Baptism in the Bible was by immersion. (**Ex: Acts 8:38-39**)
- It best symbolizes a death, burial and resurrection. (**Romans 6:3-4**)
- The word "Baptize" means "to dip under water." The Greek word βαπτίζω (baptizo) means "to immerse or dip under water."

WHO IS A PROPER CANDIDATE FOR BAPTISM?

- Those who have heard the gospel. (**Acts 18:8**)
- Those who believe in Christ. (**Mark 16:16**)
- Those who want to repent of sin. (**Acts 2:38**)
- Those who will confess Christ to others. (**Acts 2:37**)

SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT BAPTISM

Q. Can a person be a Christian and not be baptized?

A. To say *no* is to presume to be God, but to say *yes* is to say more than the Bible says (**Mark 16:16**). Once a person has said yes to Jesus as their Lord, they forfeit all rights to say no to any of Christ's commands. Baptism is one of those commands.

Q. The Bible says we are not saved by works (**Ephesians 2:9**). Isn't baptism a work that can't save us?

A. Ephesians 2 does remind us that we are saved by faith, not works, but there are two things to remember: First, baptism is not a work we can do; it is something that must be done to us (**Acts 8:35-39**). Second, faith is more than a mere mental belief that Jesus is real - faith begets obedience, and baptism is an act of obedience. Baptism is submission to Christ as Lord and Master; when we are baptized into Christ, we "put on Christ" and trust Him to represent us before God. (**Galatians 3:27**)

Q. When should a person get baptized?

A. In the book of Acts, the pattern was to be baptized the moment you confess Jesus as Lord and choose to repent and reject sin. (**Acts 8:36-37, Acts 16:31-33**)

Q. Am I ready to be baptized?

A. When you are baptized, you are saying yes to two questions in front of whomever witnesses your baptism: 1) Do you believe Jesus is the Son of God, He died on the cross for your sins, and He rose again to defeat sin and death? 2) Are you prepared to devote yourself to Christ and make Him Lord over every area of your life with no excuses? If you can sincerely say yes to both of those questions, you are ready to be baptized!

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

These are the types of questions used in some Chinese churches to help believers count the cost of being baptized and recognize the commitment into which they are stepping. It is worthwhile to consider these types of questions as you consider your desire to give your life to Christ in baptism.

1. Do you acknowledge that God created all of creation and human beings, and that we humans are made in the image of God?
2. Do you acknowledge that all have sinned, and that the wages of sin is death? Do you acknowledge that Jesus is the only Savior of mankind, and only Jesus can save all sinners? And do you willingly accept Jesus as the Savior of your own life?
3. Do you promise to offer yourselves to Jesus Christ, to recognize him as Lord and Savior, to follow his example, to love the Lord God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to love others as yourselves, according to that which he has spoken?

4. Do you acknowledge the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit in your life, that the Holy Spirit illuminates, guides, and moves you to accept Jesus as your Savior? Are you willing, after your baptism, to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit and to walk in obedience to God's will?
5. Do you acknowledge that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and the standard for every Christian, according to which we should conduct ourselves? Following your baptism, are you willing to regularly read the Bible, to love the Bible, and to follow the teachings of the Bible?
6. Do you promise to often make use of such spiritual practices as prayer, Scripture study, meditation, and church worship to grow closer to the Lord God?
7. Upon your baptism, you will be a member of the Lord's church, the body of Christ. Are you willing, after receiving baptism, to love the church as you love your own family, to participate in the ministry of the church, and together with the brothers and sisters of the church, to build the Lord's church together, and to increase the glory of God's name on the earth?
8. Do you promise through your words, deeds, and lives to bear witness to that which is true faith and to invite others into your faith through evangelism and discipleship?

Asian Access, a Christian missions agency in South Asia, listed a series of questions that missionaries must ask new believers who are considering baptism. These are the seven questions they ask to help determine a new convert's readiness to follow Christ:

1. Are you willing to leave home and lose the blessing of your father?
2. Are you willing to lose your job?
3. Are you willing to go to the village and those who persecute you, forgive them, and share the love of Christ with them?
4. Are you willing to give an offering to the Lord?
5. Are you willing to be beaten rather than deny your faith?
6. Are you willing to go to prison?
7. Are you willing to die for Jesus?

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Baptism doesn't make your life easier. In fact, it makes the devil angry and unleashes spiritual warfare into your life...

COUNTING THE COST

Read Luke 14:26-33

What is Jesus trying to express here? What will following Jesus cost you? Are you willing to endure that cost?

What do you want to leave behind in the waters of baptism?

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE BAPTIZED...

You do not need any special clothing or a special appointment to be baptized; just come.

During a worship service, at the end of the sermon, you may come forward at the close of the sermon, as we sing during our invitation time, and one of our ministers or elders can help you. You can also speak with a church leader at any time and express your desire to give your life to Christ in baptism.

If you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and you are ready to die to sin and give your life to Christ, we encourage you to obey the Lord today. There is no reason to delay. If you wait until you are "perfect," you'll never feel "good enough!"

B



BURIAL IN WATER

Acts 8:36-38

A



**ADDED TO THE
KINGDOM OF GOD**

John 3:3-9

P



PUT ON CHRIST

Gal 3:26-27

T



TAKES AWAY SINS

Acts 22:19, Acts 2:38

I



INTO CHRIST

Romans 6: 3-4

S



SAVES

1 Peter 3:20-21

M



MAKES DISCIPLES

Matt. 28:19-20