

## **Believer's Baptism**

At Grace, we typically practice believer's baptism, which is a public profession of faith by youth or adults. When he/she is old enough to make a decision on their own to decide to follow Jesus. We encourage parents to determine at what point their child is able to make the decision to follow Jesus.

At Grace, it is our typical practice to not baptize infants, as they are not able to make a heartfelt and rational choice to follow Jesus. We do offer a baby dedication service through which parents are vowing to raise their child in the ways of Jesus.

As a part of the Evangelical Covenant Church, we do affirm infant baptism.

## **Should I be Re-Baptized?**

“If I was baptized as an infant, should I be re-baptized?”

We encourage adults to make a personal pledge to follow God through the baptism ceremony. This act does not reject what your parents did for you.

If you were immersed as an adult in another church you do not need to be re-baptized as long as you understood the commitment you made to follow Jesus.

## **Are You Ready to Take the Next Step?**

If so, talk to Pastor Dave or one of the others on staff, and we'll determine a date to celebrate baptisms at an upcoming Sunday service.

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# Baptism

**Baptism** is a public profession of your faith in Jesus Christ. It is about “going public” with your faith, and it’s the next step after your salvation.

**Romans 6:4:** “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.”

## What is Baptism?

Baptism literally means to “dip under water.” It carries the picture of clothing being dipped or immersed into a dye. A cloth is dipped into a vat long enough to soak in the color of the dye. Once this process is done the cloth is pulled out of the vat now resembling the color of the dye.

When Jesus died on the cross, His blood was shed for mankind. His blood cleansed sin’s curse. Baptism is a symbol demonstrating that a believer in Jesus has been buried in Christ, raised to a new life in Him, and desires to grow to become more like Him.

**2 Corinthians 5:17:** “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”

When a believer in Jesus Christ gets baptized, he is proclaiming a commitment to follow Jesus as Lord. It demonstrates a washing away and repentance from sin. Baptism is a sign to others that one’s allegiance is pledged to God, not self. It identifies one with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection. A believer does this in order to take on the likeness and

attitude of Jesus - just like dye colors garments. When one is baptized he is choosing to take on the character and traits of Jesus.

**Key Point** - *Baptism does not make you a believer, it demonstrates that you already believe. It is important to understand that baptism does not “save” you. You are “saved” only by your faith in Jesus.*

## Baptism is an outward sign of an inward commitment.

**Ephesians 2:8-9:** For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast.”

## Why is Baptism Important?

Baptism is important because it symbolizes or proclaims what Jesus has done in your life. It is a sign or covenant distinguishing a believer. The old sinful life is buried and the new life - abundant, eternal life, the life Jesus Christ offers in God (John 10:10), is made alive inside you! When one is brought out of the water at baptism, it symbolizes this new life with Christ.

When you are baptized, it demonstrates your old sinful nature being buried; it no longer has control over you. Now you are in Christ. Jesus Christ is your new life; He gave you the Holy Spirit to help you walk in His ways. You receive your new life at the time of your salvation. Baptism simply demonstrates publicly that inner conversion and desire to live for the Lord.

## When Should I be Baptized?

As soon as you have decided to receive Christ into your life, and when you understand what baptism is

What it demonstrates, you can and should be baptized. There is no reason to delay. If you wait until you are “perfect” you will never be ready.

## Water Baptism

“Why do we baptize by full immersion in water?”

Full immersion in water best illustrates the meaning that the Apostle Paul describes in Romans 6:1-7.

As we stand in the water we make a promise or a vow to God to die to our old ways. Going under the water symbolized uniting with or joining Jesus in burial.

Coming up out of the water symbolizes a new life of union with Jesus. We are raised from the grave of water. The new life does not mean that all of a sudden everything is different, but that we have chosen a new direction - one of following Jesus.

## A Wedding Ceremony

Baptism is a vow or promise (1 Peter 3:21) to God. It is a promise that brings us into a formal, versus casual, relationship with God. It is very much like the wedding ceremony - only a spiritual wedding!

One of Jesus’ favorite pictures of the church (those who follow Jesus) is that of a bride, with Jesus being the bridegroom. Baptism is the chosen way to say our “vows” to Jesus. One of the things we ask of those who are being baptized is this:

“Do you promise to follow Jesus with all your heart, for all the days of your life?”

Baptism is a promise, or vow, to follow Jesus to the best of our ability until death - just like the vows of marriage.