

## What is Baptism?

Baptism is a necessary step in your spiritual journey of faith in Christ. Baptism does not make you a believer. It is simply an obedient response and expression of your faith and commitment to Christ. Every example we see in the Bible demonstrates that first a person commits to believe in Christ and then he or she is baptized as an expression of that belief.

## What Is The Meaning Of Baptism?

It illustrates Christ's death, burial and resurrection.

- *“For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day...” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)*
- *“Having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.” (Colossians 2:12)*

## Why be Baptized?

To follow Christ's example.

- *Jesus said, “Let it be so now, it is proper for us to do this (be baptized) to fulfill all righteousness.” (Matthew 3:15)*

To follow Christ's commandment.

- *“Jesus said, ‘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.’” (Matthew 28:19)*

To demonstrate our faith.

- *“...many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized.” Acts 18:8*

## Who Should Be Baptized?

Every person who believes in Christ should be baptized. Believers realize their sin separates them from God. They conclude that Jesus Christ's death on the cross bridges the gap between them and God. Having decided to trust Christ alone for their salvation, they follow Christ in baptism as a symbol of their new life in Christ.

## Why Be Baptized By Immersion?

Because Jesus was baptized that way.

- *“As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water.” (Matthew 3:16a)*
- *“As Jesus was coming up out of the water...” (Mark 1:10)*

Every Baptism in the Bible was by immersion.

- *e.g. “Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water...” (Acts 8:38–39)*

\*The word “baptize” means “to dip or immerse.”

It best symbolizes a burial and resurrection.

- *“Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 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.” (Romans 6:3–4)*

## When Should I Be Baptized?

As soon as you have believed in Christ for salvation.

- *“But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”*  
(Acts 8:12)

If you have not experienced baptism as a believer, even though you may have previously been baptized, the full meaning and significance of baptism has yet to take place in your life. We strongly encourage you to be baptized as a true believer in Christ.

## Should I Be Baptized Immediately After Salvation?

The Bible teaches that baptism should follow your decision to become a believer. There is no reason to delay. If you wait until you are “good” enough, you will never feel ready for baptism. Since baptism is not a part of your salvation but a symbol of it, it is ok to wait until the next scheduled baptism.

## What About Children?

The New Testament shows no example of baptism when the person did not request it. All instances of baptism follow an individual’s decision to trust Christ alone for their salvation (*Acts 2:41, 8:12, 10:47–48*). At Westwood we wait until the child is old enough to believe and understand the true meaning of repentance before we baptize them. Once a child makes a decision for Christ and there is evidence of understanding, we gladly baptize them as a symbol of their faith in Christ.

## What About Infant Baptism?

In the Bible we find parents bringing children to Jesus. He held them and prayed for them and told us to welcome them. But he did not baptize them, and he did not tell anyone to baptize them. Baptism is the public profession of salvation (as the Bible teaches), and only people who have received salvation by personal faith should experience baptism.

## Is Baptism Necessary to Become a Member of Westwood?

Yes, and this means baptism by immersion. Our heart’s desire is to simply obey the clear teaching of God’s Word. So even if you were baptized as an infant or by some other means (such as sprinkling), your baptism today represents obedience to Christ’s command for all those who come to faith in Him.

## When Do Baptisms Take Place?

We love to have baptisms during our Sunday morning worship services so our church family can celebrate with you. It’s a great encouragement and public testimony to others. We set aside the second Sunday of every month for baptism during our morning worship service.

## **Who Can Baptize Me?**

Although the Bible doesn't restrict the right to baptize to any particular person, as an act of worship and participation in the church, our senior pastor or another member of our pastoral ministry typically performs baptism at Westwood.

## **How Do I Register?**

Register online at [www.westwoodlife.org](http://www.westwoodlife.org) (More Information > Baptism) or on a worship registration card during any Sunday morning worship service. We will contact you to confirm your request and to answer any additional questions.

## **More Questions?**

Baptism is just the beginning of your spiritual journey. We encourage you to attend Starting Point to help you understand how to continue to grow as a Christian and to help you find your place here at Westwood. We will discuss baptism, what we believe, and how to plug in to the life here at Westwood. These classes are offered frequently. To register for these classes, you may call the church office or email [dcook@westwoodlife.org](mailto:dcook@westwoodlife.org).