

Baptism at Cypress Church

What is baptism?

We at Cypress Church understand the Bible to communicate two baptisms. One is the **baptism of the Holy Spirit** that happens when you initially respond in faith to God's offer of the free gift of salvation. So when you prayed to receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord, you were 'baptized' by the Spirit. The Spirit of God bonded Himself to you.

1 Corinthians 3:16 Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?

1 Corinthians 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own,

John 15:4-5 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing

1 John 2:27 But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in him.

Baptism of the Spirit gives Christ's followers guidance (John 16:13), conviction (John 16:8), and insight (John 14:26).

The other baptism the Bible speaks of is a **water baptism**, an act of being immersed and raised up in water. This water baptism is a step of obedience on our faith journey that symbolizes our conversion and new life in Christ. Water baptism does not save us from the ramification of our sin nor does it make us more righteous. Water baptism is an outward expression of an inward response to Jesus. This act of being baptized also identifies us with our fellow believers that we have come to the place where we have placed our trust in Christ alone for our salvation.

Why should I consider getting baptized?

To Follow Christ Example:

Jesus didn't need to the gift of salvation because He is without sin, yet as an example He chose to be baptized.

Mark 1:9-11 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

To be an Obedient Follower of Jesus:

Water baptism is an act of faith and obedience to the commands of Christ.

Matthew 28:19-20 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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

To Publically Declare Faith in Jesus:

Baptism declares you are a follower of Jesus. It is a public confession of your faith in, and commitment to, Jesus Christ. It is the step after salvation through repentance and faith, and is an important foundation for Christian life.

Acts 2:38 And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:13 For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

What is the meaning and significance of baptism?

A Symbol of our Move From Death to Life:

Baptism is a symbol of Christ's burial and resurrection. Our stepping into the water during baptism identifies us with Christ's death on the cross, His burial in the tomb, and His resurrection from the dead.

Colossians 2:12-14 Having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

A Symbol of our Brand New Life:

Baptism is a symbol of new life as a Christian. We bury the 'old life' and we rise to walk in a 'new life'. Baptism is an illustration of our transformation.

Ephesians 4:22-23 ... to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Baptism is like a wedding ring, it is the outward symbol of the commitment made in our heart, a commitment that has to be followed through and lived out on a daily basis. Baptism shows the world that you love, trust, and have put your hope in Christ. Married couples wear their wedding rings to show other their love, devotion, and commitment to each other. Baptism for the follower of Jesus shows our love, devotion, and commitment to Christ. In marriage there is a transition from individuals to a couple and the oneness God calls for all married couples (Mark 10:7-9).

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.
Romans 6:4 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.

Baptism does not make someone a believer (follower of Jesus). It shows that they already are one! Baptism does not 'save' anyone; only faith in Christ does that.

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Who should be baptized?

Every person who has decided to believe in Christ should be baptized. When Paul writes to the believers in Rome, he assumes that all of them have been baptized (Romans 6). The one requirement for baptism is belief in Christ!

Acts 2:41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

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

We believe in baptizing children when they are old enough to understand what it means to receive Jesus and make a personal declaration of their belief. We do dedicate children, but this is not baptism. Rather, a child dedication is a public commitment of the parents to raise their children to know the Lord and live life His way.

When are we to be baptized?

Believers in the New Testament were baptized on the same day God saved them. As soon as a person decides to believe in Christ, they can be, and are encouraged to be baptized.

Acts 8:35-38 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?" And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.

How are we to be baptized?

At Cypress Church and with our network of Branch Churches we mostly follow the example of Jesus who was baptized by being and immersed in water. Actually the word "baptize" comes from a Greek word (the original language most of the New Testament was written in) which means "to immerse or dip under water".

Matthew 3:16 And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water...

Acts 8:38-39 And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water...

On occasion we do baptize by sprinkling or some other forms. This is mostly due to medical reasons. The ceremony is as public as possible so all may celebrate the commitment the new life in Jesus.

If you would like to be baptized here, we would love to celebrate with you! To learn more and schedule a date to be baptized, please contact our church office (714-952-3001) or email Pastor Kerry at Kerry@cypresschurch.net