

Baptism at Crossway

Baptism by immersion, after accepting Christ as personal Savior, is an act of obedience that symbolizes the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ and is a testimony to one's death to sin and resurrection to new life. It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with Christ and the Church, which is the body of Christ.

*From our Statement of Faith
Crossway Christian Church*



What Exactly is Baptism?

The word "baptism" as it appears in the Bible means immersion (the process of submersion in water followed by emergence from the water). In ancient times, the word was used to describe ships at sea that had sunk under the water. Even in the New Testament this word is also used for the washing of cups and pitchers.

The New Testament was originally written in Greek. When the Greek word 'baptizo' is used in the New Testament, our English word "immerse" fits nicely every time. New Testament scholars agree that the baptism of the Bible is immersion. The following examples from the Bible support that understanding; please note the descriptions of the baptisms – "down into the water" and "came up out of the water.":

"As soon as Jesus was baptized, He came up out of the water..." Matthew 3:16.

"Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.
When they came up out of the water..." Acts 8:37, 38.

Who Should Be Baptized?

Baptism in the Bible always followed understanding and trust. When someone understood the good news of Jesus and put their trust in him, he/she was baptized. Therefore, if you understand the good news of Jesus and you have put your trust in him, then you are ready to be baptized. For more information on Children and Baptism, please see that particular column.

What is the Significance of Baptism?

Baptism is the outward expression of an inward miracle. It is a visible, tangible, physical expression of what is happening, or has happened, inside us spiritually. Our baptism is a picture seen by others revealing what Christ is doing within us. The Bible provides three images that bring light to the meaning of baptism.

- "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 (see also Colossians 2:12).

We are identifying with Jesus' experience and demonstrating outwardly in our baptism that:

We are dying to our old life of disobedience.
We are burying that old life of
disobedience. We rise to live the new life
led by Christ.

- "...For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." Galatians 3:27.

We are demonstrating by our baptism that we are: Taking off the "old clothes" of our past, and putting on "new clothes" of how Jesus would live.

We put on Jesus' values and His priorities. We surrender to Jesus' way. We make Him the Leader of our lives, That means - "I'm no longer in charge...Jesus is."

Why Should I be Baptized?

Because Jesus was baptized. He is our model and our example for how to live life. Jesus said it was the right thing to do and John baptized Him. Immediately afterward God expressed how pleased He was with Jesus' actions (Matthew 3:13-17).

To mark a transition in life. Jesus' baptism, mentioned above, marked a transition in his life from carpentry to the ministry that he had been sent to begin. Baptism marks a transition in our lives as well. Baptism should mark a transition to a life of greater trust and service.

To obey Jesus. Jesus commanded baptism. After his resurrection and before his ascension to heaven, Jesus left final instructions to his followers (which includes us). In those instructions he commanded that people who become his followers should be baptized (Matthew 28:18-20).

Baptism was an integral part of the early church. The example of the early church in the book of Acts provides a clear understanding that baptism was experienced by those who were putting their trust in Jesus. The book of Acts provides numerous examples of the first Christians being baptized (Acts 2:41; 8:12, 34-39; 9:18; 22:11,16; 10:47,48; 16:13-15; and 16:33,34). Note that although each situation varied in some aspects, all who were baptized expressed belief in Jesus and were baptized immediately. Baptism was an important part of their new life in Christ.

Baptism links us with other Christians. Countless numbers of Christians have been baptized into Christ since the beginning of the church. Our baptism links us to a community of faith around the world and throughout history.

Baptism is a declaration. Because it is a way to communicate to others your commitment to, and trust in, Jesus Christ. Though it may seem a little intimidating to be involved in such a public act, this special experience draws all who witness it closer to God.

Baptism and Children?

Crossway practices baptism by immersion for those who have put their trust in Jesus. This was the pattern for those who were baptized in the New Testament. Babies are not able to understand the story of Jesus and put their trust in him. Therefore, Crossway does not practice infant baptism. Crossway does celebrate new births once a year at a Parent and Baby Dedication Service.

Since Crossway does not baptize infants, parents occasionally ask about the appropriate age at which their child should be baptized. It is true that children can trust Jesus in ways appropriate to their various stages of development (ages). This trust should be nurtured and developed primarily by their parents and supplemented by the church at every age.

Baptism, however, carries a great deal of symbolism and meaning behind the act. In short, it is a declaration that trust has been placed in Jesus and that one is a Christ-follower. It is identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, as well as identification with the church.

Research suggests that children do not cognitively grasp symbolism and the meanings behind symbols until roughly 8-10 years of age. Therefore, the Elders of Crossway strongly encourage children to be at least 8-10 years of age before being baptized. It is our belief that by waiting until at least that time, baptism will be

much more meaningful to both the child and the parents. It will also leave a greater imprint upon the child's heart and soul.

There is no reason to limit or delay a child's spiritual development prior to that age just because the act of baptism has not taken place. There are many more aspects to a child's spiritual development than just baptism. Parents should be nurturing their child's faith in various ways so that baptism will be the natural course as the child gets older. Finally, if the parent is an immersed believer in Jesus, it is our hope that they will baptize their child when that exciting day does come.

Other FAQ's

What if I was "sprinkled" as a child or adult?

Because of the Bible's teaching of baptism by immersion, we ask those who have been sprinkled to be immersed. This does not invalidate the importance of what parents or spiritual mentors might have done for us. It is simply the next step in our spiritual journey. Immersion is a decision we get to make to obey and follow Jesus.

If I was immersed at another church, do I need to get re-baptized?

No. We are immersed into Christ and not into a particular local church. If you have been immersed into Christ there is no need to be re-baptized.

Who should baptize me?

Any baptized Christian may have the privilege of baptizing another. We encourage you to have the person who has impacted your journey to/with Christ perform the baptism. Of course our staff is available to perform baptisms for any believer.

How can I participate?

Contact the church office to speak with someone about being baptized.