

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT BELIEVERS BAPTISM?

1. IT'S AN OUTWARD SYMBOL OF AN INTERNAL ACTION

1. **Baptism expresses union with Christ** in his death and resurrection. And the clearest teaching on this is found in Romans 6:3–4, where it says this: “Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?” So, you hear the idea of unity there. “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.”
2. **Symbol of New Life:** Baptism symbolizes the death of your old self and the resurrection to a new life in Christ. It represents a cleansing from sin and a new beginning in your relationship with God.

2. IT'S A PUBLIC DECLARATION OF FAITH IN JESUS

Baptism is a visible act that communicates your faith in Jesus Christ to others. It's a way to confess your faith before the church and the world.

We see this element of baptism when those who heard Peter preach on Pentecost were convicted of their sin, they asked him what to do, and he urged them to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:37–38). And then we read, “So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls” (Acts 2:41).

Receiving the word and being baptized went hand in hand. All those who embraced the gospel were baptized, and only those who embraced the gospel were baptized.

3. IT'S A COMMITMENT TO BE PART OF THE CHURCH

Baptism is a public commitment to the church, joining you with other believers and marking you as a member of God's family. It's like putting on the colours of sports team you support.

Pastor John Piper puts it like this: “Faith unites us to Christ; baptism symbolizes the union.” An analogy would be saying **“With this ring I thee wed” at a wedding. When couples say that, they don’t mean that the ring or the act of putting a ring on a finger is what makes them married. It is a *symbol* of the promise they are making, but the covenant-making vows make the marriage.** So it is with faith and baptism.

4. IT'S A SYMBOL OF SPIRITUAL ASSURANCE

While not necessary for salvation, baptism can strengthen your assurance of salvation by giving you a “good conscience” toward God.

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.

John 3:5 - Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Mark 16:16 - Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

1 Peter 3:18-22 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, v19 through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison v20 who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only

a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, v21 and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also--not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, v22 who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand--with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

5. **IT'S A WAY TO BE OBEDIENT TO THE COMMAND OF CHRIST**

Why should you get baptized? To obey Christ's command. Which command? The one he gives us in Matthew 28:19. Let's look at this verse in context:

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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." (Matt. 28:18–20)

6. **IT'S AN OCCASION FOR A JOYOUS CELEBRATION**

Oftentimes when people profess faith in Christ, they do so in the quiet of their home with their parents or through the counsel of a trusted friend. Even when it's done in church through the preaching of a pastor, that decision is usually made in the heart of the person without any visible display. Baptism, on the other hand, is almost always public with invitations to friends and family to come and witness the wonderful things God has done in this person's life. Like the addition of a newborn into the life of an extended family, the baptism of God's children brings great joy to their spiritual family as they celebrate this new life.

7. **IT'S AN WAY TO PREACH WITHOUT SAYING A WORD**

Baptism declares the name of Jesus. Right before Jesus ascended into heaven, He gave His disciples their marching orders. These were His final words to them.

"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" (Matt. 28:19–20, emphasis added).

God gave Christians very specific instructions:

- Go.
- Make disciples.
- **Baptize those disciples.**
- Teach them to follow God's Word.

Because baptism is a symbol of God's grace and because it is a way to publicly pledge our allegiance to Him, Christ commands His disciples to be baptized and baptize others in His name.

8. **IT'S A WAY TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS**

Jesus set an example: Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22).

And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:16–17).

Jesus was baptized. I want to be like Jesus. That is good enough for me. How about you? Have you been baptized?