

Why should I be baptized?

Being baptized is something every believer is commanded to do. After his resurrection Jesus commissioned his disciples, *"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you"* (Matthew 28:19-20).

Baptism is a public declaration of our faith in Jesus Christ and of our decision to follow and serve him as Lord, and as such, it serves as a sign of our entrance into the fellowship of his church. It is also a very meaningful and powerful symbol of what God has provided for us in Christ: the forgiveness of our sins and the promise of everlasting life.

What is baptism?

Our word *to baptize* comes from the Greek meaning "to soak, immerse, or overwhelm (with water)." There are a variety of ways of baptizing, each of them reaching back to the early days of the Christian church. Perhaps the earliest and most meaningful form is *submersion*, in which the believer is momentarily submerged in water,

symbolizing his dying and rising with Christ.

What happens in baptism?

Baptism is an outward sign of what has already taken place within us when we received Christ. It is a symbol of much more than a washing away of sin, but of an actual union with Christ.

In going under the water, the believer is joining in Jesus' death on the cross and thus crucifying the "old self" with its bondage to sin and separation from God, no longer having to live in sin but freed to live for Christ. In coming up out of the water, the believer is uniting with Jesus' resurrection from the grave, rising to new eternal life with him.

As a symbol of our repentance, baptism serves as a clear point of departure between our old and new lives: we are renouncing our former way of life and turning back to God, resolved no longer to live as slaves to sin, but as slaves of Christ. *"You are not your own; you were bought at a price"* (1Corinthians 6:19-20).

"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 have a new life... because anyone who has died has been freed from sin... In the same way count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Romans 6:3-4,7,11).

Should I be re-baptized?

Baptism can be a very meaningful and powerful point in the life of every disciple. If you were baptized in infancy or at any time prior to your receiving Christ, we urge you to be baptized again as a believer.

If you were baptized as a believer in another church or denomination, you need not be re-baptized even if you have been away from church for a while. You may need to recommit your life to Christ, but the Lord has not forgotten your baptism.

What to expect on the day of your baptism:

Everyone being baptized will be asked to bring appropriate bathing attire, a t-shirt cover-up, and a towel to the baptism event. There is a required baptism class that you will need to attend.

A small baptismal pool is “hidden” behind a wood panel on the right side of the stage area of our RVC sanctuary. Each person will be called forward individually to enter the pool where one of our pastors will pray and baptize you by quickly dunking you in the pool.

IF YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE AT (516) 678-7888.



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