

EXPLORING BAPTISM

Going all in with Jesus

A BAPTISM GUIDE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



Let's Explore!



It's great news that you want to find out more about baptism.



Following Jesus is the best thing you can do. Jesus himself was baptised, and he invites everyone who wants to belong in God's family to be baptised too. As a follower of Jesus, you are invited to make baptism part of your story.

So let's explore baptism together. First, we'll think a little about why you want to be baptised and what you already know about it, as well as looking at what baptism is and isn't. Then we'll look at the story of baptism, and how it fits into God's story and your story.

Why do you want to be baptised?

What do you already know about baptism?



What Baptism Is

When you get baptised, it's a way of telling everyone that you love Jesus and want to follow Him. Some people describe it as a 'public declaration' – showing and telling everyone that you're trusting in Jesus as your Saviour (the one who puts things right between us and God), and Lord (the one who is the King of our lives).



Baptism comes after you have made the decision for yourself to accept God's gift of forgiveness – the forgiveness Jesus made possible by dying for our sins and coming back to life again. He went down – and came back up. Baptism acts that out – going down into the water and coming back up. It shows how you are 'joining in' Jesus' death and new life and receiving it for yourself.

Jesus told his followers that they should get baptised – it's an opportunity to show that you have decided to live your life for him and with him – on his team! Baptism is an all in thing, you go all in to the water. And it shows others that we are all in for Jesus.



Getting baptised is letting everyone know the choice you have made to be one of Jesus' followers. Remember, following Jesus doesn't just mean being interested in him, like you might 'follow' a sporting team. Following Jesus means being on his team and playing life his way. It means really listening to what he teaches (in the Bible) and doing what he taught us.

That might sound hard, and sometimes it is. But it's what is best for us and for the world. And best of all, Jesus doesn't just tell us what to do, but promises to be with us and to help us by his Holy Spirit living in us.

So baptism shows people on your outside something that has happened on your inside – in your heart. If you've said 'Yes!' to God the Father, to belonging in his family; 'Yes!' to Jesus to be your Saviour and Lord; and 'Yes!' to the Holy Spirit to be God's presence in and with you – then it's great to show everyone by being baptised.

What Baptism Isn't



Baptism is not about showing that you're 'good enough', 'know enough', or have 'done enough'. Getting baptised is not saying 'I have reached this level – see everyone how good I am?' No, when we get baptised it is about what Jesus has done for us and the life he invites us into.



Baptism is not something you should be made or forced to do – it is so important that it is your choice. Getting baptised will probably make some people very happy. But don't do it just to make them happy, if in your heart you don't really want to follow Jesus.



Baptism is not just something private between you and God. It's a wonderful celebration, and your church family will want to be a part of it and celebrate with you. It is important to let everyone know the choice you have made to say yes to Jesus. This is why baptism usually doesn't happen at home with one or two people. You are part of the family of Jesus followers and so when you are baptised it is important the church is part of that. You belong with them and they belong with you.

Baptism In God's Story

What does the Bible say about baptism?

- Jesus was baptised (Matthew 3:13-17, Matthew 28:18-20)
- New believers in the early church were baptised (Acts 2:36-42, Acts 8:26-40, Acts 9:1-19 & Acts 22:6-16, Acts 10:44-48, Acts 16:11-15)
- All believers should be baptised (Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:16, Acts 2:37-39)
- Baptism is a great witness to friends and family and a public confession of our faith (Matthew 10:32, Romans 10:9-10)
- It is a significant life event. You'll always be able to think back and remember your decision to follow Jesus (Romans 6:4)



Read together Mark 1:1-13

Watch this video to see how baptism is part of God's story.



From these verses what do you discover about God?

From these verses what do you discover about people?

What do these verses make you think about baptism?

The Story of Baptism

Jesus told his disciples to go and make more disciples, all round the world, baptising them and teaching them how to live his way. You can read how this quickly got started in the book of Acts.

Some churches began baptising every new baby, because they wanted everyone to belong to Jesus. But others were convinced that everyone is invited but no-one forced into God's kingdom – so baptism should only be for people who have made their own decision to follow Jesus. These people were given the nick-name Baptists.

Today, Baptist churches can be found all around the world, and have been baptising and discipling people for hundreds of years! We baptise by full immersion, all the way under the water (unless perhaps someone has a disability).



So baptism is your response to God's love. It shows others you fully entrust yourself into Jesus' hands. It lets everyone know that you believe Jesus is the one who puts things right between us and God. It demonstrates that he is the King of your life, your Saviour and Lord. And it shows that you are receiving the Holy Spirit and the new, full life that he offers.



Find out about the history of baptism and different ways it's been done.



Baptism and Your Story

Baptism is a way to show the world that you follow Jesus. Telling the story of how you found out about God and decided to follow Jesus is important. We call that a 'testimony'. Talking about baptism is great, too. If a friend asked you what baptism means, what might you say?



As part of your baptism, you can choose to share your testimony with the people who are there. If you don't want to do this yourself, you may want to ask someone to read what you have prepared, or pre-record, it or just have it written down for you as a reminder of why you are being baptised.

Remember, your testimony is powerful and can be really helpful to others. Here are three things that are great to include in your God story:

My story of choosing to live the Jesus way.

This could be specific stories about what life was like for you before you chose Jesus. Or, if you have grown up in a family who loves Jesus, it could be about what has brought you to the place where you've made this choice for yourself - to follow Jesus for the rest of your life. You could include details of the time you said yes to Jesus.

How Jesus has already made a difference in your life.

Jesus said, "I have come that you may have life, and have life to the full" (John 10:10). Fullness of life can be expressed in your attitudes, values, actions, relationships, and how God gives you peace, strength, purpose, friendship, joy, contentment, guidance, hope etc.

Share an example of how Jesus gives you a full life.

Why I want to be baptised.

Finish by sharing why you want to be baptised.



Practical Questions About Baptism



Now's a good time to talk with your pastor, family or leaders about some of the practical things for your baptism:

Who will baptise you?

What should you bring?

What should you wear?

Where and what time should you arrive?

Should you invite someone to be a 'towel holder' standing nearby?

Who could pray for you?

How do baptisms happen at your church?

Will you be asked any questions during your baptism?

And any other questions you have.

“Baptism is your response to God's love!”



Your Ongoing Story

Baptism is something you only do once – it's your big, all-of-life YES to Jesus. But you will find that as you continue to grow up, there are more things in your life that you need to say yes to Jesus about (how you work, what you do with your money, the way you love other people, and much more). Being a Jesus follower is an ongoing choice to let Jesus be the King of your life. But making those choices or even coming back to them doesn't mean you will need to be baptised again. **Your baptism is one very special moment in your story so celebrate and remember it!**



How could your baptism be made significant and special?

Your ongoing Story

As you go forward in life, following Jesus, here are some really important things to remember:



Being a Jesus follower is learning about God and his big story **and encountering Jesus** in worship and prayer within our faith community (church).



Being a Jesus follower is about putting his teaching into action – responding with compassion, loving and serving others and finding a space to use the gifts God has given you for the benefit of others. As you put your faith into action you see the power of God firsthand.



Being a Jesus follower is done as part of a community, we need companions for the journey. Those who are older, those who are younger and those the same age.

As you begin to connect this moment of your baptism to your life long following Jesus, it would be great for you to continue talking with someone about how to follow and represent Jesus well. Maybe you could meet up a few times over the next term. You could spend time looking at all the important things about following Jesus together, perhaps read the Bible together.

Here are some ideas of passages to start reading together – the gospel of Mark, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, the story of Joseph in Genesis. As you read together you might like to talk about what the passage says about God, what it says about people and what stands out to you or what questions does it raise for you?)



Being a Jesus follower includes markers along the road; things like your baptism, but other big significant moments and events that you can look back on and see how God has been at work. Make a choice to be part of things that help you trust God: things like camps or special ministry events where you will see God at work and experience Him in new and different ways.



What are some ways you can
put those four things in place
in your life?

“Baptism is going
all in for Jesus!”





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