



Take the Plunge: Baptism Sunday!

“Change your life. Turn to God and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, so your sins are forgiven. Receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” ~ Peter, Acts 2, The Message

Put A Ring On It

Baptism – an outward symbol of an internal spiritual reality

Important to Jesus...important to me (Matthew 28:16-20)

Baptism Before Jesus

The Word

Baptizo - to dip, to immerse, to submerge, to make clean with water, bathe to overwhelm

Jewish Ritual Purification (Leviticus 11-15)

The Beginning of Something New (Mark 1:4-11)

John's counter temple baptism pushed against the Jewish practice of the day, by offering cleansing and forgiveness apart from the religious system of ritual and sacrifice.

Jesus' Baptism:

1. Pictures his death and resurrection
2. Foreshadows the importance of baptism to those who will follow him
3. Public demonstration of his identification with those he had come to love and save
4. Affirmed from heaven

The Jesus Movement

Baptism is an integral symbol of our identification with Jesus and our spiritual family!

An individual decision, exercised in community

See: *1 Corinthians 12:13; Acts 2:41, 8:12, 8:26-40, 9:18, 16:13-15*

Our 'Not So Secret Agenda' – Baptism!

Common Objections

1. I've already been baptized as an infant, do I really need to do it again?
2. I'm worried about offending and insulting my family.
3. It feels like The Meeting House is making a big deal about this – I thought we weren't about rules!
4. Everyone already knows that I'm following Jesus, why do I need to take this step?

Now for the Good Stuff – Dunk Time!



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Home Church Questions...

HANGOUT [Warming Up to the Topic]

1. What has been your own experience, if any, with Christian baptism?
2. After briefly reviewing this week's message, share one thing that most challenged, convicted or encouraged you.

HEAR [Listening to God through Scripture]

3. Read the story of one person's baptism in **Acts 8:26-40**.
 - a) What verse stands out to you the most from this passage? Why?
 - b) Would you describe the Ethiopian as being 'religious'? Why? What lessons can we learn from this?
 - c) What do **verses 30-31** tell us about the role God wants us to play in evangelism (and in helping people understand the Bible's message)?
 - d) Although Phillip took the initiative to instruct the Ethiopian, who takes the initiative in the resulting baptism? Is there a lesson in this?
 - e) See **verse 36**. Why did they need to find enough water to be baptized in?
 - f) What about the baptism of the Ethiopian points toward the community aspect of Christian baptism?

HUDDLE [Making It Personal and Praying Together]

4. Notice that with the Spirit's encouragement, Phillip takes the initiative in this conversation. Have you ever taken the initiative in talking to someone else about Jesus? If so, what was it like? If not, why not?
5. Do you have next steps to take regarding baptism or evangelism? Pray for each other regarding this.

December 29, 2013 | Matt Vincent | @Matty_Vinny

Quotes...

Baptism is how we dedicate ourselves to God after being newly created through Christ.

— Justin Martyr, Early Christian Leader

Baptism then, is not necessary for salvation. But it is necessary if we are to be obedient to Christ, for he commanded baptism for all who believe in him."

— Wayne A. Grudem, Theologian and Professor

Baptism is rich in meaning. It suggests cleansing. When you are a disciple, you understand that you are cleansed by Christ. You understand that Christ died in your place on the cross, paying for your sins, fully forgiving you for all your wrongs.

— Brian McLaren

"Christian living means dying with Christ and rising again. That, as we saw, is part of the meaning of baptism, the starting point of the Christian pilgrimage."

— N.T. Wright, *Simply Christian*

The baptism of believers is a public witness that they have received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and are becoming part of the community of faith. We believe that baptism by immersion symbolizes the believer's submission to Jesus Christ and identification with His death and resurrection.

— Articles of Faith and Doctrine of the Brethren in Christ Church

"Is it possible for an unbaptized believer to be saved? Yes, definitely. Should every believer be baptized? Yes, definitely."

— Max Lucado, Author

"Jesus thus intended to identify himself with John's message and with the revival movement it had created, to enroll as a member of the purified and prepared people of God."

— Matthew, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries