

Congratulations, we are excited about your interest in following Jesus' command and example to be baptized! Our prayer is that this Bible study help you prepare and decide. God bless you!

### 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). Scholars agree that the baptism of the Bible is immersion. The following examples from the Bible substantiate this conclusion:

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

*"Then Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him."* And it says *"when they came up out of the water."* Acts 8:37-38

Note the descriptions of the baptisms - "down into the water," "came up out of the water."

Baptism is the outward expression of the inward miracle of being born again. It is a visible, tangible, physical expression of what is happening inside spiritually. Our baptism is a picture to be seen by others revealing what is happening within us.

Two descriptive word pictures are given in the Bible to explain what happens at baptism.

1. *"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 (see also Colossians 2:1)

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

- a) We are dying to our old life of sin.
- b) We are burying that old life of sin.
- c) And we rise to live the new life.

2. *"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:

- a) taking off our old clothes of our sinful nature and lifestyle,
- b) and putting on new clothes of Jesus' nature and lifestyle.

We put on Jesus' values and His priorities. We surrender to Jesus' way. We make Him Lord of our lives, as well as Savior. That means - I'm no longer the boss of my life. Jesus is.

### Why should I be baptized?

1. Because Jesus was baptized. He is our model and example in everything we think and do. Please read Matthew 3:13-17. Jesus came to John the Baptist at the River Jordan to be baptized. John, however, didn't feel worthy to baptize Jesus, saying that Jesus should instead be baptizing him (John). "Jesus replied, 'Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.'" (v.15) Jesus said it is proper - it is the right thing to do. So John baptized Him. And immediately afterward, God expressed how pleased He was with Jesus' actions. Jesus said baptism was the right thing to do, and then He followed through with action.

2. Jesus commanded it. After His resurrection and before His ascension to heaven, Jesus gave final directions to His followers (which includes us): "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore, 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 28:18-20. See also Mark 16:15,16.

3. Baptism is an integral part of every conversion experience recorded in the book of Acts (which tells about the actions and beliefs of the first Christians and the first churches that formed after Jesus' ascension). Note the following examples of the apostles, their associates, and the first Christians baptized:

- a) Groups of people being baptized – Acts 2:41; 8:12
- b) Paul being baptized - Acts 8:34-39; 9:18; 22:11-16
- c) Cornelius being baptized - Acts 10:47,48
- d) Lydia and her household being baptized - Acts 16:13-1
- e) Philippian jailer and his household being baptized - Acts 16:33,34
- f) Corinthians being baptized - Acts 18:8
- g) Ephesians being baptized - Acts 19:5

Though each situation varied in some aspects, all who were baptized expressed belief in Jesus and were baptized immediately. You see, baptism is a part of becoming Christian. We are not saying that you are lost without baptism; but according to these Scriptural examples, baptism is a part of one's conversion experience.

4. It is a way to witness to others of your belief in Christ and your resulting commitment. Though it may seem scary and humbling to be involved in such a public act of surrender, it translates into a powerful witness to all who view it. Who would you like to invite?

### **How will I know when I am ready?**

You are ready to be baptized: When you believe that Jesus is the Son of God and are ready to receive Jesus as your Savior. When you are ready to repent - ready to turn your life around. When you are ready to put your past behind you and put your life in Jesus' hands. Read Acts 2:38, Colossians 3:5-10, John 1:12,13.

### **Who should baptize me?**

Any Christian may have the privilege of baptizing another person. It would be appropriate for the Christian who led you to belief in Christ or the Christian who is a great influence in your life, the one whom you greatly respect, or a pastor or counselor who is available to baptize you.

### **What steps should I take?**

1. Respond to the invitation during the Sunday worship service. Come forward and share your desire to be baptized with a pastor or prayer counselor.
2. Let a leader, teacher or parent know you want to be baptized. Or come to the Living Room before or after the worship service.
3. On the day of your baptism, bring a swimsuit, shorts, and dark t-shirt.