

"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. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

_Romans 6:4-5

The Importance of Being Baptized.

Why should I be baptized?

1. **To follow the example set by Christ.** Mark 1:9 "At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river." Why was Jesus baptized? In order to save Him? No, He didn't need to be saved. He was perfect. Baptism doesn't save you. It is a symbol of obedience and it's an example that we are to do what He has done.

2. **Because Christ commands it.** Christ commands that every Christian be baptized. "Jesus said, 'Go then to all people every and (1) make them My disciples, (2) baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and (3) teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.'" These are the three things the church is commanded to do: Make disciples -- help people come to know Christ; Baptize them; Help them grow up. Many people think, "I'll be baptized after I've grown up. After I know about the Christian life, then I'll be baptized." No, it's right after you make the decision to follow Christ. Notice the order: You make the disciples, then you baptize them, then you spend the rest of your life growing as a Christian.

3. **It demonstrates that I'm really a believer.** The Bible says, "Many of the people who heard Him believed and were baptized." Baptism doesn't make you a Christian. It just shows that you are a Christian. A wedding ring doesn't make me married, it is a symbol of a commitment that I made that made me married. One day I made a commitment to my wife before God and a bunch of people and I said "I do" and I gave my life to her in front of God for the rest of my life. That commitment is what makes me married, not the ring. If I were to lose this ring, I'd still be married. What this is, is an outward symbol of an inward commitment.

That's what baptism is. Baptism doesn't make you a Christian. It's just an outward symbol of an inward commitment. It is your commitment to Christ that saves you. Baptism just says to the world, "I'm not ashamed to tell the whole world what's happened to me. I've given my life to Christ." The Bible says, "We know that we have come to know Him if we obey His commands." How do you prove you're a Christian? You obey His commands. One of His first commands is, Be baptized.

What is the meaning of baptism? Baptism does two things.

1. **It illustrates Christ's burial and resurrection.** "Christ died for our sins. He was buried and He rose again." the Bible says "For when you were baptized you were buried with Christ and in baptism you were also raised with Christ." At New Life we baptize the way they did in the Bible -- putting people all the way under the water. It is a symbol of a burial and resurrection. Just like Jesus Christ died and was buried in the ground for three days and then rose again.

2. **Baptism illustrates my new life as a Christian.** 2 Corinthians 5:17 "When anyone becomes a Christian, he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun." In the Bible, there was no such thing as a person claiming to be a Christian and not be baptized. It was automatic. You were baptized as soon as you gave your life to Christ.

"By our baptism then, we were buried with Him and shared His death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead so we also may live a new life." Romans 6:4

It doesn't make you a Christian, it shows you already believe.

Why should I be baptized by immersion?

There are lots of ways. There are some churches that sprinkle a little water on your forehead. Some pour a little water. Some dip a little bit. Other churches put you all the way under the water. Why do we believe and practice at New Life that you should be baptized by immersion? Four reasons.

1. **Because Jesus was baptized that way.** We want to do it the way they did it in the Bible. It says "As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water." He went down to the Jordan river. John the Baptist baptized Him in the river. He set the example.

2. **Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion.** Example "Then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. Then they came up out of the water."

3. **That's what the word means.** "Baptize" literally means "dip under water." The Greek word baptize means to dip under water.

4. **It best symbolizes a burial and resurrection.**

Some of you were baptized as children or babies, I'm sure that was very significant for your parents, but you don't even remember it. So it didn't mean anything to you. We've had many people say, when they got older and they accepted Christ, "I want to be baptized the way Jesus commanded, the way Jesus talked about." We're not talking about the baptism of confirmation but a baptism of confession. "I want the world to know I'm a follower of Christ." You can't do that until after you are a follower of Christ.

Who should be baptized? Every person who's believed in Christ. "Those who believed and accepted His message were baptized." Acts 8:13, "Simon himself believed and was baptized." Acts 8:12, "But when they believed Philip as he preached the Good News and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."