



BAPTISM IN WATER

by Immersion

S T H E L E N S

christian life centre

An Elim Pentecostal Church

Why is Baptism in water important?

We believe baptism in water is important because Jesus was baptised. It was Jesus' desire to do everything according to God's will and one of his first acts as he started his ministry was to be baptized, demonstrating how important baptism is!

Then at the birth of the Church, on the day of Pentecost, the first sermon ever preached by the apostle Peter to those who would become the first Christians, included reference to the importance of baptism in water.

Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River. He wanted to be baptized by John. But John tried to stop him. So he told Jesus, "I need to be baptized by you. So why do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be this way for now. It is right for us to do this. It carries out God's holy plan." Then John agreed.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he came up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened. Jesus saw the Spirit of God coming down on him like a dove. A voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him."

[Matthew 3:13-17]

Baptism and Forgiveness

Peter says that repentance should be accompanied by baptism as a sign of commitment to Jesus Christ.

Peter replied, "All of you must turn away from your sins and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Then your sins will be forgiven. You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." [Acts 2:38]

Later in the book of Acts we often find baptism in water linked to conversion and we can see this in the following verses:

☐ Acts 8:12-13 ☐ Acts 9:18 ☐ Acts 10:47 ☐ Acts 16:15 ☐ Acts 16:33 ☐ Acts 18:8

Baptism in water is important for every believer and has been since the earliest days of Christianity.

What does baptism by immersion mean?

The word that the New Testament translates as baptize, or baptism, is the Greek word βαπτίζω (Baptizo), which means to *submerge* or *immerse*.

It was the word used when plunging cloth into a dye to colour it, completely immersing and saturating it so that it took on the colour of the dye. In the same way, baptism in water saturates us in a substance which we use to wash ourselves to get clean. Washing is an expression the Bible uses when it speaks of the difference that Christ makes to our lives.

Going completely under the water and coming up again signified the life of Christ, a new, risen and eternal life. Baptism by immersion reflects our decision to take on the life of Christ and allow him to wash us clean.

Baptism at St Helens Christian Life Centre is a full immersion in a pool of water!

For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was.

[Romans 6:4-5]



IS Baptism necessary to be a Christian?

The short answer to this is, "no". If we look at the thief on the cross beside Jesus, we see that he was told, "today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43) and so clearly he did not need to be baptised, nor did he have the opportunity to be baptised before he died.

However, we should not use this example as an argument to avoid baptism in water as we see throughout Acts that baptism is clearly linked to repentance.

Peter replied, "all of you must turn away from your sins and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ, then your sins will be forgiven.

[Acts 2:38]

It is also clearly linked to our decision to follow Christ. In Acts 19, Paul encounters some believers in Ephesus who have not really heard about Jesus' death and resurrection. They had not realised he was the Christ, the one God has sent to deal with their sin and give them new life. As soon as they received Paul's teaching and believed in Jesus, they were baptised. So should we be!

Paul said, "John baptised people, calling them to turn away from their sins. He told them to believe in the one who was coming after him. Jesus is that one."

After hearing this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus.

[Acts 19:4-5]

Baptism in water is clearly shown in the Bible to be a very important part of our decision to follow Jesus Christ, which should not be ignored.

What is the difference between water and spirit Baptism?

Very briefly, baptism in water publicly demonstrates our decision to receive the life of Christ and follow him.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is how we receive power to live and witness for Jesus. We also need to be filled with the Holy Spirit to receive his gifts and to enable the development of his fruit in our lives.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will be my witnesses.

[Acts 1:8]



Do I need to be baptised in water?

Yes, if:

- † You want to clearly demonstrate your commitment to Christ
- † You desire to let others know about his grace in your life
- † You intend to live for Christ in the world
- † You want to follow Jesus' example
- † You want to follow the example of early Christians
- † You long to receive all the God has got to give you.

Please think carefully and prayerfully about this.
We would love to baptise you at our next baptism service.

May God Bless You



Application for baptism in water

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone No. _____

Email: _____

Church
(if not CLC) _____

Date you
became a
Christian: _____

Please fill in the form and hand in at the Church Office or to a Church Leader
and we will contact you about the next steps.

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