

This is Exciting!

This is such an exciting time in your life! We are honored to be a part of this important decision in your relationship with Jesus. As you follow Jesus' command concerning Water Baptism, we want you to do so understanding the biblical foundation for this life-changing step of growth.

In Acts 8 you can read about Philip's encounter with a man from Ethiopia. Philip took the opportunity to expound upon the Scriptures and introduce the Ethiopian to the saving knowledge of Jesus. While talking, they came upon a body of water, and the man asked if he could be baptized. The New King James version of the Bible says that Philip responded with this prerequisite: *"If you believe with all your heart, you may."*

Before being baptized in water you must come to a place of surrender to Jesus by making Him the Lord and Savior of your life. Your resolve must be similar to the Ethiopian man, *"I believe that Jesus is the Son of God."* Salvation is necessary before taking the next step of Water Baptism. If you have made Jesus the Lord of your life then read on to find out what Water Baptism is about.

Therefore go and make **disciples** of **all nations**, baptizing them in the **name** of **Father** and of the **Son** and of the **Holy Spirit**, and teaching them to **obey everything** I have commanded you.

Matthew 28:19-20

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What Baptism is all about:

Obedience

Jesus left His people with two specific commands that are vital to our growth as Christians. The first is communion (the Lord's Supper) and the second is Water Baptism. He gave the church these sacraments as a reminder of his death and resurrection. Water baptism does not provide salvation, it is only a another step of obedience in the plan of God. You are dying to yourself and coming alive to the power and purpose found in Christ. In a very real sense you are saying "Not my will, but yours."

Identification

In Water Baptism you are identifying with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Romans 6:3-4 attests to this when it says, *"Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were 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."*

When you are submersed into the waters of baptism, you are symbolically, yet very intentionally, dead to your old ways of living - it is buried! As you come up from the water you are made alive to the new life found in Christ. Now that your old life is "dead unto Christ" you want to be sure not to go digging it back up!

Confession

Water Baptism is a public act that renounces sin from your past and professes faith in Christ. You are expressing publicly that Jesus is your Lord and that you are a part of the family of God. Many have referred to baptism as a "outward sign of an inward work." It's a visible and audible confession to your friends, family, and church of the deep work Christ has done in your life. The Book of Acts chapter 10 refers to many individuals that responded to the message of Jesus. During this time the Apostle Peter asked if "anyone could keep these people from being baptized with water." The answer was obviously "no" and therefore they were publicly baptized as an open acknowledgement of Christ as Lord.

Release

Nothing could be greater than a life that is fully alive through Jesus Christ! That happens when you are not trapped in bondage to your sin and guilt. In baptism you are crucifying the sin of your life and coming alive in Christ. There is great joy when you are alive in Christ and dead to sin. Water baptism is a symbolic statement of this new life and marks a point of release into further growth and ministry for you as a believer.

Response

Not only is Water Baptism a Biblical command, but it is also modeled to us by Jesus who himself was baptized as described in the Gospels. He knew the importance of this sacred moment and calls you to the same obedience knowing that it will mark a significant point of blessing for your life.