

BAPTISM

Welcome,

We are so glad that you are considering getting baptized! This class will help you understand the importance of baptism, as well as help you prepare to take this important step in your journey with Jesus.

One of the clearest examples we see of baptism in the Bible is when Jesus himself was baptized.

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"

Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

Matthew 3:13-17



Baptism Information

Who should be baptized?

Those who believed and accepted His message were baptized... Acts 2:41

If I'm not sure I'm a Christian or I struggle with doubts, what should I do?

1. **Admit you are a sinner that needs a Savior.**

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23

2. **Believe- - put your confidence & trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.**

*To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.
John 1:12*

3. **Confess Jesus Christ as your Savior & Lord.**

For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved. Romans 10:9-10

You can take these steps by praying a simple prayer of commitment to God. You can know for sure today by doing what Christ has said to do, by praying this prayer and meaning it in your heart:

"Dear Jesus, thank you for making me and loving me even when I've ignored You and gone my own way. I realize I need you in my life and I'm sorry for my sins. I ask you to forgive me. Thank You for dying on the cross for me. As much as I know how I want to follow you from now on. Please come into my life and make me a new person inside. I accept your gift of salvation. Amen."

Why should I be baptized?

1. **To follow the example set by Jesus.**

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. Matthew 3:13

2. **Because Christ commands it.**

*Jesus said, "Go then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey everything I have commanded you."
Matthew 28:19-20*

3. **It demonstrates that I really am a Christian.**

...many of the people who heard Him believed and were baptized. Acts 18:8

What is the meaning of baptism?

1. It illustrates Christ's death and resurrection.

Christ died for our sins... He was buried...and He rose again. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

2. It illustrates my new life as a Christian.

When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun! 2 Corinthians 5:17

Baptism doesn't make you a believer – it shows that you already believe. Baptism does not “save” you, only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring – it's the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart.

Why be baptized by immersion?

1. Because Jesus was baptized that way.

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

2. Baptism in the Bible was by immersion.

...then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water...Acts 8:38-39

3. It Symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

Christ died for our sins... He was buried...and He rose again. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

When should I be baptized?

As soon as you have believed (or as soon as you realize the importance of being baptized)!

Those who believed...were baptized...that day! Acts 2:41

Then Philip began with the scripture and told him the Good News about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water, and the man said, 'Look, here is water! Why shouldn't I be baptized right now?' Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' The man answered, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' So they went down into the water and Philip baptized him. Acts 8:35-38

COMMUNICATING MY STORY

(Testimony Worksheet)

“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” 1 Peter 3:15

Example: Paul’s testimony – Acts 22:1-21

Before meeting Jesus (Acts 22:1-5)

Paul describes what he thought and did before he became a believer.

Goal: to give specific, yet appropriate, examples of what your life was like (attitudes, needs, and problems) before meeting Christ.

- Remember that examples will establish you as a credible witness in the minds of non-Christians.
- Keep the focus on Jesus.
- Avoid being too explicit or sensational when speaking about your past/sin.

How Paul met Jesus (Acts 22:6-11)

Paul explained how he became a believer.

Goal: To allow the listener to walk away with a clear understanding of how you became a Christian and how they can trust Christ as the payment for their sins.

Be careful not to use clichés and church language. Remember that a non-Christian might not understand terms such as ‘got saved’, ‘FourLaws”, etc.

After Paul met Jesus (Acts 22:12-21)

Paul explained how becoming a believer changed his life.

Goal: to explain specific ways Christ has changed your life – to show that having Christ in your life really does make a difference!

Avoid using general statements such as “I have so much peace now.” Be specific. It is the Holy Spirit’s responsibility to draw someone to Christ, but you want to communicate your story in such a way to show the listener that your life is different and more meaningful with Christ.

Use 1-2 questions from each of the following categories to help you write your testimony.

Before I accepted Christ

1. What was your life like that will relate most to the non-Christian?
2. What did your life revolve around most? What was the source for your security, meaning, or happiness?
3. How did those areas (from question 2 above), let you down?

Note: If you accepted Christ as a young child you probably won't have much to share in this section.

How I met Christ

1. When was the first time you heard the gospel (or when were you exposed to the dynamic faith of someone else)?
2. What were your initial reactions to Jesus?
3. How did your attitudes begin to change?
4. What were the final struggles that went through your mind just before did you accept Christ?
5. Why did you go ahead and accept Christ?

After I Accepted Christ

1. What are some of the specific changes and examples that Jesus has made in your life?
2. Why are you motivated differently now because of Jesus?
3. What would you say to someone who is considering Jesus?

Helpful tips

1. Begin by introducing yourself.
2. Write in the same way you that you speak-make the testimony yours.
3. Practice it until it becomes natural.
4. Consider including a favorite Bible verse.
5. Plan for 2-3 minutes in length when you read your testimony.
6. Choose a theme.
7. Bring a written copy (large enough size to read) to the filming session.

Filming your testimony

The number one fear in America is public speaking. We want to reduce as much anxiety as possible by filming your testimony in advance. This allows you to share your story without having to speak to a large group, try to memorize it, or feel like you have to share it perfectly.

Please use the questions above to help you write out your testimony in preparation for filming it. We typically film testimonies about two weeks prior to the baptism date. We will contact you to schedule a time to film your story at the church.

Baptism Details

Logistics

- Plan to meet in the Worship Center or lobby 30 minutes before the start of the service you are scheduled to be baptized.
- Bring a change of clothes and a towel with you. If you are comfortable doing so, we recommend wearing the clothes you will be baptized in to church with sweat pants and a shirt/jacket. This keeps you from having to change into your baptism clothes. (This is suggested, but not required).
- Baptism clothes. Men, please wear a shorts-style swimsuit or shorts over a swimsuit with a dark shirt. Women, please wear shorts over a swimsuit and a dark shirt. Ensure your baptism clothing is modest.

Who will baptize me?

If you have someone who has played a significant role in your life, especially in your faith journey, we encourage him or her to baptize you. The only requirement is that the person baptizing you must also be a follower of Jesus. We need to know one week prior to your baptism if you'd like someone other than a pastor to baptize you. Please let us know about your preference for whom you would like to baptize you by emailing: frontdesk@efcb.org.

Invitations

Being baptized is a significant milestone in your journey with Jesus. It is also a great opportunity to invite family and friends to come to celebrate with you. Many people who would not normally attend church will come to watch you be baptized. Think and pray about whom you can invite. You may even want to hold an open house or celebration party/meal afterward with the individuals that you invite.

Finally, congratulations on your decision to be baptized. Jesus and your church family are proud of you!