

Having been baptized...

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore 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 that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20

Goal for Church Covenant Study

To understand and fulfill our covenant relationship with God (God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit) and each other.

Objectives

As a result of participating in this Covenant Discipleship Group learning experience, we will be able to discuss baptism by addressing the following questions:

- What is baptism?
- Why do we baptize?

Covenant Emphasis for this Session

The underlined phrase serves as the basis for this session.

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior; and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

What is baptism?

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.¹

Why do we baptize?

We are baptized...

To follow the example of Jesus. Matthew 3:13-16

- To "fulfill all righteousness"
- To set us an example that we should follow
- To reveal himself as belonging to God and being the Christ

¹ _____, Baptist Message and Faith, 1963

To demonstrate our *obedience to Jesus' command*. Matthew 28:19-20

Jesus *started* his public ministry by being **baptized** and he *ended* his public ministry by commanding his Apostles to *baptize* and teach disciples from all nations as they went into the world. These were Christ's final words on earth. They must not be overlooked.

To make a witness of our repentance, forgiveness of sins and receiving of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38-41

With repentance and faith (belief) in Jesus the Son of God who died for our sins and was raised from the dead, God promises to forgive our sins (each and every one of them, past, present, and future) and give us the gift of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit when we are baptized into His Son, Jesus Christ.

To share in the *death and resurrection of Jesus Christ*. Romans 6:3-5

Through baptism we are united with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection. Baptism is when the old self dies and new life begins. Baptism is when we stop living for ourselves and start living for Christ. Through baptism we die to ourselves and exchange our life for his. It is in baptism that we "die" with Christ, and so we, therefore, will live with Christ as well.

To express our *unity in Christ*. Ephesians 4:4-5; 1 Corinthians 2:3-6

Baptism unites us with the body of Christ (the Church). Baptism enables us to enter into the joy that awaits us in serving the Lord as a member of the Church.

Baptism is:

- A declaration that we personally believe that as Jesus died, was buried, and rose again the third day, that we will also be raised in the last day when the trump of God calls his children home.
- A public commitment to be an open disciple of the Lord. It is by this that we can show to all whose side we are now on.
- The expression of our desire to walk in the newness of the eternal life that God has given us.
- Our signal to God and others we have accepted Christ's gospel and are a part of the body of Christ (his Church).

Won't you present yourself as a candidate for baptism or reaffirm your baptismal vow?

Do you accept Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord? Do you, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, want to live a life worthy of his name?

Enter into the joy and fullness of our salvation, and hear God speak to you: "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*" Matthew 3:17.