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**Disciples of Christ Bible Fellowship**

***Baptism***

**What is the significance of baptism?**

Have you ever thought about getting baptized but have too many questions still unanswered?
We would love to help you understand a little bit more about this significant, next step in your journey of following in the footsteps of Jesus.

**Purpose & Importance.**

It originated with John the Baptist and is actually what earned him the title "The Baptist" John was widely known for baptizing people in the river Jordan and Jesus Himself was water baptized by John at the beginning of his ministry ([Luke 3:21](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+3%3A21&version=NIV)).

**Why should I consider getting baptized?** **Following Christ:**

In order to understand the reason for being water baptized, it is important to carefully consider what the Bible says about it. Jesus himself was baptized He was not a sinner, yet he humbled himself in obedience to identify with us and give us an example to follow.
"At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan."[*(Mark 1:9*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+1%3A9&version=NIV))

**Important Water Baptism is An Act of Obedience:**

Water baptism is an act of faith and **obedience** to the **commands of Christ**. On water baptism one of the principal passages, which establishes it as a doctrine is [Matthew 28:19-20](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+28%3A19-20&version=NIV): "Therefore go 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 I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'

This passage establishes **water baptism as a commandment from Jesus himself**, and it is the principal reason why water baptism remains important for us today.

Since Jesus left a final command for us to be baptized (as disciples) and to baptize others (to make them disciples), there is nothing stopping us doing the right thing and obeying His wishes for us on this matter. Baptism demonstrates our love for Jesus, "If you love me, keep my commands." ([John 14:15](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+14%3A15&version=NIV)).

The apostles and the early church made sure to keep the commandment of water baptism. Several passages in Acts describe the apostles immediately baptizing nearly everyone who accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

**Purpose of Baptism**

Baptism connects us to the body of Christ, and gives us a real sense of being joined with other believers in a communal journey towards the goal of perfection in Christ Jesus. " For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body…" ([1 Corinthians 12:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+12%3A12-13&version=NASB))

**A Public Declaration:**

Baptism declares that you are a follower of Jesus Christ. It is a public confession of your faith in, and commitment to, Jesus Christ. It is the next step after salvation through repentance and faith and is an important foundation for the Christian life. Water baptism is a practical demonstration of a spiritual reality that has already taken place in your life.

**A Brand New Life:** Here is one simple way to explain baptism:

It is a symbol of your new life as a Christian. We bury the ‘old life,’ and we rise to walk in a ‘new life’. Baptism is like a wedding ring; it is the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart, a commitment that has to be followed through and lived out on a daily basis. We continue the practice of water baptism today as a symbol of our personal and public identification and union with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

[Colossians 2:12](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+2%3A12&version=NIV) *"Having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead."*

Baptism is a symbol.  It’s meant to show the world that that you love, trust, and have put your hope in Christ.  It’s like the wedding ring example. If I have trusted Christ to save me from sin, and He is the lord and joy of my life, then I’ll want everyone to know about it. So baptism is a statement to everyone who sees it that I have trusted Christ for my salvation and I’m committed to living for Him.
*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!* ([2 Corinthians 5:17](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2Corinthians+5%3A17&version=NIV)).

Going under the water was a burial of your old life; coming up out of it was a resurrection, God raising you from the dead as he did Christ. When you were stuck in your old sin-dead life, you were incapable of responding to God. God brought you alive—right along with Christ! Think of it! All sins are forgiven, the slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ’s cross.
*"We were therefore 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."* ( [Romans 6:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+6%3A4&version=NIV))

Water baptism is a way to visually preach the gospel. Standing in the water symbolizes Jesus dying on the cross, immersing in the water symbolizes Jesus being buried in the tomb and being raised from the water symbolizes Jesus rising from the dead. We bury the ‘old life,’ and we rise to walk in a ‘new life’.

**A New family:**

Baptism also connects us to the ‘body of Christ,’ his people in the earth. In baptism there is a real sense of being joined with other believers, not just participating in an individual act of our own spiritual journey.
*"… For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body…"*([*1 Corinthians 12:12-13*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+12%3A12-13&version=NIV))

**How are we to be baptized?**

As per the example of Jesus – by being immersed in water. The word "baptise"comes from the Greek word "baptise"which means "to immerse or dip under water"
"As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water."[*(Matthew 3:16*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+3%3A16&version=NIV))

Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion under water. The book of Acts shows us that this was the norm for every believer.
*"…then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water…."*([*Acts 8:38,39*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+8%3A38-39&version=NIV))

**Who should be /Baptized?**

Every person who has made the decision to believe in Christ. When Paul writes to the believers in Rome, he assumes that all of them have been baptized ([Romans 6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+6&version=NIV)). The one requirement for baptism is belief in Christ!
*"Those who accepted his message were baptized…."*([*Acts 2:41*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+2%3A41&version=NIV))
*"But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women"*([*Acts 8:12*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+8%3A12&version=NIV))

We believe in baptizing children when they are old enough to understand what it means and make a personal declaration of their belief in Christ..

**What to wear for Immersion Baptism**

 ***Do* wear:**

* first, ask if a robe is provided or if you need to bring your own clothing
* dark-colored clothing that won’t become see-through when wet, such as a dark-colored t-shirt and swim trunks, dark leggings, or a dark robe (unless your denomination prefers white)
* dark-colored undergarments with full coverage (ex: sports bra, boxers)
* consider wearing a one-piece swimsuit under your clothing to ensure modesty
* when choosing how to wear your hair, consider a ponytail, wrapped or dutch braid, or bun

***Don’t* wear:**

* white or light fabrics that will cling or become see-through when wet (unless white is specifically preferred by your denomination / church)
* garments that will easily tangle around arms and legs
* jewelry and other accessories that could fall off or become lost
* shoes (take them off before the ceremony)
* take your cell phone and wallet out of your pockets first (this is obvious, but… we’ve all been there.)

Bring a towel, hair brush or hair dryer, and change of clothes and undergarments. If you wear glasses, you might want to keep them off.