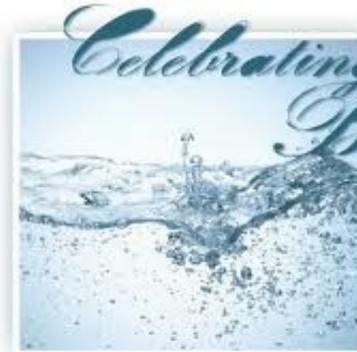


Baptism

at Parkville Fellowship Baptist Church

Baptism at Parkville Fellowship Baptist Church ...



At PFBC, baptism is a cause for celebration. We're excited when people publicly declare that Jesus is their Saviour and that they choose to follow Him. Few events in the Christian life carry as much significance and symbolism as baptism.

Along with the Lord's Supper, Jesus Christ ordained baptism as a special experience for the church to celebrate. These events give every Christian a unique opportunity to share their obedience, worship, and love of God. Many, however, have questions concerning the biblical meaning and instruction concerning baptism, and this pamphlet is designed to answer several of these questions:

- **What is baptism?**
- **Who should be baptized?**
- **Why should Christians be baptized?**
- **When should Christians be baptized?**
- **How should Christians be baptized?**

What is baptism?

Baptism is a public proclamation of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. God created each of us to know and glorify Him, but our sin nature and personal sins have created a gulf between mankind and God.

The scripture teaches that the penalty or “wages” of sin is death, eternal separation from God (Romans 6:23). No human effort, including baptism, can make up for our sinful state and acts. But God, demonstrating both His love and justice, has paid sin’s penalty for all who receive His gift of grace. Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, lived among us, died on the cross, and was raised from the dead to pay the penalty of sin for all who will believe in Him.

When we place our faith in Jesus Christ, we receive God’s gift of forgiveness and new life in Christ. God restores us to a state of spiritual purity, freeing us to again know Him and love Him.

Baptism is a public testimony that richly symbolizes these spiritual truths. Our being baptized, immersed fully into water, symbolizes and visualizes our death to sin’s control, and our coming up out of the water symbolizes and visualizes our new life in Christ.

Baptism is an outward sign of something that has already taken place within. It symbolizes (a) the washing away of sins, Acts 22:16; (b) our union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, Romans 6:3-6, Colossians 2:12; and (c) the Lordship of Christ.

Baptism “into” Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:27) means that we come under the authority of Christ.

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

(Romans 6:3-5)

Who should be baptized?

Since baptism is a public profession of the Christian’s personal faith in Jesus Christ’s sacrificial act on our behalf, only those who have professed faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour should be baptized. In other words, baptism *follows* faith in Christ. Romans 3:28, 4:1-9 and Ephesians 2:8-10 teach us that faith alone is sufficient for salvation, therefore, baptism does not contribute anything to salvation.

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.
(Galatians 3:26-27)

Why should Christians be Baptized?

There are a few reasons why every person who has professed faith in Jesus Christ should be baptized:

- By being baptized you are following the example of Jesus who was baptized by John the Baptist (Mark 1:9-11)
- Christ commanded that His followers be baptized. Jesus is both Saviour and Lord for every Christian, and baptism provides an opportunity for every believer to publicly submit to Christ’s leadership.

Baptism, then is an act of **confession**. Confessing Christ is a necessary part of coming to Him (Romans 10:9). To publicly submit to baptism is a declaration of our faith in Him. (During your baptism you will be asked to talk about your faith in Jesus.)

It is also an act of **identification** with Christ. The baptized believer walks in newness of life, the old life has been buried in the death of Christ. They are saying, ‘Jesus, take control of my life.’

cont ...

Finally, baptism is an act of **submission** to Christ. This submission is expressed in our obedience to the Word of God in all things.

- The early church, under the leadership of the apostles, baptized every new believer. These first Christians would have thought it inconceivable that someone could profess faith in Jesus Christ and not be baptized – the two were inseparable. Immediate baptism provided a rich explanation of God’s work in the life of the new believer.

When Should Christians be Baptized?

Since baptism is a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ, it should take place after one understands the Gospel, experiences the grace of God, and responds to it through faith in Jesus Christ. Baptism performed prior to these three things is representative of something other than new life in Christ and a profession of faith in Jesus.

This is why we at PFBC do not baptize infants: they are unable to understand what baptism means and respond personally to their need for a Saviour. Obedience to Scripture requires that baptism be representative of faith in Him. As sinful people, desperately dependent upon His grace, we should seek to live in obedience to Him.



How should Christians be baptized?

The meaning of the word ‘baptize’ in Greek, the language of the New Testament, is “to immerse, dip or plunge”, or more accurately, “to cause to be dipped”. The following Scriptures give some idea of how the word is used: John 1:33; Romans 6:4; Matthew 3:13-17.

Take a few moments to observe its usage in the New Testament. Read carefully the following verses, and think about how the word is used:

- Matthew 3:16;
- Acts 8:38

Reflect on phrases such as “going down into the water” and “coming up out of the water.”

Also, read John 3:23 where it says that they baptized there, “because there was much water there”.

So, Parksville Fellowship Baptist Church practices baptism by immersion. Our death to sin’s control and new life in Christ is symbolically portrayed as we descend into, and emerge from, the waters of baptism.

The God of the Bible has revealed Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Salvation is taught in Scripture as the work of all three. That is why we will baptize you in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

