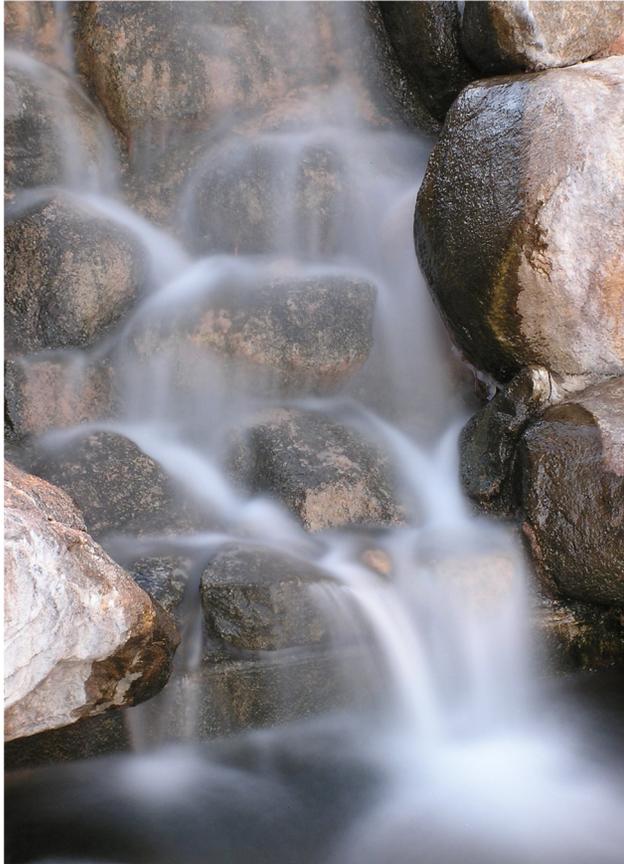


# Baptism



What is baptism? Why be baptized? The following explains the basic concepts associated with baptism at BCC.

## What does it mean?

Some believe the act of baptism saves them from hell. Others believe infant baptism removes original sin and therefore gives access to heaven. It must be understood that nothing you do or can do will save you or remove sin. If that were so, Jesus would not have died to remove your sins. You must be saved before you are baptized. *Baptism proclaims your faith; it does not constitute your salvation.*

## How do I find salvation if not through baptism?

Salvation comes as a gift from God as a result of surrendering your life to Jesus. By placing yourself under the authority of Jesus, you give Him complete control. It is no longer your will in control of your life, but His. God's Word, the Bible, is where you discover what God's will is. When the Bible tells people to repent of their sins, believe in Jesus, confess Him publicly as Lord and Savior and be baptized, those who are submitted to God do it. Giving your life to Jesus is more than just saying a prayer, but it starts there. Give your life to Him and ask Him to come into your heart, seek His forgiveness for your sins and sinfulness and then tell others about the change that has taken place in you.

## If salvation comes without being baptized, then why do it?

Because God commands it. ("Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."...Acts 2:38). All believers are to be baptized. Even Jesus was baptized and afterward God said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased." Matt 3:17. Therefore, baptism is an act of obedience.

## What does it symbolize?

If you have given your life to Jesus, now you are ready to be baptized. The symbolism is rich. Jesus descended to earth, died, was buried, resurrected and then ascended to Heaven. When you are baptized, you descend into the water, die to your self, are buried in the water, are resurrected from the water and now will ultimately ascend to heaven when Jesus calls you home. *Baptism publicly identifies you with Jesus Christ. It outwardly proclaims what has happened on the inside.*

## What, then, does infant baptism accomplish?

Since baptism symbolizes the conscious choice of giving your life to Jesus, infant baptism poses a problem. An infant or very young child cannot understand all that salvation and baptism represents! It is hard to determine when a child is old enough to make the decision to follow Jesus. Parents must wrestle with that and make their own judgment. Some believe that infant baptism reserves a place for their child in heaven. It does not. The infant made no proclamation of faith; only the parent's faith is proclaimed. Salvation comes through the confession of sins, faith in Jesus Christ, and submission to His lordship. *Thus infant baptism poses one danger...giving a false sense of eternal security.*

## What happens if an infant or a child dies before they're baptized?

Ultimately only God knows. But until a child is old enough to make the choice to yield his life to Jesus, God's grace is extended to him. So, if the worst happens, they are swept into the loving arms of Jesus. This is referred to as the "age of innocence." Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" John 14:6. When a child passes the age of innocence, a conscious and proclaimed decision to follow Jesus is critical.

## How am I baptized?

Which is right, total immersion or sprinkling? Total immersion is deeply imbedded into Jewish culture. Before and after Jesus, total immersion was the only way it was done. There are no references to sprinkling in the entire Bible. We believe then that total immersion is the best model. Since neither the water nor the method saves you, in special circumstances someone may be sprinkled. Typically baptisms are performed in the baptismal during Sunday morning services by the pastor, Small Group Leader, discipler or parent. We advocate public baptism to proclaim one's identity with Christ.

## Good reasons NOT to be baptized

Do not be baptized if you have not given your life to Jesus. It would be a mockery of Jesus to be baptized and not truly have him as your Lord and Savior. That would be saying, "Jesus, I want to appear as a Christian, but I do not want to follow you." Never be baptized because you are made to feel guilty or to please anyone but God. Never be baptized to become a member of a church. The Bible does not equate baptism with church membership.

If you are interested in being obedient in baptism, please contact us: 810.229.4192

## INTERESTED?

Please go through the following questions prayerfully with your Bible to help understand baptism on a deeper level:

## A Brief Study on Baptism

Take a few moments to look up what the Bible says about baptism. Brighton Christian Church strives to reflect accurately what the Bible teaches.

1. Read Mark 16:15-16. According to this, I must \_\_\_\_\_ the Gospel before I am baptized.

2. Read Acts 2:37-38. Peter had just finished preaching and the people wanted to obey. What two things did he tell them to do in verse 38?

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

What two things did they receive?

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Read Acts 2:41, 8:26-39, 16:29-34

According to these verses, when were new believers baptized?

a. As infants?

b. After a 12-week class?

c. Immediately?

4. Read Galatians 3:27

a. When a person is baptized he or she is clothed with \_\_\_\_\_?

5. Read Romans 6:1-7

a. In verse 3 "All who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His \_\_\_\_\_?"

b. In verse 4 "We were \_\_\_\_\_ with Him (Jesus) through \_\_\_\_\_ into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a \_\_\_\_\_."

c. In verse 5 "Since we have been united with Christ in His death, we will also be united with Him in His \_\_\_\_\_."

6. Read Matthew 3:13-17. According to verse 15, Jesus was baptized in order to fulfill \_\_\_\_\_?

7. Read 1Peter 3:13-22. In verse 21 we see that we receive the pledge of a \_\_\_\_\_ toward God.