

# Believer's Baptism

## Answerbook



# Baptism

Baptism is seen in all types of Churches, but there are significant differences in the how different churches baptise people. So most of you will either have been to a christening or be familiar with churches that baptise babies. However in contrast we believe that the bible teaches that baptism is only for those who have already responded in faith to Jesus.

Baptism itself does not save anyone (only Jesus can do that), but it is a powerful sign and declaration of saving faith.

The greek word 'Bapizo' means 'to plunge, dip, immerse' That means lots of water. The expectation in the word, is that the person is going to get very wet – completely immersed in water. So in the New Testament part of the Bible people were normally baptised in a river, rather than sprinkled. There is nothing magic about the amount of water, but what is significant is what the water symbolises.

## Why should we be baptised?

Jesus was baptised. We are following his example (Matthew 3:13-17); Obedience to Jesus' command in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38); Baptism is a symbol (like a wedding ceremony) of unity with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection and shows you belong to Him (Romans 6:1-4, Colossians 2:11-12); Baptism pictures the washing/cleansing of your heart and purification through regeneration (Titus 3:4-7, Acts 22:16).

We are following the historical example of the early church. Throughout Acts, we see people being saved and then

baptised. Baptism is a sign of your entrance into and unity with the church, both local and universal.

Taking Romans 6:3-4 Paul describes in a sentence what it means to know Jesus.

*“Do you not know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised 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”.*

Baptism is a public picture of ‘dying with christ, burying our sins with him. Then when they come up again it represents sharing in the resurrection of Jesus. Baptism is a reminder of *“the amazing truths of passing through the waters of judgment safely, of dying and rising with Christ, and of having our sins washed away”* (Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology –IVP Pg.969 ).

## **What are the benefits of baptism?**

Baptism, with its amazing symbolism, is a fantastic opportunity to remind yourself of the wonderful truths of the message of Jesus Christ and another evidence of God’s life changing work still being active today.

Baptism is an encouragement to other Christian people as they see you declare your beliefs to the church and that your desire to obey the command to be baptised and live as a follower of Jesus Christ.

Baptism is also a great chance to invite many non-Christian friends, family and colleagues to hear you speak of your faith in Jesus and to hear the gospel explained.

We do not baptise babies and children at Newcraigs Evangelical Church. However we are delighted for children of Christian parents to have a **Parent/Child Dedication Service**. The dedication service provides the parent(s), an opportunity to express publically their desire to lead and spiritually nurture the child in cooperation with the Holy Spirit, so the child will develop a desire to love God and love others in Jesus Christ.

## **What if I have been baptised as an infant?**

First, you should be grateful that you had parents who cared enough about you to set you apart for God. Because of their devotion, you have an opportunity to complete their prayer by willingly submitting to adult baptism. Adult baptism is not a sign of disrespect for what your parents did, and it can be seen as a fulfillment of their prayers. Be thankful for the heritage of concerned parents, but don't be negligent of your responsibility as an adult to make a personal pledge toward God in baptism. Several who are now members of this church were baptised as infants and then, upon coming to a personal faith, were baptised as adults. God has led you to this point and we pray that you will take this important step as soon as possible.

Whatever your own experience and beliefs about baptism you are welcome to be involved as an active part of the church. However we ask all members to respect the church's views on baptism as set out in this leaflet and this is the view the Elders will teach from the Bible in our church when the subject of baptism comes up. Speak to our Pastor Adam Broughton or one of the Elders about being baptised.