



## BAPTISM: WHAT IS THE BIG DEAL?

### **A QUICK LOOK AT BAPTISM**

#### **It is NOT:**

1. A requirement you must meet in order to go to heaven.
2. Something which will wash away your sins.
3. An event which will make you a new person.

#### **It IS:**

1. A tradition God established for his people.
2. Something God wants you to do. It shows others three things about you.
  - a. That you believe the message of the “Gospel” or the good news of Jesus Christ: that Jesus died for your sins, was buried, and rose again.
  - b. That you belong to the family of all those who have come to believe the Gospel story of Jesus.
  - c. That you intend to live an obedient life to following Jesus.

#### **Who Should NOT be Baptized:**

1. Someone who thinks it will wash their sins away.
2. Someone who does not believe the truth about Jesus.
3. Someone who wants to do it because they think it will help them go to heaven.
4. Someone who does it because their parents want them to, or because their friends are doing it.

#### **Who SHOULD be Baptized:**

1. Anyone who has believed the truth about Jesus.

2. Anyone who understands what baptism is and isn't.

## **WHY BE BAPTIZED?**

### **To follow the example set by Jesus himself**

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?' Jesus replied, 'Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.' Then John consented." (Matthew 3:13-16)

### **To obey Jesus' command**

"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..." (Matthew 28:19)

### **To publicly acknowledge my personal faith in Jesus Christ**

"Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day." (Acts 2:41)

To express my love for Christ and His Word, "You are my friends if you do what I command." (John 15:14)

**CONCLUSION:** While salvation is a free gift of God's grace alone, the sincerity of one's faith in Jesus is demonstrated by obedience. Taking the step of baptism demonstrates our obedience to Jesus and His teachings in scripture.

## **WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?**

The Bible teaches that every individual who puts his or her trust in Christ for salvation should be baptized. The Bible has many examples of this teaching. The people who heard Peter's first sermon asked, "Brothers, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37) He answered: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins." (vs. 38) Their response: "Those who accepted His message were baptized..." (vs. 41)

In the book of Acts, numerous other examples of baptism of believers are given. For example:

"But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Simon himself believed, and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere..." (Acts 8:12-13)

"...many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized." (Acts 18:8)

**CONCLUSION:** These biblical examples indicate that the person who has first repented of sin and who has placed their faith in Jesus should be baptized. One must first be a believer in Jesus to be eligible for baptism.

### **WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?**

Baptism is an outward symbol of one's identification with Christ's death, burial and resurrection. The lowering of an individual into the water symbolizes his or her identification with Christ in His death and burial. Similarly, raising that person from the water symbolizes his or her identification with Christ in His resurrection and new life.

"Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We are 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 6:3-5)

**CONCLUSION:** Baptism is an outward expression of an inward experience that has already taken place through faith in Jesus as Savior.

### **WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED BY IMMERSION?**

**Because Jesus was baptized in that manner.**

"As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him." (Matthew 3:16)

**Because it is the literal meaning of the word baptize.**

The English word "baptize" is a transliteration of the Greek word "baptizo" which, if translated, means "to immerse or to dip under."

**CONCLUSION:** Even though other churches practice different methods of baptism, which were introduced after scripture was written, we at Harvest

Community Church feel it is in the best interest for the individual as well as the church to uphold the straight forward teaching and example of scripture.

### **SHOULD I BE RE-BAPTIZED?**

That depends upon the significance of your first "baptism". If you had actually trusted Christ prior to being baptized, there is no need to ever be re-baptized as a sort of second commitment to Him (i.e. "This time I really mean it!"). But if your first "baptism" was as an infant, you were unable to personally declare your trust in Christ at that time. That event was more for you parents than as a personal declaration of your faith. As a result we would encourage you to consider getting baptized now as a believer. This would not only be beneficial for you, but also for those loved ones who will see you take your stand for Christ.

### **WHEN SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?**

As soon as possible! The Bible indicates that baptism is one of the first steps a new believer takes.

"As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?' And he ordered the chariot to stop. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him." (Acts 8:36-38)

It's not unusual, however, for someone to discover the importance of baptism several years after professing faith in Christ. Therefore, we would encourage this person to make plans to be baptized at the first opportunity.

### **CAN MY FAMILY BE BAPTIZED TOGETHER?**

Absolutely! If each family member understands fully the meaning of baptism and each one has personally placed his/her trust in Jesus for salvation, then we encourage families to be baptized at the same time. It is a wonderful expression of commitment and becomes a great moment for the entire family.

### **HOW OFTEN DOES THE CHURCH DO BAPTISMS?**

We try to schedule baptisms quarterly.

### **HOW CAN I BE BAPTIZED?**

You can find updated information and registration details online at [www.harvestflorida.org/baptism](http://www.harvestflorida.org/baptism)

### **WHAT HAPPENS AT A BAPTISMAL SERVICE?**

We celebrate Baptisms during our regularly scheduled worship service times. This allows those that attend Harvest Community Church to celebrate with you and experience what God is doing.

During the service, the teaching pastor will briefly explain to those attending what baptism is and why we do it. During the worship service while singing with the band, those being baptized will enter the baptismal one at a time.

You will enter into the water and the pastor will ask you three questions:

1. Have you trusted Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior?
2. Do you believe that Jesus' death on the cross is how you are forgiven of sins?
3. Do you choose to leave your old life behind and follow Jesus?

Then the pastor will say "I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit" and slowly lower you into the water and raise you up again.

Don't be surprised when people clap at your baptism. It is a very happy experience for any Christian when someone publicly identifies themselves as a follower of Jesus.

After everyone has been baptized, the pastor will close in a prayer of commitment for you.

### **DAY-OF INSTRUCTIONS ON BAPTISM SERVICES.**

- Invite as many friends and family members as possible.
- Bring a towel.
- We encourage women to wear a swim suit under a pair of baggy shorts and a T-shirt. We encourage men to wear baggy shorts and a T-shirt. (Remember, water has a way of making some clothes quite indiscreet)
- Show up at least 15 minutes early and checkin at our Guest Services table. If you need a Harvest Tee Shirt for baptism, we'll have one for you.
- You will be able to change in the restrooms if you desire.
- Once you're changed into what you'll wear for the baptism, have a seat in

the auditorium.

- After the sermon, you will be instructed to get up with all those being baptized and to head out to the hallway. Our team will guide you from there.
- If someone is joining you in the tank to help baptize you with the pastor, they should come with you at this time.
- After the service, we encourage you to take a photo at the photo station and share that picture with friends on your social media platform(s). This is a great way to bear witness publicly to your commitment to follow Jesus.

# Harvest Baptism Consent

*I have read the above pages of An Overview of Baptism at Harvest. I also allow the use of photographic images or video taken during the baptism service that include me to be used by Harvest Community Church for purposes of celebration videos or promotional purposes online or during worship services or events.*

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Printed Name

Signature

Date

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Legal Guardian Name  
(For those under 18)

Signature

Date