

# HARVEST CHAPEL BAPTISM

## WATER BAPTISM

When it comes to the subject of baptism, there are a few questions that come up. In an effort to provide information to understand this important ordinance of the church, we offer these simple answers.

### WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

- **To follow the example set by Christ**

“At the time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river” - Mark 1:9

- **Because Christ commanded it.**

“Jesus said, ‘Go then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you’” - Matthew 28:19-20

- **It demonstrates that I really am a believer.**

“We know that we have come to know Him, if we obey His commands,” - 1 John 2:3

### WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?

- **It illustrates Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection.**

“Christ died for our sins... He was buried... and He rose again.” -1 Corinthians 15:3-4

“For when you were baptized, you were buried with the Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ.” - Colossians 2:12

- **It illustrates my new life as a Christian.**

“When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun!” - 2 Corinthians 5:17

“By our baptism then, we were buried with Him and shared His death, in order that , just as Christ was raised from the dead... so that we may live a new life!” - Romans 6:4

Baptism doesn’t make you a Christian. Only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring- it’s the outward sign of the commitment you have made in your heart (see Ephesians 2:8-9)

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

- **Because Jesus was baptized that way.**

“As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water” - Matthew 3:16

- **Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion.**

“...then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water...” - Acts 8:38-39

- **It best symbolizes a burial and resurrection. (see Romans 6:1-11)**
- **The word “baptizes” means “to dip under water.”**

### **The founders of the major denominations agree:**

“I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the word imports and the mystery signifies.” Martin Luther (founder of Lutheran denomination)

“The word “baptize” signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church.” John Calvin (founder of Presbyterian denomination)

“Buried with Him alludes to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church.” John Wesley (founder of Methodist and Wesleyan denomination)

## **WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?**

- **Every person who has believed in Christ.**

A Believer is someone who has realized that their sin separated them from God. Has given up all efforts to reach God through good works or religious activity. Has concluded that Jesus Christ’s death on the cross for their sin is the only thing that can bridge the gap between them and God.

A Believer is someone who has decided to trust Christ alone for their salvation. If you have come to that point in your spiritual journey, then you are ready to be baptized. (Acts 2:41; 8:12-13)

## WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN?

The new testament shows no example of baptism when the candidate did not request it. All instances of baptism followed an individual's decision to trust Christ alone for their salvation (Acts 2:41; 8:12; 10:47-48).

At Harvest, we wait until the child is old enough to believe and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them. Some churches practice a "baptism of confirmation" for children, a custom that began in the 4th or 5th century AD when the parent pledges their commitment to raise their child according to Christian values and beliefs. This is not Christian baptism.

Harvest offers a similar opportunity for parents through Child Dedication, as the purpose of baptism is to publicly confess your personal commitment to Christ.

## WHAT ABOUT INFANT BAPTISM?

In the Bible, we find parents bringing children to Jesus. He held them, prayed for them and told us to welcome them. But he did not baptize them, and he did not tell anyone else to baptize them. It seems more biblical to wait until a personal decision to trust Christ has been made.

If baptism signifies salvation (as the Bible teaches), only people who have intentionally received salvation should experience baptism. If you were baptized as an infant, but have since trusted fully in Christ for your salvation, then we encourage you to take the next step and follow Christ in biblical baptism by immersion. And we are convinced that you will feel the smile of your Heavenly Father on your obedience, just like he did with Jesus on his baptism when He spoke from Heaven saying: "And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." - Matthew 3:16-17

## WHEN SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

- **As soon as you believe!**

"Those who believed were baptized that day!" - Acts 2:41

"Then Philip began with the scripture and told him the Good News about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water, and the man said, 'Look, here is water! why shouldn't I be baptized right now?' Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' The man answered, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' So they went down into the water and Philip baptized him." - Acts 8:35-38