

Baptism @ SEASIDECHURCH

We are excited about your interest in being baptized. Here are a few things to read through before baptism.

Water baptism, along with communion, is one of two signs or symbols of the Christian life. **Baptism is a sign of beginning the Christian life while communion is sign of continuing the Christian life.** Here are a few truths about baptism and some passages that instruct us on baptism.

Baptism symbolizes a believer's unity with Christ's life, death, and resurrection.

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. (Romans 6:3-4, ESV)

Baptism is a physical symbol of our spiritual unity with Jesus. Just as Jesus died and was buried so the baptismal candidate goes under the water symbolizing death to their old lives. Just as Jesus was resurrected from the tomb so the baptismal candidate comes up out of the water to live a new life for Him.

Jesus commanded all of his followers to be baptized.

Go therefore 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, ESV).

Being baptized is a step of obedience. We get baptized and baptize others because Jesus told us to.

Baptism is a step of obedience that comes after repentance and faith in the gospel. Notice in the following passage that the normal pattern for baptism is to hear the gospel, believe the gospel, and then be baptized.

Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "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. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (Acts 2:37-41, ESV) Also see Acts 16:11-15 and 18.8.

Baptism is communal

Baptism isn't simply an individual event.

"For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12.13, ESV)

When a person is baptized they are brought into the body of Christ. By being baptized you are being brought into the universal body of Christ and this local church called Seaside, where you will get to live out your faith.

Bad reasons to be baptized:

- *I want to get my life together.* That's good, but the first step is to repent of your sin and believe the gospel. Then follow the command of Jesus and get baptized!
- *I think it will help me take my faith more seriously.* We applaud you for the desire to take your faith more seriously, but the waters of baptism won't act like some sort of spiritual caffeine to power your faith. God's word, prayer, being in community, and following Jesus, day in and day out, is what you need to help you grow in your faith.

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- *My friends are doing it or my parents want me to get baptized.* Baptism is your decision and you should do it when you desire to publicly express your obedience to and faith in Christ.

Bad reasons not to be baptized:

- *I need to be a better Christian first.* Being baptized is not a commitment to be a "perfect Christian" it is rather a decision to publicly identify with Jesus' death and resurrection. In baptism, through a symbol, you express your faith that Jesus died for your sins and is the one making you into a "better Christian" through His grace.
- *I want to wait for _____ to be baptized with me.* While it may seem warm and fuzzy to be baptized with your spouse, family member or best friend who maybe isn't yet a believer, don't wait to obey Jesus. Jesus has called you to follow him and your individual baptism expresses that. You go into the waters of baptism with Jesus and come out with Jesus. Perhaps seeing your baptism will spur your spouse/friend to desire baptism as well.
- *I was already baptized as an infant or as a young child.* Though infant baptism or paedo-baptism is a practice by some Bible believing churches, the Bible doesn't clearly teach this nor is there one clear example of Christian parents baptizing their infants. While your water baptism may have been a special moment for your parents, it wasn't the baptism that we see in the New Testament. Also, if you were baptized as a child, but later realized you did it for the wrong reason and just recently have come to believe the gospel for yourself, you should be re-baptized. There is actually a case of this in the New Testament. In Acts 19.1-7, some began following Jesus, but didn't fully understand baptism. They had only been baptized by John. They were re-baptized. So there is re-baptism in the New Testament. Ultimately, if you have been baptized apart from personal faith in Jesus, you just got wet.

Reasons to be baptized:

- *You desire to be obedient to Jesus because he commanded it.*
- *You want to publicly declare of your faith and confidence in Jesus alone.*
- *You want to publicly identify with Jesus life, death, and resurrection through baptism.*

Water baptism is merely a sign or symbol of faith in Christ. Baptism doesn't save a person, it doesn't make them more holy or more spiritual. Though many experience God in deep ways during their physical baptism, baptism is primarily a physical symbol of what Jesus has done for the one being baptized. It is an outward sign of an inward reality.

Questions for the Baptismal Candidate

1. **What is the gospel?**
2. Why do you want to be baptized at this time?
3. What is baptism?

Next Steps

1. **Let us know you are have questions or are interested in baptism. Email- jon@seasidechurch.com**

We are excited to walk with you and serve you as you move forward in following Jesus!

- *The Elders @ Seaside Church*