





WELCOME

We're thrilled that you're investigating baptism as the next step in your spiritual journey. Baptism is a wonderful step of obedience in following Christ. It is an opportunity to follow Jesus' example and teaching by publicly proclaiming your trust in him. By being baptized, you announce that Jesus has washed away your sins and given you new life.

By getting in the water we are not declaring that we've achieved sinless perfection or some type of "super-Christian" status. In fact, we're saying almost the opposite. Baptism is not about what we've achieved, but about what Christ has achieved in us. Baptism also pictures the fact that we were dead in our sins until we trusted Christ who paid our sin's debt and conquered sin's power through his resurrected life.

When people are rightly related to Jesus, they are rightly related to one another as well. Baptism serves as a visible initiation into God's family, in which we all stand on equal footing as brothers and sisters.

So this is a very special event! Whether you are new to the faith or a long standing Christian, our desire is for your baptism to be a joyful and memorable experience.

We encourage you to look forward with eager anticipation to our next baptism service.

Invite family. Invite friends. And, if you know some folks who do not yet know Christ, take another courageous step of faith and invite them to come to your baptism, too.

God often uses the stories of people like you to draw others to himself. Your baptism celebration of new life may spark new life in someone else!

BEFORE YOU GET IN THE WATER

To help you prepare for baptism, please respond to the two questions below.

ASSESSING YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

1. If you were to meet God face to face today, how confident would you be that he would receive you into heaven? Mark on the line below where your confidence is before God.

Not Confident

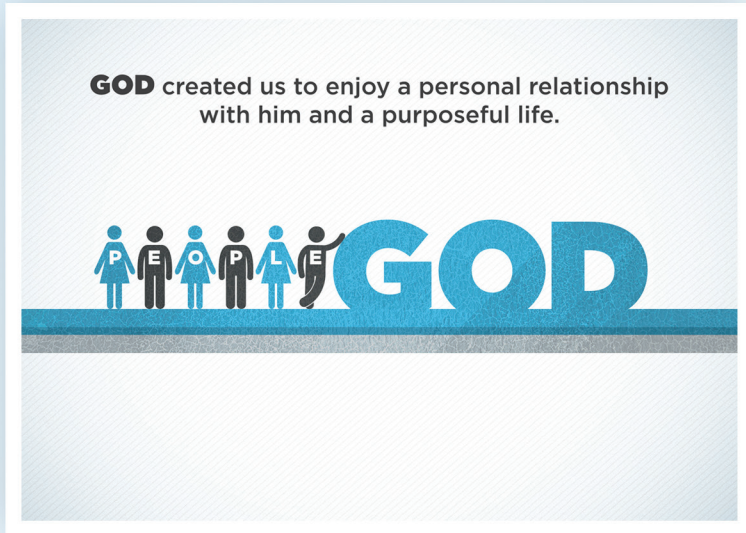
Absolutely Confident

2. On what would you base your confidence? If you were asked, "Why you should be allowed into heaven," what would you say?

GOD'S GOOD NEWS

On the following pages are four simple truths that summarize God's Good News communicated to us in the Bible.

TRUTH 1



“Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent” (John 17:3).

TRUTH 2



“But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you” (Isaiah 59:2).

TRUTH 3



“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God” (1 Peter 3:18).

TRUTH 4



“It is by grace that you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

A SUGGESTED PRAYER OF FAITH IN JESUS

God, I recognize that you created me to enjoy a personal relationship with you and a purposeful life. My sin—rebelliously going my own way instead of yours—has separated me from you. I cannot do anything to repair the damage done by my sin. I'm in need of forgiveness and new life.

I believe Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead to pay sin's penalty and break sin's power. By faith, I surrender to you as my Savior and King. I want to obediently follow you. Please forgive my sins, give me the gift of eternal life, and send your Spirit to help me become more and more like Jesus. In Jesus' name, Amen.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU PUT YOUR TRUST IN CHRIST?

- You are saved.

"If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, **you will be saved**" (Romans 10:9).*

- You are given eternal life.

"And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. **I write these things to you who believe** in the name of the Son of God **so that you may know that you have eternal life**" (1 John 5:11-14).*

*Emphasis added



COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT BAPTISM

WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

- *To follow the example of Christ.*

“At that time *Jesus* came from Nazareth in Galilee and *was baptized* by John in the Jordan” (Mark 1:9).*

- *Jesus Christ instructed his followers to be baptized.*

“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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20).*

- *It demonstrates that you are truly a follower of Christ.*


“*Those who accepted Peter’s message were baptized*, and about three thousand were added to their number that day” (Acts 2:41).*

“Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and *his entire household believed* in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed *and were baptized*” (Acts 18:8).*

“Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus...The eunuch said, “Look, here is water. Why shouldn’t I be baptized?” ... Then *both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him*” (Acts 8:35-38).*

- *By uniting with Christ in baptism, you also unite with all other believers and are welcomed into Christ’s body, the church.*

“*For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body*—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink” (1 Corinthians 12:13).*



*"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26-28).**

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

- *Every person who believes in Christ as their Lord and Savior. Baptism is an obedient step as a believer.*

*"Those who accepted his message were baptized" (Acts 2:41).**

*"Simon himself believed and was baptized..." (Acts 8:13).**

*"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" (Acts 8:12).**

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?

- *It represents Jesus Christ's burial and resurrection.*

"Having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead" (Colossians 2:12).

- *It is a picture of your new life as a Christian. Going under the water, we illustrate our burial, dead to our old life of sin. Coming out of the water, we portray resurrection, our new life in Jesus.*

*"We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were 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 6:2-4).**

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

- *Baptism doesn't save you, only your faith in Christ does. Baptism is a symbol of the commitment you've made to Christ, just like wearing a wedding ring symbolizes a marriage commitment.*

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

WHY BE BAPTIZED BY SUBMERSION (GOING UNDER WATER)?

- *Because Jesus was baptized that way.*

"As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water" (Matthew 3:16).

- *It is the example in the Bible.*

*"Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water..." (Acts 8:38-39).**

- *The word baptize means "to dip or submerge."*
- *It best symbolizes a burial and resurrection and what has happened to you upon believing in Christ.*

- Forgiveness and cleansing from sin

*"And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name" (Acts 22:16).**

- Clothing yourself with Christ's character

*"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (Galatians 3:26).**

- Dying and rising again

*"We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were 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 6:2-4).**

WHY DO SOME CHURCHES BAPTIZE INFANTS?

Infant baptism began about 300 years after the Bible was completed. For some churches, it was a ceremony for parents to pledge to raise their children in the Christian faith until the child was old enough to make his or her own personal confession for Christ.

In the Catholic tradition, the belief is held that the water operates apart from a child's faith, taking away original sin and making the child acceptable to God. Others in the Reformed tradition emphasize the parallels between the Old Testament practice of circumcision and the New Testament practice of baptism. Circumcision marked a baby boy as part of the covenant community. In the same way, they believe infants can be baptized into Christ's body based on the faith of their parents and church. At Christ Community Church, we see no Scripture that instructs infant baptism. The model we see throughout Scripture is that of believers (not infants) going public with their faith in Christ through baptism.

We see the practice of Jesus blessing or dedicating children, not baptizing them. We believe child dedication and baptism are best observed as two distinct practices.

HOW OLD MUST A PERSON BE TO BE BAPTIZED?

We are not given a specific age in Scripture. The model we observe in Scripture is an authentic confession of sin and trust in Christ.

At Christ Community Church, we wait until our children are old enough to believe, understand, and articulate their faith before we baptize them. This is typically not before 4th or 5th grade. We desire children to have a firm memory of their baptism experience.

Prior to baptism, we do offer child dedication services for parents who wish to thank God for the gift of their children and promise to raise and encourage their kids to follow Christ with the support of the church.

WHEN SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

- *As soon as you believe!*

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

SHOULD A PERSON EVER BE RE-BAPTIZED?

Some people realize that the infant baptism they experienced missed some of the essential significance God intended for baptism. Others sense that their mode of baptism lacked the powerful symbolism of submersion. And still others recognize that they were baptized without having saving faith, maybe under pressure, or as an initiation rite into a religious system rather than as a personal response to God's Good News found in Jesus.

Any of these reasons are legitimate. 1 Peter 3:21 says that baptism involves "the pledge of a good conscience toward God."

If your conscience is not clear because you never came to baptism with faith in Jesus, we encourage you to be baptized again. But, if you believe you had legitimate saving faith at your previous baptism; even if you subsequently stopped following Jesus for a time, you do not need to be re-baptized.

IF I PUT MY FAITH IN JESUS LONG AGO, SHOULD I STILL BE BAPTIZED NOW?

Many of us simply were not instructed about baptism when we first came to Christ. By getting in the water now, you will correct this past oversight and communicate your earnestness in following Jesus. Being baptized now will bolster your faith and clear your conscience. The very fact that you are reading this paragraph right now probably indicates that God's Spirit may be prompting you to follow Jesus in this area.

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF BEING BAPTIZED?

The primary benefit of baptism is the encouragement that obeying Christ's example and teaching brings. The Apostle Paul highlights these truths about baptism.

"What shall we say then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (Romans 6:1-3)

"Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Romans 6:8-11).

ARE THERE ANY REASONS THAT I SHOULD NOT BE BAPTIZED?

Intentional ongoing disobedience against God and his Word would be reason to wait.

WHAT ARE MY NEXT STEPS AFTER BAPTISM?

Belonging to a Community Group.

Growing through:

- Reading God's Word. Helpful resource: Pastor Jim's *Bible Savvy* series
- Praying. Helpful resource: Pastor Jim's *Prayer Coach*
- Consistent worship attendance.

Serving with the abilities, gifts, passions, time, and resources God has given you.

Reaching out to others by sharing God's Good News here and on GO Teams.

*Emphasis added

HOW DO I WRITE MY FAITH STORY?

WRITING THE THREE PARTS OF YOUR FAITH STORY. (250 WORD MAXIMUM)

PART 1

BEFORE CHRIST: What caused me to see that I **need** Christ?

(25-50 words)

SAMPLE PERSONAL FAITH STORY, word count = 25

"Before I trusted in Jesus, other things were more important to me like possessions and what other people thought of me."

PART 2

MY DECISION: The who, what, when, where, why, and **how** of my decision to surrender to Christ. (50-75 words)

SAMPLE PERSONAL FAITH STORY, word count = 66

"Then my daughter introduced me to Christ Community. Here, I heard the truth about Jesus dying for my sins because he loved me. My eyes were opened and I saw the sin in my life: greed, anger, lust, self-centeredness, and pride. With our friends Jon and Sarah, I confessed I was wrong and asked Jesus to forgive my sins and take control of my life."

PART 3

AFTER CHRIST: Now having a relationship with Jesus, what **changes** have taken place in my life? (50-80 words)

SAMPLE PERSONAL FAITH STORY, word count = 80

"Since then, I can truly say my life has changed. My husband and I pray together every day. We are closer to our children. We have enjoyed serving at the church. I've also joined a wonderful women's Community Group. I know there will still be trials and tribulations, but James 1:12 says, 'blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him'."

Total word count of sample = 171

Your story word count 250 Maximum

THREE ADDITIONAL HELPFUL ELEMENTS

1. Use Scripture, making sure Jesus is the hero of your story. Some great Scripture verses to consider: Romans 10:9, 10, John 14:6, John 3:16, Ephesians 2:8, 9. Make it personal.
2. Name people instrumental in helping you trusting or growing in Christ using their first & last name. This will be a HUGE encouragement to them. Also make sure you invite them to your baptism!
3. Stay away from "churchy words" people won't understand like, "read in the word," "redeemed by the blood of the Lamb," "baptized by the Spirit," "sanctified," "fellowship," "the world..."

WE NEED TO HAVE YOUR PERSONAL FAITH STORY *AS SOON AS POSSIBLE*

We will make edits to each story to correct grammar and avoid potentially confusing language while affirming Bible truths. Be assured that the story will be true to what you prepare and in your voice.

Please send your faith story via email to:

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF FAITH STORY:



BAPTISM DAY LOGISTICS

WHEN SHOULD I ARRIVE?

You and your guests that will be on stage with you need to arrive one hour prior to your scheduled baptism service. At this time, you will receive final instructions, so please be prompt! Wear the clothes you will be baptized in. Bring a bag with a change of clothes, two towels, and a plastic bag for wet clothes.

WHAT SHOULD I WEAR?

We recommend you wear dark pants, ideally shorts and your baptism shirt. Avoid garments such as jeans or sweats. They absorb too much water. Everyone should take special care to be modest, wearing swimsuits or t-shirts under their other clothes. Please do not wear white. Everyone will receive a baptism t-shirt that you will wear over your swimsuit or other clothing.

DO I GET TO CHOOSE MY BAPTISM SERVICE?

We try to be as accommodating as possible with service selection, so we would like to know which service you prefer. Occasionally, however, we are not able to place you in your preferred service. We try to have a balance of male/female, adult/children, along with a variety of story content in each service. The order in which we receive the faith stories also plays a part in which service you will be part of. Once you have been assigned a service we are generally not able to change it. We thank you in advance for your understanding of this outreach opportunity.

WHAT DO I DO AFTER I COME OUT OF THE WATER?

We will provide separate changing rooms for women and men. Bring a change of clothes along with 2 solid colored towels. You should place your change of clothes: under-clothing, shirts and pants, towels, and footwear in a duffel bag or backpack in the appropriate changing room.

SHOULD I INVITE FRIENDS AND FAMILY?

Yes, yes, YES! The baptism service is a wonderful outreach opportunity. Family and friends who do not yet know Christ, and who otherwise might not be interested in coming to church, are often very willing to come to your baptism service. So invite them! Let them hear story after story, including yours, of how God changes lives. You may even want to plan a party or reception after service. We encourage everyone to take full advantage of this opportunity to share God's good news with your family and friends.

CAN MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS TAKE PICTURES?

Yes, in appropriate areas.

WHAT IF I HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS?

Let us know. We will work at accommodations together.

BAPTISM REGISTRATION FORM

Today's Date: _____

Name: _____

Name Pronunciation (Phonetic Spelling):

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Best Contact Phone: _____

Best Contact Email: _____

Baptism Service Date: _____

Campus: _____

Preferred Service Time (Please fill in your service time):

Saturday service: _____ Sunday service: _____

Age Range (CIRCLE):

KidsWorld (4th or 5th Grade) Genesis (Middle School)

High School 19-29 30-49 50+

Gender (CIRCLE): Male Female

T-Shirt Size (CIRCLE): Youth Medium • Youth Large

Adult Small • Adult Medium • Large • XL • 2XL • 3XL

Any Physical Concerns: _____

Continued on other side



PHOTO RELEASE

We love to celebrate our baptism participants by posting a photo and their faith story on our website and on the monitors around church!

____ I consent to my faith story being posted on ccclife.org

____ I consent to my picture being posted on ccclife.org and on building monitors

Signature: _____

.....

Minors are always listed by first name, last initial. Please sign below to indicate your preferences regarding your child's photo being posted with their story on ccclife.org/baptism.

____ I consent to my child's faith story being posted on ccclife.org

____ I consent to my child's photo being posted on ccclife.org and building monitors

Parent/Guardian signature:

"We were 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 6:4

CHRIST COMMUNITY
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