

BAPTISM BY IMMERSION

DESCRIPTION

Baptism is an outward demonstration of the change that took place in our heart when we believed Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Jesus Christ commanded all of His disciples to baptize new disciples in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Baptism in Christ's day was done through full immersion under water. In fact, even Jesus was baptized in this way. This type of baptism is rooted in a practice ordained in God's Law for ritual cleansing, called a *mikveh* in Hebrew. Ritual cleansing like this was required of priests before they could serve God and was required of common people in order to remain clean before God.

For believers today, this type of baptism symbolizes our inclusion in Christ's death and resurrection. Our old self dies as it is submerged under the water and we emerge out of the water as a new creation in Christ. As we are literally submerged into the waters of baptism, we figuratively include ourselves in the death of Jesus and we put to death the sinful nature we inherited from Adam. Coming up out of the waters of baptism signifies our participation in Jesus' resurrection. Our old life is rolled away and we emerge as a new creation in Christ. Hallelujah!

If you or anyone in your group has not been water baptized, it can be done by your fellow disciples in any body of water, including a pond, the ocean, or a bathtub. It is a time for great rejoicing as a fellow believer commits themselves to Jesus and demonstrates their new life in the New Covenant with God.

SCRIPTURE PORTION

Matthew 28:19-20 NIV - 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."

GROUP PRACTICE

1. Prepare:
 - Ask the group if there is anyone who has not been baptized who wants to be.
 - Ask the group if there was anyone who was baptized or sprinkled as a child who wants to affirm their faith and/or rededicate their life to Christ.
 - Meet with the people who want to be baptized before the day of baptism in order to discuss with them the seriousness of this act of faith and their understanding of the commitment they are entering into.
 - Determine which body of water you will gather at to submerge these believers in baptism.
2. Before baptizing someone, have them affirm their faith in Jesus Christ. Ask them:
 - Do you believe that Jesus is Lord?
 - Do you believe that God raised Jesus from the dead?
 - Wait for their genuine response of faith through verbal spoken agreement or affirmation of these statements.
3. Pray for them and listen to anything the Holy Spirit may desire for you to say to them at this very special time in their life of faith.
 - Allow members of the group to offer words of prayer and/or encouragement for the person being baptized.
4. When you are both ready, say to them: "I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."
 - Submerge them under the water and help to raise them up out of the water.
5. Rejoice! Affirm them as a child of God and a new creation in Christ. Welcome them into God's family and God's Kingdom!



PURPOSE:

Outwardly demonstrate our inner and eternal covenant commitment to Jesus Christ.

Be cleansed from the old and emerge as a new creation.

GROUP SIZE:

Any size group.

SCRIPTURES

Mark 16:16

Matthew 28:19

1 Peter 3:21

Romans 6:3-4

Colossians 2:11-12

1 Corinthians 12:13

Acts 2:38

Acts 8:38

Acts 9:18

Acts 10:47

Acts 22:16