



BAPTISM

STEP OUT IN OBEDIENCE

Christian baptism
is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

It is an act of obedience symbolizing
the believer's faith in a crucified, buried,
and risen Saviour,
the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life,
and the resurrection to walk
in newness of life in Christ Jesus.

Baptism is an exciting and integral part
of what it means to love Christ.
To come to a place of making this decision
and stepping into it,
one must stand openly before Christ, and say,
"I will follow!"

Welcome!

We celebrate your desire to consider this important step in your faith journey. This booklet was designed for you to take home and explore scripture, as it relates to baptism. As you read it through, note any questions that come up and bring your list to a group session or one-to-one visit with a pastor. Pastor Dan has posted a great message on our church website that further explains what Baptism means to a Christ Follower. Be sure to check it out in the "Explore Faith" section.

"For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body - whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free - and we were all given the one Spirit to drink."

1 Corinthians 12:13 NIV

What is baptism?

Baptism is the moment when a believer publicly confesses Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, identifying with Christ and His church. The act of baptism by immersion is done by lowering a person completely into water, then raising him/her up out of the water again. There are many forms of baptism practiced by various churches however, we believe that immersion baptism best represents the truth of total identification with Christ. It is our practice to baptize this way and we believe that immersion was the most likely practice in first-century Judaism and in the early church. These facts are based on the study of the Greek verb βαπτίζω (bap-tid-zo) which is most commonly defined in one of the three ways: to dip repeatedly, to immerse, to submerge (of vessels sunk)

We also take into consideration other baptisms described in the New Testament, in particular, Christ's baptism. "...He (Christ) went up out of the water..." **Matthew 3:16 NIV**

Is baptism necessary for salvation?

No. The reason for getting baptized is not because it's a necessary thing to do to get into heaven, but because Jesus commanded it. Only through belief/faith in Christ can one find favour with God and have assurance of salvation.

Jesus, Himself said: *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* **John 14:6 NIV**

Close to 200 times in the New Testament salvation is said to be solely by faith in Christ, with no mention of baptism. Baptism doesn't make you a Christian, but it is the first step of being a follower of Jesus.

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God."

Romans 5:1-2 NIV

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Ephesians 2:8-10 NIV

Two additional points to consider:

1. Jesus told the thief on the cross that he would be with Him in paradise, however it was not possible for this man to be baptized: Jesus answered him, *"Truly I tell you, today you will be with Me in paradise."* Luke 23:43 NIV
2. The apostle Paul said: *"For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel - not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power."*

1 Corinthians 1:17 NIV

If baptism is not necessary for salvation then why should I be baptized?

Obedience. That one simple word clearly summarizes why we should be baptized. When Jesus was talking to His disciples He told them: *"If you love me, keep my commands."*

John 14:15 NIV

Baptism just so happens to be the last command given by Christ to His disciples as a part of the Great Commission: *"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 NIV

If we are followers or disciples of Christ then we should be baptized. Neglecting this command results in disobedience. Since true faith always expresses itself in obedience, those who have believed in Christ and have been properly instructed about baptism will obey Christ by being baptized.

At CrossRoads Church, we believe baptism is the 'first step' of obedience as a follower of Jesus, not 'just a stage' when we become really serious about our faith. Jesus asked people to 'count the cost' of following Him from day one. Baptism then, is an expression of declaration from the one who has 'counted the cost' and is ready to follow Him - all in.

We accept Jesus' offer of grace because we come to the conclusion there is nothing we can do to be acceptable to him; we all fall short of the standard. Accepting this amazing gift of grace allows us to come to Jesus just as we are, but then to grow in our understanding of who He is and what it means to make Him Lord in our lives.

What is the meaning of baptism?

Baptism does not impart anything special on the person who is immersed, such as guaranteeing entrance into heaven or experiencing a unique washing away of sins. Instead, it symbolizes:

- Our identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection
- Our identification with Christ's church - the body of Christ
- Our cleansing from sin

Baptism symbolizes one's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection.

As we are lowered into the water, we see a picture of 'dying to our old ways' and being buried to our past life of sin. When we come up out of the water, we identify with Christ's resurrection as we leave the past behind and begin a new life, lived in the power of Christ. On top of this baptism is also a visual and public declaration to others (and ourselves) that we have been freed from the guilt of past sins and the death penalty those sins incurred.

“Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 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 6:3-4 NIV and Colossians 2:11-12 NIV

Water Baptism symbolizes our identification with Christ’s church- the body of Christ

“For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body - whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free - and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.” 1 Corinthians 12:13 NIV

The second thing baptism symbolizes is our identification with the church. Although this took place spiritually at the moment of saving faith, the act of baptism publicly identifies a person with other Christians. Essentially, it is an outward declaration saying, “now I’m one of them”.

Baptism symbolizes cleansing from sin

Water is a primary symbol of cleansing but one can never forget that water is not what cleanses the heart. The work of the Holy Spirit, thanks to the death and resurrection of Christ, is what cleanses us.

He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. Titus 3:5-7 NIV

Baptism is an outward, physical symbol of what has taken place in the spiritual world. We have died to ourselves and our selfish living and now are called to live out a life following Jesus, giving him total reign or Lordship, in our lives.

Who can be baptized?

Scripture affirms that those who have believed and are in a relationship with Jesus Christ, should be baptized. When studying the pattern found in the New Testament we find that people heard the gospel, believed in the message they heard (therefore believing in Jesus Christ), then were baptized. Here at CrossRoads we do not baptize

infants rather, we celebrate Child Dedication as the means for a parent to entrust their children to God.

Consider the following verses from Acts noting the order of belief first, then baptism:

- Acts 2:41 *“Those who accepted his message were baptized...”*
- Acts 8:12 *“But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized....”*
- Acts 8:36-38 *“As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, ‘Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?’ Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, you may.’ The eunuch answered, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.”*

How long should I wait to be baptized?

Biblical examples indicate that baptism should take place soon after a person comes to faith. This is true both for adults and children. If you're under the age of 18 we ask that you contact one of our Family Ministries staff to further discuss this important step:

- Elementary age – contact our Pastors of K-6 at K-6Pastors@CrossRoadsChurch.ca
- Grades 7-12 – contact Youth Ministries at Youth@CrossRoadsChurch.ca

Is it necessary for a person who has been baptized as an infant to be baptized by immersion?

We believe that being baptized by immersion is an individual's decision made after committing one's life to Christ, and not someone else's decision made on their behalf. If you have been baptized as an infant, we feel baptism by immersion is a great way to affirm your parent's faith and their desire to see you have a personal relationship with God of your own. This action doesn't 'undo' or 'redo' what your parents did but rather acknowledges what they had prayed for and desired to see as reality in your life.

Re-baptism

As a church we do not feel one needs to be re-baptized by immersion, for any reason. There is no indication in the Bible of any believer being re-baptized after a lapse of faith. The way of restoration for a person who has fallen away from the Lord is through the confession of sins as seen in 1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* If you want to have a further conversation with one of our staff about your unique circumstances, call the office to set up an appointment.

What is the next step?

We'd love to talk with you more about your interest to get baptized plus give you the details of all you need to know to proceed. Here are a couple ways to do that:

One-on-One Conversation with a Staff Member

If you'd prefer to have a one-on-one discussion with one of our staff, contact CommunityLife@CrossRoadsChurch.ca or call 403-347-6425.

If you're under the age of 18 years, please contact:

- Elementary age – email our Pastors of K-6 at K-6Pastors@CrossRoadsChurch.ca
- Grades 7-12 – email Youth Ministries at Youth@CrossRoadsChurch.ca

Being Prepared for Baptism Day

Where will the baptism service be held?

Indoor Baptism Service – church sanctuary, during regular service times (following COVID guidelines)

Summer Baptism Service – location and times to be determined each year. If the weather is poor, the service will be held inside at the church.

When and where should I meet?

Indoor Service:

- Please meet in the Worship Room 45 minutes prior to the service start time.
- Come dressed in your baptism clothing.
- Check in with the hosts when you arrive.

Outdoor Service:

- This will depend on the location of the service. We will make sure you know all the details as the baptism day approaches, but plan on meeting 45 minutes prior to the service.
- Come dressed in your baptism clothing.
- Check in with the hosts when you arrive.

What should I wear for my baptism?

- Dark, loose fitting nylon shorts, track pants or yoga pants (jeans/sweat pants not recommended). For your privacy, shirts should be tucked in once you are in the baptismal tank.
- A bathing suit must be worn under your clothing.
- Please don't wear lotions, hairspray or heavy makeup or deodorant.

What should I bring?

- 2-3 towels
- Change of clothing for after the service
- If possible, leave valuables at home or with a family member or friend during the service

How long will the service last?

- Services will vary depending on the number of baptisms but you can expect the service to last about 1-1 ½ hours.

Media and Keepsakes

- Certificates will be provided upon request.
- Services will be available to view online.
- Guests are encouraged to take pictures or video of their own.
- Make a point of celebrating this momentous event with friends and family.

COVID-19 Guidelines:

- The baptismal tank is chlorinated.
- The Pastor who is baptizing you will be masked.
- To limit contact and possibility of exposure, we ask that only the Pastor and baptizee be in the tank.
- Please register online for the church service that both yourself and any guests for your baptism will be attending at **CrossRoadsChurch.ca/Attend**.

Small Group Discussion Questions

Watch Pastor Dan's instructional video on the Church website. This video can be found in the 'Explore>Baptism' section. After viewing, have your group answer these questions:

1. If you've already been baptized, share your story of how you came to the decision and what difference the experience made in your life.
2. For those who have not, what might be stopping you from being baptized?
3. What can we learn from the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3) that would give us insight into the significance of the act?
4. Baptism is included in the Great Commission of Jesus to His disciples (Matthew 28:18-20), why was it an important action for the first Christians?
5. If baptism was important for Jesus personally and important for the first believers, what importance does it have for us today?

Have additional questions?

Contact us at:

Main.Office@CrossRoadsChurch.ca

403-347-6425

www.CrossRoadsChurch.ca





crossroadschurch.ca/baptism