

# BAPTISM

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## WELCOME

We are so excited that you're interested in being baptized here at MissionView!

In the New Testament, Jesus instituted two *ordinances* (sometimes referred to as *sacraments*) for his followers to practice: Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which we often call Communion. These practices serve as public reminders of what God has done and is continuing to do.

At its core, baptism is a proclamation of faith. It is practiced by believers who have recognized their sin before a holy God and are publicly declaring their salvation in Jesus Christ.

This booklet will describe:

- What Scripture says about baptism.
- What baptism illustrates.
- What baptism is not.
- Who is baptized.
- How we baptize.
- Why we baptize.

It will also include:

- Preparing for your baptism.
- Details about your baptism day.
- Next steps to take after being baptized.

## **WHAT SCRIPTURE SAYS ABOUT BAPTISM**

There is a recognizable pattern found in the New Testament where people hear the gospel, repent, believe, and are then baptized.

Here are just a few examples:

- Jewish believers at Pentecost (Acts 2:37-41)
- The Ethiopian man (Acts 8:30-39)
- Cornelius' household (Acts 10:44-48)

Christians today are continuing in this pattern as people recognize that sin has kept them from God and only Jesus can save them and restore that relationship.

To be saved means that you are made into a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). That is why you often hear Christians described as being “born again” (John 3:3). Born-again believers are cleansed of their old life of sin and made new. This includes being given a new heart, a new life, a new family, a new Lord, a new Spirit, a new eternal destination, and much more (Romans 6:1-11, Colossians 2:11-12, Galatians 4:4-7, Titus 3:4-7)!

Then, baptism is a public proclamation of this very salvation in your life.

## **WHAT BAPTISM ILLUSTRATES**

Baptism is meant to function as a visible symbol of a deeper invisible reality. It's like a wedding ring; a married man wears this visible symbol to proclaim the invisible reality of his commitment to his wife.

By being submerged in water, you are identifying with Christ's death and symbolically displaying death to your old self and old life. Coming up out of the water reminds us of Christ's resurrection and announces your union with Jesus and newness of life in Him. The act says, “I am not just a different or better person, but I am brand new!”

Additionally, the water symbolizes being washed and cleansed of sin, a beautiful picture of what has already happened at the moment of salvation.

## **WHAT BAPTISM IS NOT**

Baptism is not what saves us. We are only saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9). While it symbolizes being washed and made new, only the blood of Jesus really purifies us (1 John 1:7).

Similarly, baptism is not necessary for salvation. It is not a prerequisite to be saved, nor is it required afterward for salvation to be complete. Rather, believers are baptized after salvation as they respond to Christ's command and celebrate new life.

There is nothing magical or significant about the water used for baptism, though we do believe it to be a spiritually celebratory act.

## **WHO IS BAPTIZED**

Baptism is reserved for believers who have made a profession of faith.

At MissionView, we do not baptize infants. We allow children to be baptized if they make a profession of their own accord and we work alongside families to determine if it is the appropriate time. That being said, we do allow families to dedicate their child to the Lord before the congregation at various times throughout the year.

Often new Christians question whether or not they are spiritually ready for baptism. Take comfort in knowing that most people who are baptized are brand new in their faith. Once saved, we should obey and celebrate, not wait!

Typically, we do not baptize people if they have been baptized before, as we are given a new life only once. However, we would be happy to talk with people on a case-by-case basis about their story.

## **HOW WE BAPTIZE**

At MissionView, we practice immersion in water. We believe that immersing rather than sprinkling was the New Testament mode of baptism and that it serves as a better symbolic picture.

We baptize publicly. We believe that this is a time to celebrate with the Church family the public proclamation of a person's salvation.

We baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, as commanded by Jesus (Matthew 28:19).

Individuals are able to be baptized by a pastor at MissionView, but we also allow people to be baptized by whoever has been most influential in their discipleship (Matthew 28:19).

## **WHY WE BAPTIZE**

We get baptized because Jesus was himself baptized, and we want to follow his example (Matthew 3:13-17).

We get baptized in obedience to Jesus, as he commanded that we do so (Matthew 28:19). This should be one of the first steps of obedience we can take in our new lives with Him.

We get baptized to identify with Jesus and his Church. By being baptized we are announcing our participation in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-13, Ephesians 4:4-6).

We get baptized to celebrate and worship God together. In being baptized, the love and grace of God are put on display for all to see!

## **FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

If you have more questions about baptism, connect with us at the church office. A staff member would love to continue talking through things with you.

## PREPARING FOR YOUR BAPTISM

MissionView celebrates baptism several times each year. Keep an eye on the church calendar for upcoming dates.

If you are uncertain about whether or not you'd like to be baptized, please reach out and you can be connected with a staff member.

If you are certain you'd like to be baptized, please begin to consider your faith story. Everyone should be able to answer the following questions:

- What was your life like before Jesus?
- How did you come to know Jesus?
- How has your life changed?

Those who are comfortable will be encouraged to share their testimony with the congregation at the time of their baptism. We will work with you!

## YOUR BAPTISM DAY

### WHAT TO WEAR

- A black t-shirt that says "Raised to Life" will be provided.
- Dark pants or shorts.
- Flip-flops or sandals.

### WHAT TO BRING

- A towel.
- A full change of clothes.
- A plastic bag for wet clothes.
- A hair dryer, if necessary.

### WHAT TO DO

- You and the person baptizing you will meet 15 minutes prior to service at the Welcome Desk in the lobby.
- When it is your turn, head on stage to share your story (if applicable).
- Carefully step into the water.
- The person baptizing you will say, **"I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."**
- Get dunked.
- Head backstage and you'll be shown the nearest place to change.
- Celebrate!

## **NEXT STEPS**

Congratulations! We're so excited to celebrate with you! You may be wondering, "what's next?"

Baptism is an initial step, not the end. Sometimes we are tempted to go back to our usual, everyday lives after being baptized. Instead, it should be an exciting time of growing in our relationship with God. Growing in discipleship is a lifelong process.

Here are just a few things we would suggest to encourage this:

- Become a member at MissionView.
- Go deeper with one of our ministries, such as by joining a community group.
- Find a mentor or accountability partner. We can help to connect you!
- Develop a schedule for reading scripture.
- Serve at MissionView and in our community.

If you are unsure how exactly to move forward, MissionView staff would love to help you in this process. We are excited about what God has done and is continuing to do in your life and in the Church!