

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

*Knowing and  
Loving God...  
Making God's Love  
Known to Others*



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What do we  
believe about  
**baptism?**



A commitment to follow Christ includes 3 clear steps:  
**Making, Marking and Maturing**

## Making the Commitment

In a marriage ceremony a couple makes a commitment to each other through their vows. These vows are the core of the marriage covenant and communicate allegiance to one's spouse. Similarly, when a person places their faith in the Lord Jesus they are **making** a commitment to Him above all else and all others.

Jesus has initiated the new covenant through His sacrificial death for us on the cross and His resurrection from the dead. We cannot earn this gift; we can only receive it by faith. Placing one's faith in Jesus comes prior to baptism and is our only hope for salvation. Before we mark our commitment through the act of baptism, we first must make a commitment.

Commitment involves a choice, so it takes place after an individual is mature enough to make a conscious decision to follow Jesus.

## Marking the Commitment

Baptism is a symbol of commitment, but it is not *just* a symbol. Consider a wedding ring - it is a visible symbol of a relational reality when two people join together to become one family through their common commitment to one another. During a wedding ceremony, rings are exchanged as a public illustration of a permanent, covenant relationship that has been formed. The rings are symbols, but

they are significant because they **mark** the commitment that has been made through the wedding vows.

In the same way, being baptized is a believer's demonstration of a commitment to follow Christ. The act of baptism is a believer's identification with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection; it is a sort of "re-telling" of the Gospel story through a public act of obedience.

Baptism comes after making a personal commitment to follow Christ. Baptism does not 'save' you; it is through belief in Jesus and choosing to follow Him, that a person is saved.

## Maturing the Commitment

During a wedding ceremony, a couple makes and marks the commitment; it is the start of a lifetime of **maturing** that commitment as they live out their covenant promises together. In the same way, baptism is a pledge of obedience to Jesus. Just as the wedding ceremony is not an end, but a beginning, a baptism ceremony is also a beginning. It is the foundation of a lifelong, Spirit-empowered journey towards maturity in one's faith.

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 SAVIOR; the believer's death to sin; the burial of the old life; and the rebirth to walk in newness of life in CHRIST JESUS.

It is a testimony to his/her faith in the final resurrection of the dead.

# Baptism in brief:

## *It is a command of the Lord.*

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 expresses union with Christ.*

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*

## *It is immersion in water.*

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?" And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

*Acts 8:36, 38*

## *It is for those who have already placed their faith in Jesus.*

Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.

*Acts 10:47*