

To be a Christian means to place one's faith in Jesus, in his death for sins, in his resurrection, and submit to his lordship. Entrance to the Kingdom of God comes through a change of allegiance from all other lords or authorities and a recognition that Jesus is Lord. That's why Jesus appeared on the scene and told people: 'The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!' (Mark 1:15). To repent means to change one's mind about something in a way that leads to action. Jesus is, literally, calling people to turn from every other authority that they may follow, and recognize, him as their Lord.

2. To recognize Jesus as 'Lord' means to submit to him. Is Jesus your Lord and Master? Would you say that this is true of your life? How does your life evidence the reality that you are following Jesus?

For people in the Roman world, following Jesus meant no longer recognizing Caesar as Lord, but Jesus. This was a costly choice for people to make. In fact, Jesus actually tells people to take the time to consider the cost of discipleship.

3. Read Luke 14:25-33. Would you say that you have considered the cost of following Jesus? In your life, what could following Jesus in discipleship and baptism cost you?

Pt 2: In Baptism...

In the Bible, an unbaptized follower of Jesus is the exception. It's a rare thing. In fact, baptism has been described as 'the biblical sinner's prayer'. Often times, in the New Testament, people expressed their desire to follow Christ by being baptized. Whether you've been following Christ for a decade, or for ten minutes, you need to be baptized.

Baptism is a public declaration that Jesus is Lord, that he has changed your heart, and that you have been born again. It's an act that says, 'I am declaring that I am a disciple of Christ. He is my Lord!'. Let's take some time to look at Baptism in the New Testament and what it means.

I. Baptism in Jesus' Time

A. The Baptism of John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1-11)

- **Background:** The Jews were familiar with the ceremonial baths that symbolized cleansing from sin. They also knew that Gentiles had to be baptized if they wanted to be a part of the Jewish religion.
- **The Condition:** For being baptized by John was _____. (verses 2, 8, 11) Being baptized did not change the people, it was only a public confession of an inward change of heart.
- **The Result:** In John 1:35 and 4:1, what were people called after they had been baptized? _____. In I Corinthians 1:11-15, why was Paul glad he had not personally baptized many people? If someone had been baptized "into the name of Paul" what would that make that person? A _____ of Paul.

B. The Baptism of Jesus Christ (Matthew 3:13-17)

- Jesus was baptized to publicly demonstrate his identification with man and his desire to submit to God's will.
- He baptized others (through his disciples). (John 3:22; 4:1-2)
- He commanded his disciples to baptize. (Matthew 28:18-20)

2. Baptism in the Early Church

A. Baptism in the Holy Spirit

- The Promise - Acts 1:4, 5
- The Fulfillment - Acts 2:1-4
- The Explanation - I Corinthians 12:13
According to this verse, how many believers have been baptized in the Holy Spirit?

B. Water Baptism (Acts 2:37-41)

- Who was being baptized? (verse 41) _____
- What were they added to? _____
- What did water baptism mean to the Believers?
Inwardly - they had repented of their sin and believed in Jesus Christ.
Outwardly - they were publicly demonstrating that an inward change had taken place and they were identifying themselves with other believers in the church. Being baptized was closely associated with becoming a part of the church.

3. Baptism in the book of Romans

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 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 6:1-4

4. Summary

After being born again we are baptized to demonstrate to people:

That we have repented of our sin and God has forgiven and cleansed us.

That we died with Christ and are now going to live a new life.

That we are separating ourselves from the world and are committing ourselves to the fellowship and lifestyle of the church.

That we have been baptized in the Holy Spirit and that has made us a part of the Body of Christ.

5. Questions

Why Do I need to be Immersed?

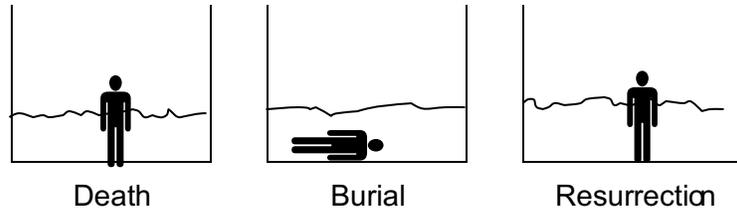
Because _____ was baptized that way.

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

The Greek word baptizo means to _____.

Baptisms in the Bible are described in terms of going into water and coming out of water.
...went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water... Acts 8:38-39

It best pictures one's identification with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection.



Should Children Be Baptized?

At Summerside, we wait until our children are old enough to believe and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them.

Some churches practice a "baptism of confirmation" for children. This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on behalf of the child. The parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his own personal confession of Christ. This custom began about 300 years after the Bible was completed. This is different from the baptism talked about in the Bible which was only for those old enough to believe. The purpose is to publicly confess your personal commitment to Christ.

When Should I be Baptized?

As soon as you have _____!

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