

BAPTISM AT GOSPEL CITY CHURCH

Baptism is an act of obedience for those who have professed faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. The act of baptism declares in dramatic form a believer's new life in Jesus. It is a symbolic "water burial" that identifies a new convert with the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

Romans 6:3–6: Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

Baptism is meant to be a one-time occurrence that points to a believer's profession of faith in Christ for salvation.

WHO IS BAPTISM FOR?

Baptism is only for those who can give a credible profession of faith in Jesus. In other faith traditions, parents are encouraged to baptize infants. This distorts the purpose of baptism. Only those who have a capacity to understand the gospel, consciously choose Christ as Savior, and give evidence of repentance and faith should be baptized.

When someone is baptized at Gospel City Church they are asked to share a brief testimony of how they were converted to Christ. It is always a powerful moment when someone tells their story of turning from sin to follow Christ as Savior and Lord. It gives glory to God and encourages others who may need to be baptized as well.

WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN WHO WANT TO BE BAPTIZED?

We believe that children can be genuinely converted to Christ by grace through faith at an early age. We encourage children to wait until they are around 12 years old before they follow the Lord in baptism. This does two things: it gives time for spiritual fruit to be shown confirming genuine conversion: it also allows the child to have an adult memory of his/her baptism.

WHAT IS THE SEQUENCE?

It is important to be baptized on the right side of your conversion. Baptism should follow conversion, not the other way around. It is possible for a person to go through the religious ceremony of baptism without being genuinely converted, only later to experience genuine conversion. In this case, the new convert should be genuinely baptized on the right side of conversion. It is not that they are "baptized again." They are simply being baptized authentically as a true follower of Christ. The Scripture is clear that there is only "one baptism."

Ephesians 4:4–5: There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism...

Notice the sequence:

Acts 2:38,41: And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

1. Receive the Word.
2. Repent and believe.
3. Be baptized.

DOES THE METHOD MATTER?

At Gospel City Church we baptize by immersion. Why? The word “baptism” means, “immerse, plunge, saturate.” Those who have been baptized by some other method (i.e. sprinkling, pouring, etc.) will be welcomed as a member of Gospel City Church as long as your baptism followed conversion. But we encourage you to consider being baptized scripturally.

In Mark 1:5, John baptized “in the river”. In Mark 1:10, after being baptized, Jesus “came out of the water”. In Acts 8:35, the Phillip and the Ethiopian “both went down into the water” for baptism.

WHAT DOES BAPTISM ACCOMPLISH?

Baptism is a new convert’s way of publicly declaring that he/she has been saved. By choosing to be baptized, a new Christian is making a bold statement that he/she has chosen to follow Christ and wants the world to know it.

Baptism contributes nothing to salvation. Scripture clearly teaches that salvation is by grace through faith, not human activity or religious ceremony. The waters of baptism cannot wash away sin. Only the blood of Jesus can wash away sin.

Ephesians 2:8–9 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Gospel City Church reserves membership for those who have been baptized following their conversion to Christ.