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words, baptism is a matter of a clear conscience before God and an evidence of what has already occurred in your heart. Further, in the story of the thief on the cross (Luke 23:43), Jesus told the condemned man that he would be with him in paradise. This man repented and believed while dying without any opportunity for baptism, yet he too received the promise of eternity.

Thank you for your interest in the Bible's teaching about baptism. Jesus Christ, as an example, was baptized in the Jordan River just prior to the start of his public ministry. Many have said, "If Jesus was baptized, then I should be also." This brochure is designed to answer some of the common questions about baptism. If you have become a follower of Jesus Christ, please read through this brochure and consider being baptized as a testimony to that relationship.

BELIEVER'S BAPTISM

*identifying
with Christ ...*

New Life

What is baptism?

Baptism by immersion in water is a symbolic picture of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christ died, was buried, and then was raised on the third day. As he was placed in the ground dead and came out from the tomb alive, so water baptism is a picture of the believer's identification with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. As a sinner, the Bible says that all are "dead in their sins," but upon conversion, the believer is given "new life." Water baptism is a public acknowledgement that the person is no longer dead in his/her sins, but is now alive in Christ. Romans 6:3-4 says, "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."

To speak to one of our pastors or elders about being baptized, please call the church office using the contact information below.



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EMAIL: info@harvestbarrie.ca
www.harvestbarrie.ca

OFFICE:
258 Bayfield Street
Barrie, ON L4M 3B7
705-739-8613

WORSHIP:
Timothy Christian School
750 Essa Road, Barrie, ON
9 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.



What happens at the baptism service?

Baptism is a beautiful and special event in the life of a believer. While it is a simple ceremony, it will also be one of the most memorable spiritual milestones in a new Christ-follower's journey with God.

The following information is helpful in knowing what happens on the day of the baptism:

Those being baptized are to bring a towel and swimsuit. A large, dark coloured T-shirt will be provided. Just prior to the service, all of those being baptized, those performing the baptizing and the baptismal workers meet to pray and answer any last minute questions. The workers are there to assist you in preparing. During the baptism itself, each candidate steps into the baptismal tank. The one performing the baptism will introduce the candidate to the congregation. The process of being baptized is simple. With gentle but firm support, the person being baptized slips under the water for a brief moment. The person baptizing assists the person in coming up out of the water. Baptism can be a very special event for family and friends who should be invited to witness this important day in your life.

What are the steps to be baptized?

- You must be a follower of Jesus Christ. If you are not sure what this means, please contact us and we will explain this further.
- Complete the baptism application available on the website.
- Attend an interview with one of the church leaders to discuss your decision to be baptized.

Why full immersion baptism?

The word baptism is often used to describe religious rituals which have developed over time and become part of a church's tradition. While baptism may have come to mean sprinkling or pouring, the Bible's picture of baptism is always that of full immersion.

Consider these points from the Bible:

1. The word "baptism" comes from the original Greek word, baptizo, which means "to immerse or dip."
2. The Greek word "baptizo" is never used for any other method of baptism, such as sprinkling or pouring.
3. In every passage where baptism is mentioned, the actual text either requires or allows for immersion.
4. Whenever baptism is described in the Bible it always pictures a person being baptized "in" water, never "with" water, as in pouring or sprinkling. The various prepositions used with baptism require immersion as the method. Baptism is described in the Bible as being "in" water; people are said to come out from "inside" the water, and they enter "into" the water. For example Mark 1:10 records, *"And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opening and the Spirit descending on him like a dove."*

Who should be baptized?

The Bible teaches that only those who have become believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are to be baptized. The Bible specifically states that baptism is for those who have first believed. Acts 8:36-38 says, *"And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, 'See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?' And Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' And he replied, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him."* You will notice that the condition for baptism was believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Since this is limited to those who are old enough to understand, it follows that baptism is limited to those who have personally crossed the bridge to faith in Jesus Christ.

Every mention of baptism in the Bible is associated with salvation. Our conclusion is that baptism is only

for followers of Christ. New parents often wonder about having their baby baptized. As we look at the Bible, we find that there are no examples of infant baptism. All examples are based on personal faith.

When should I be baptized?

Every example of baptism in the Bible was immediately following salvation. For example, on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41) new believers were baptized on the very same day. The man from Ethiopia (Acts 8:36-38) was baptized immediately after understanding the message explained by Philip, and following Saul's conversion (Acts 9:17-18), he was baptized within a few days. So, it would seem that baptism should occur as soon as is practical after making the decision to follow Christ.

Concerning children and baptism we know from experience that they often receive Christ at an early age. Since we wish for them to make sure of their salvation, we do not encourage children to be baptized until the parents and our children's workers are assured they have a clear understanding of the message and their relationship with Jesus Christ. It is important that the child not only has received Christ, but that the child has chosen for himself/herself to be baptized. As a general rule, we encourage children to wait until their junior high years (age 11+) before being baptized.

Why should I be baptized?

Baptism is a step of obedience for a Christ-follower, and symbolizes for the world, identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Although it is clear from the Bible that baptism is not necessary for salvation, what is also clear is that it is a required step of obedience and an evidence of having received the new life. The Bible says that, "Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 3:21 ESV). In other