

# What is Baptism?

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*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."  
(Acts 2:38)*

To grasp meaning from this powerful text, let's break down its main thoughts:

- Repent means to change your mind/direction.
- To be baptized means to be immersed.
- The 'name of Jesus Christ' refers to more than just a word or title, but to the nature, character and identity of God's son.

Baptism is all about Jesus. When we recognize our need for Jesus and willingly surrender our lives to Him one of the first steps we take is to be baptized. We recognize that our decisions have led us away from God so in order to have peace with God and a relationship with Him we need to think and act differently. Since the church began, those who have become convicted of their need for the grace of God have taken the step of being immersed in water as a declaration of their life change. By allowing himself or herself to be immersed in water, the believer is showing their relationship with God. This ceremony is an outward demonstration of an inward transformation.

The immersion into water expresses the believers' death to sin and their old life. Being drawn up out of the water expresses the believers' resurrection into a new life in Jesus as a child of God. With this new life comes a new identity. Thus baptism symbolizes a life changed the love of God.

Jesus commanded His followers to be baptized. When we are dunked into the water we are obeying our risen Lord and we are identifying ourselves with Him. Baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is declaration of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus in life of a believer. Baptism is incredibly powerful as we are taking part in a sacred act that has been practiced for thousands of years by every believer from every part of the world who by faith, surrendered their life to Jesus and trusted in Him alone for their salvation.

Baptism is the public declaration of our new lives in Jesus and the beginning of our journey with Him. It is one of the first steps as we seek to live, love, and look like Jesus. With it comes one of the greatest gifts that God has given: His Spirit which dwells within us, guiding us, encouraging, and mediating to God on our behalf.