

# *Baptism at The Bridge*

Before you sign up to be baptized, we want to take a moment to share what baptism is, what it means, and how to know if you're ready.

## **What Is Baptism?**

In the New Testament, the beginning of a journey with Jesus is marked by something called baptism. (Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 2:41, 8:35–39, 9:17–18)

At The Bridge, we like to say that baptism tells two stories. (Romans 6:3–5; Colossians 2:12)

First, it tells the gospel story. When someone goes down into the water and comes back up again, it's a picture of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.

But baptism also tells your story—that because of Jesus, your old life is gone and a new life has begun.

Scripture says in 2 Corinthians 5:17:

“If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here.”

That's why we practice full-immersion baptism (Matthew 3:16). Going down into the water represents dying to the old life—sin, self, and the past. Coming up out of the water represents being raised to new life in Christ.

## **What Does Baptism Mean?**

Another way to think about baptism is like a wedding ring.

A ring doesn't make someone married, but it shows that they belong to someone.

In the same way, baptism doesn't earn our salvation or wash away sin. Jesus has already accomplished that through his life, death, and resurrection.

Instead, baptism is a public declaration that we belong to Jesus and that he is now on the throne of our lives. (Matthew 28:19–20)

## **Why Should I Be Baptized?**

We get baptized because Jesus calls his followers to it.

In Matthew 28, Jesus tells his disciples to go and make disciples and baptize them.

And throughout the book of Acts, when people trusted in Jesus, baptism was one of the very first steps they took.

Baptism isn't a way to earn salvation. It's a step of obedience and celebration that comes after someone has trusted in Jesus. (Acts 8:35–39; 1 Peter 3:21)

## **How Do I Know If I'm Ready?**

You're ready to be baptized if you've personally trusted in Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins and decided he now gets your full allegiance.

Baptism isn't a maturity milestone, and it's not something you wait to do once you've cleaned up your life.

Instead, it's a step that comes at the beginning of following Jesus. (Acts 10:44–48)

## **Who Should Baptize Me?**

As we look at the New Testament, baptism is never tied with a particular role or office. Because of that, at The Bridge any follower of Jesus can baptize another believer.

Often this is someone who has played an important role in your faith—maybe the person who helped you come to know Jesus, a mentor, a friend, or a pastor.

## **What's My Next Step?**

If you've trusted in Jesus but haven't been baptized since making that decision, that's your next step. (Acts 2:38–41)

If that sounds like you—or even if you have more questions and would like to talk them through—click the sign-up button and someone from our team will connect with you soon.

We can't wait to celebrate what God is doing in your life.