

SAMUEL'S CHURCH  
BAPTISM APPLICATION

1. Full legal name:

First \_\_\_\_\_

Middle \_\_\_\_\_

Last \_\_\_\_\_

2. Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

3. Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you been able to attend our Baptism Class or read through our church's paper on the meaning of baptism (see below)?

yes \_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_

5. Why would you like to be baptized?

6. How would you describe how things are between you and God right now?

7. If you died tonight, are you certain you would go to heaven?

yes \_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_ not sure \_\_\_\_

8. If God asked what you are relying on to get yourself into heaven, what would you say?

9. Was there ever a time when you chose to turn from your sin to accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior for the rest of your life?

yes \_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_ not sure \_\_\_\_

If yes, please describe on the back of this page the circumstances surrounding your decision to accept Jesus.

Please return this form to the pastor when completed.

## Christian Baptism

The purpose of these notes is to give Biblical answers to common questions about baptism. People have many different ideas about what baptism means, but our objective is to discover what the Bible says about it.

### 1. What Does The Word "Baptize" Mean?

In the original Greek language of the New Testament, the most generalized meaning for the word "baptize" is to dip, soak or drench something. The drenching can be done by immersing something, or submerging it, or even dipping it. In the case of church baptism, a Believer is drenched with water (Acts 8:36-38). Why does God command that a Believer be publicly drenched with water? The answer lies in what the water of Christian baptism stands for.

### 2. What Does The Water of Baptism Stand For?

Let us first look at what the water of John the Baptist's baptism stood for. Mark 1:4 tells us that John's baptism was a baptism (or drenching) of repentance. As John was preaching about sin near the Jordan River, many people came to listen to him, and as they did, many were convicted and repented of their sins to God. At that point John called these people to come into the river and be baptized. Why? Because the water stood for repentance. When a person on the bank repented and came to be baptized, he was telling everyone watching that he had decided to repent. He was telling them that he was not just standing on the bank listening about repentance, but he had chosen to totally drench himself with repentance. The water of John's baptism stood for repentance.

Now ever since John's time Christians continued to be baptized, but the water no longer stands for repentance. The water of Christian baptism now stands for God Himself. In Matthew 28:18-20 Jesus commanded His men to make disciples of all nations and to baptize them "in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."

This is the meaning of Christian baptism: it is God's way for Christians to publicly state that they have chosen to join themselves to God and His salvation. When a person comes to be baptized, he is in effect saying, "I am no longer standing on the sidelines just hearing about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. I am not even just sticking my big toe in and thinking about whether to join God. In just the same way as I have chosen to totally drench myself with water today, I have chosen to totally drench myself with God and His salvation."

### 3. Who Should Be Baptized?

Acts 2:41 says, "Then those who had received his word were baptized." Since baptism is God's way for a Christian to publicly say he has been saved, only those who have received Jesus as their Savior should be baptized.

### 4. Is Baptism Necessary For Salvation?

In Acts 16:29-31 Paul is asked, "What must I do to be saved?" and replies, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved." This means when God opens a person's eyes to realize he is guilty of sin and will be punished for it in hell, there is only one thing he can do to be saved: place his trust in Jesus to save him. No good work of any kind can save a person from Hell not baptism, church attendance, giving up swearing, lying, cheating, etc. Everything that needs to be done to save us was done by Jesus when He died and rose again. The only thing God requires us to do is trust Jesus to do it all for us.

Now, once we are saved by trusting in Jesus, God has many things He commands us to do (to love Him with all our heart, love others, tell others of His salvation, to be baptized, etc.), but we are to do these things not in order to get ourselves saved and going to heaven, but because we are already saved and going to heaven through our trust in Jesus alone.

In this sense baptism can be compared to a wedding ring. A person does not wear a wedding ring before marriage, but only after. And what does it tell people? That he is married. It does not get him married - it only tells people he is already married. In the same way, baptism has no meaning before salvation. A person should not be baptized before he places his trust in Jesus as his Savior, but only after. And what does it tell people? That he is saved. It does not get him saved - it only tells people he is already saved. Like a wedding ring, baptism is an outward picture of what has already happened inside.

### **5. Should Babies Be Baptized?**

No. The Bible talks only about Believers' baptism. Since babies can not believe on Jesus for their salvation, God never intended them to be baptized. The same applies to anyone who has not personally placed his trust in Jesus to save him. Unless a person has believed on Jesus for their salvation, he should not be baptized.

What should be done if a person was baptized as a baby, and later received Christ as his Savior? Or what if a person was baptized as a child or adult, but only later placed his trust in Jesus as his Savior? Once a person truly becomes a Believer, then he should truly become baptized. God's intention is that once you are saved, you need to publicly declare your choice to trust in Jesus by being baptized.

### **6. Is Being Baptized Something God Expects of Every Christian?**

Whenever baptism is mentioned in the New Testament, it is never offered as a suggestion, but an important first step after salvation.

In the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) Jesus commands His disciples to do two things after leading someone to salvation: to baptize them and teach them. This means every Christian is responsible to see that those they lead to salvation get baptized afterward. We see Peter obeying this in Acts 2:38 as he says to the people, "Repent and be baptized everyone one of you," and in Acts 10:47-48 when he commands the new Christians to immediately be baptized. Whenever baptism is mentioned in the New Testament it is never presented as an option for the new Christian, but as an important first step after receiving salvation.