

**WATER BAPTISM INFORMATIONAL GUIDE**

*(logo of baptism theme name)*

*“...Going under the water was a burial of your old life; coming up out of it was a resurrection; God raising you from the dead as he did Christ.”*

*- Col. 2:12 (The Message)*

CHURCH LOGO HERE

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Dear Water Baptism Candidate,

One day John the Baptist was down at a river when he had this amazing encounter with Jesus.

When Jesus came out to the river to be baptized, John saw something he had never seen before…a man without sin! John fell down and begged the Lord to baptize him instead, but as you’ll see in the passages following, Jesus wanted to walk the road of obedience as an example for all of us. Since Jesus found the value of this moment it should be equally as valued by each and every one of us.

When I was baptized in water, it was an awesome day to answer the call of God to obedience. That day is permanently etched into my memory. It’s been an amazing journey ever since.

Water baptism is the place of beginning for a walk of obedience to the One Who has your life in His hands. As you learn to trust Him with more and more of your heart and life, you will discover new meaning and destiny in your journey. I pray that God would wrap you up in Him and breathe a sense of His Presence into your heart that will never leave regardless of any difficulties that may come.

Congratulations on your decision to follow the Lord in water baptism!

Yours in His service,

(pastor signature)

Pastor (insert pastor name)

Lead Pastor

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**CHAPTER 1**

You have made the most important decision you will ever make in following Jesus!

Making the decision to follow Christ means you chose to open your life to the influence of God and His Son, Jesus Christ. It is the best choice you could ever make! Living life in connection with God is what you were designed to do. It is why you were created. Your heart longs for that relationship.

Now what? What should one do following this monumental decision? The next step on your faith journey is to be baptized.

**WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?**

Baptism is often presented as an outward act reflecting an inward experience. The inward experience involves coming out of sin into the new life in Christ. As important as it is that one give public testimony of this great transforming work of God’s saving grace by being baptized, that is only the first of many reasons for being baptized. If you read through the New Testament to see what it says about water baptism, you will see the great emphasis placed on this ordinance by Christ and the Apostles.

**FIVE TRUTHS ABOUT WATER BAPTISM**

**First, water baptism is vital because it was commanded by our Lord Jesus.** Just before He ascended into heaven He told His disciples, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit…." He then added, "…teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19,20). This would include water baptism. Furthermore, He said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15), and "You are My friends if you do whatever I command you" (John 15:14).

**Second, baptism testifies of a new life** (2 Corinthians 5:17). It gives public witness to our identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6:3–13; Galatians 2:20, 3:37; Ephesians 2:5,6; Colossians 2:12, 3:1–4). The "old man" is symbolically dead and buried in a watery grave. Water baptism proclaims the gospel. It attests to forgiveness and cleansing from sin. Those who have declared their faith in Christ should not be denied this recognition and public witness to their identification with Him and His body of believers. In essence, it is a declaration that as a child of God, he or she is uniting with the body of Christ.

**Third, it declares our allegiance to Christ, putting ourselves on God’s side** (Matthew 12:30). Jewish converts already believed in the Father and the Holy Spirit but had rejected Jesus as the Son of God. After they were converted, they were to acknowledge all three Persons of the Godhead: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).

**Fourth, water baptism indicates the seriousness of our commitment to Jesus Christ.** It is the visible sign that seals the spiritual commitment. It affirms our salvation—that we are born again, dead to sin, alive in Him, and now free to "walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4). We pledge to God that we will live for Him. It gives the convert something to live up to.

**Finally, water baptism is an act of obedience to our newfound Savior and Lord.** Obedience is the first lesson a Christian must learn. God’s abundant blessings follow obedience to this commandment of the Lord Jesus.

Every unbaptized Christian should notice the attitude of Jesus when He subjected himself to baptism by John, not because He needed repentance, but as He said to John, "It is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15). Jesus became an example when He surrendered himself to be baptized by John. Every new person who is saved has the right to be baptized in water and should be baptized at the earliest opportunity.

**CHAPTER 2**

**WHY BAPTISM BY IMMERSION?**

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The word for baptize in Greek is *baptizo*, which means "to dip, plunge, submerge, or immerse." The word *baptize* means “to immerse or dip under water.”

Baptism in the New Testament was related to the ministry of both John the Baptist and of Jesus. John's baptism was symbolic of one's repentance from sin and of willingness to participate in the kingdom of God (Matt. 3:6-8; Luke 3:3-16) and always was performed by full immersion in water.

Jesus himself was baptized that way. As Christians, we are to follow the model of life as Jesus spoke and demonstrated through His life on earth. This includes following His lead to be baptized by full immersion.

*“As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him.”* (Matthew 3:16)

Not only was Jesus baptized this way, every baptism in the Bible was by immersion. There is no record of any other way of baptism occurring that wasn’t done through immersion in water.

*“Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water…”* (Acts 8:38-39)

**CHAPTER 3**

**WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?**

Every person who believes in Christ should be baptized.

In the Early Church, there was no such thing as an unbaptized Christian. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter concluded his sermon with this charge, *"Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit"* (Acts 2:38).

About 3,000 converts were baptized that day (2:41). In fact, all converts mentioned in the Book of Acts were baptized after they were converted: The Samaritans (8:12); the Ethiopian eunuch (8:38); the apostle Paul (9:18); Cornelius and his family (10:47,48); Lydia and her household (16:15); the Philippian jailer and his family (16:33); and the Ephesian disciples (19:5).

Look at the suddenness with which new converts were baptized. There is no indication in Scripture that anyone was put on probation before being baptized in water. Baptism stood at the very threshold of Christian life. In almost every instance of detailed conversion and baptism, the emphasis suggests urgency and imminence. The Ethiopian was baptized immediately in a pond of water by the road (8:36); Paul was baptized by Ananias within hours after conversion (9:18); Cornelius and his friends were baptized the same day they came to the Lord (10:47); and the Philippian jailer and his household were baptized "immediately" (16:33).

When a person is converted and dies to sin and his old life, water baptism is the very first step in following Christ. There’s no trial period or anything to prove. As soon as someone enters a saving relationship with Jesus, they are ready to be baptized.

*“Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.”* (Acts 2:41*) “But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”* (Acts 8:12)

In addition to the above stated reasons, Jesus Himself gave us the command to be baptized.

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,* ***baptizing*** *them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”* (Matthew 28:19) In these passages of Scripture, which is called the Great Commission,we are commanded to tell others of the Lord and encourage them to follow His commandments, including baptism.

We believe that it clearly points out the need to obey the commandments of Christ if you truly love Him. (John 14:15; 15:10) If there is opportunity to obey, you must. Therefore, the heart that is willing to do whatever the Lord commands is the one belonging to the true saint of God, the true believer. And, to that one, baptism is important! You are saved by Grace, but baptism brings a public acknowledgment of the inner workings of His Spirit in you.

Note: At (church name), we wait until our children are old enough to believe and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them.

Some churches practice “baptism of confirmation” for children. This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. The parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his own personal confession of Christ. This custom began about 300 years after the Bible was completed and is different from the baptism talked about in the Bible, which was only for those mature enough to believe. At (church name), being baptized the way Jesus demonstrated (even though many may have been “confirmed” as children) is a requirement to become a member.

**CHAPTER 4**

**HOW DOES ONE GET BAPTIZED AT (CHURCH NAME)?**

At (church name) we celebrate with people taking the step of baptism. These are times when the whole church worships the Lord together and celebrates those who have made the decision to follow Christ and be baptized.

If you’ve made the decision to follow Christ, and you’d like to take the next step of water baptism, all you need to do is sign up for water baptism. There will be a short informational meeting for you to attend. On the day of the baptism, simply show up and be prepared to celebrate the decision you’ve made! You won’t regret it.

A few things to know:

**1. Your Testimony:**

A. You will be given an opportunity to share why you are being baptized in water AND what Jesus has done for you. We do not require that everyone does this, but we encourage/ask you to do so. This is important for you and of great significance to those who hear.

B. Some individuals find it difficult to talk in front of people, so we will set up a time to video you sharing your testimony (along with the others who are being baptized). The video will be edited to enable your “best message” to be shared and will only be shown during the service.

C. Please remember to use the great name of Jesus in your testimony.

D. It doesn’t matter what your previous church affiliation has been.

**2. The Place of Baptism:**

You should come to church dressed in the clothes and the “(name you use for baptisms Example: “Made New”, “I have decided”, etc.…)” shirt you will be given, that you will be baptized in. There will be a person who will guide you as to where to place your towel and your change of clothes until after the baptism. You will also want to change into dry clothes before returning to the service.

**3. The Time for Baptism in a Service:**

On the day of your baptism, we ask that you be present 15 minutes prior to baptism to check in and review the process one last time.

**4. Other Considerations and Precautions:**

A. Please wear the “(name you use for baptisms)” baptism shirt that we will provide. Wear appropriate undergarments to be baptized in, including shorts. No shoes are required; however, some have chosen to wear socks to provide better traction in the baptismal.

B. Please do not wear white shorts or pants for the baptism. Please bring a towel and plastic bag for your wet clothes.

C. Remember to bring a complete set of dry clothes.

**5. The Mechanics of Baptism:**

A. Enter the baptismal tank immediately after the person preceding you has been baptized and left the tank.

B. While you enter the baptismal tank, your video will be shown.

C. After your testimony, turn and face the minister who will sasy: *“[your name], it is an honor and a privilege to baptize you, in the Name of the Father, the Son the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.”*

D. Place your right hand over your nose and mouth and with your left hand grasp your right wrist.

E. Keep your legs loose so as to bend as the minister assists you in going under the water.

F. When you feel the minister begin to lift you up, assist by bending your knees and standing up.

G. Unless you are remaining in the tank for your spouse or child to be baptized, cautiously proceed back up the steps.

**WE WANT YOU TO DEVELOP AN AUTHENTIC, LIFE-CHANGING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.**

If there is anything we can do to help you grow, please contact the church office by emailing (church email).