

I WILL FOLLOW

BAPTISM AT **THE CHAPEL**



WHEN JESUS COMMANDED HIS FOLLOWERS TO “**GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS**” (MATT 28:18-20), HE INCLUDED TWO ELEMENTS: (1) BAPTIZING THOSE DISCIPLES AND (2) TEACHING THEM TO OBEY ALL HE COMMANDED. BOTH ELEMENTS ARE PART OF “MAKING DISCIPLES.” AT THE CHAPEL, WE COMMIT OURSELVES TO THESE AS WE MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS.

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Baptism is one of two ordinances the church regularly practices—the other being the Lord’s Supper (i.e., Communion or Eucharist). The Lord’s Supper (Matt 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20) reminds Christians of the broken body of Christ and the blood he shed for our sins. Baptism uniquely (and once-for-all) identifies us with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus (Rom 6:1-4). It also identifies us with the community of faith—the church.

Thus, baptism symbolizes our identification with the person and work of Jesus, the covenant community (local church), and the new life we have—and share—with him.

WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

You should be baptized because you want to obey your Savior and identify your life with his. While baptism is a joyous—and memorable—event, it should not be entered into because you would like to make your family happy, you want God to love you more, you are afraid you are not saved, or reasons similar to these.

DOES BAPTISM SAVE?

No, baptism does not save us, nor is it necessary for salvation. If it were, then salvation would no longer be by grace (Eph 2:8-10). However, that should not diminish the value of baptism for the believer as a **first step of obedience** to and identification with Jesus.

Baptism is an obedient response to the grace of God you have received in Christ. In Acts 8 Philip, a follower of Christ, meets up with an Ethiopian and, after hearing the gospel clearly explained, the Ethiopian exclaims, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” (Acts 8:37). Throughout the Book of Acts, we see examples of people hearing the good news of Jesus and following in obedience with baptism (Acts 2:41; 8:12; 9:18; 10:47-48; 16:14-15; 18:18; 22:16). It is with that joyful expectation we should approach our baptism.

WHEN SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

You should be baptized after clearly understanding the gospel and placing faith in it. These two elements are essential. First, the message must be clearly understood. Sometimes that happens immediately, and other times it is a process (taking days, months, or years). Listen to what the Apostle Paul says to the Corinthian church (1 Corinthians 15:1-8):

1 Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most

of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. **7** Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. **8** Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

And again to Timothy (1 Timothy 1:15):

15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.

Thus, after we comprehend that message of grace in our minds and hearts, we place our faith (trust) in Christ for the forgiveness of our sins. Any baptism that happens before faith, we would say, is not the type of baptism seen in the Scriptures.

TESTIMONY INTERVIEW

Part of The Chapel's baptism process is having the person desiring baptism meet with someone from our ministry leadership. We ask that you come to that meeting with a written testimony (2-3 minutes) that you share with us so we can understand more of your story of grace and the gospel message. Those testimonies are then shared in our baptism services.

• **A note to those regarding infant baptism:**

Some faith traditions, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, practice infant baptism. They differ in this way: while Roman Catholic infant baptism sees baptism as the remission (removal) of sin and granting of saving grace to the child, Protestant infant baptism sees it as identifying the child with the New Covenant (in the same way circumcision was a sign of the Old Covenant) and then, upon a true profession of faith later in life, the person baptized as an infant is saved. However, we believe that baptism follows saving faith, and that saving faith requires comprehension of the gospel message before it can be properly received—so

baptism cannot happen before faith. Thus, we would gladly accept anyone seeking baptism who may have only been baptized as an infant.

• **A note to those with young children seeking baptism:** If you have a child who desires baptism, we want to encourage that! While, at times, it is difficult to discern at such a young age whether or not that child has comprehended the gospel, we certainly believe that salvation can come at a young age. To help in that process, our Treasure Kingdom staff has information they can give you. We'd also ask that your child have a brief testimony to share. Please know that, because baptism is not saving, delaying baptism in order to discern comprehension from the gospel is okay.

• **A note to those who have delayed their baptism by years:** Fear, insecurity, lack of instruction, and many other reasons cause a number of people to delay baptism long beyond their comprehension of the gospel. After that, guilt or shame for delaying sets in. We want to say this: *all obedience is beautiful*. If you have delayed your baptism for any reason, please do not allow that to be the reason to not move forward. We would love to meet with you and help you along in the process.

WHERE SHOULD I BE BAPTIZED?

God has no requirement on where you are baptized. Thus, there is complete freedom. At The Chapel, our *preference* would be that your baptism happens in one of our baptism services held at different times throughout the year. (Campus, Oaks, or Refuge all have specific times they baptize.) We would prefer this so that we can share in the celebration together as a church family, and so that those who are a part of the congregation are able to hear your testimony.

If the baptism happens at another location or in another way, we encourage you to share your testimony with us, along with any pictures or video you may have of the baptism so that we can celebrate with you.

HOW DOES THE CHAPEL PRACTICE BAPTISM?

The Chapel normally practices baptism by immersion. We believe that immersion is the best way to symbolize the conversion that has happened and reflects what we see in Scripture. However, we do not hold that as law. If there are needs present preventing baptism by immersion, we will work to accommodate them. The Campus location has a portable baptismal that is brought out for services. The Oaks location has a permanent baptismal located above the stage.

WHO CAN BAPTIZE?

There are no requirements that only pastoral staff or other staff perform baptisms. In fact, your community group leader, mentor, or other person influential in your conversion may be best! Our only expectation is that the person baptizing has been obedient in baptism as well.

BAPTISM PROCESS

The process for baptism at The Chapel is as follows:

1. Read the information provided about baptism.
2. Fill out our ***Baptism Interest Form*** at www.thechapelbr.com/baptism
3. Begin working on your written personal testimony. (If you need help you can visit our baptism page for resources.)
4. Bring testimony to a meeting scheduled with a member of Chapel leadership (we will contact you to schedule a time after receiving the baptism interest form).
5. After confirmation, we begin preparing you for our baptism service.

DEATH,
BURIAL,
RESURRECTION