

Why should a Christian be baptized?

Obedience: In the Bible we see people being baptized right after they believe in Jesus. If this is not possible; the sooner after salvation, the better. Baptism was designed by Jesus to be His followers' first step of obedience, one that sets the pattern for continual spiritual growth.

What if I'm hesitant?

Water baptism is not what saves you (Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5). However, the example and command of Christ and the early church make it very important. Baptism is a very necessary step of obedience in your walk with Christ. Don't allow nervousness or embarrassment to hold you back from this awesome experience!

How do I get ready to be baptized?

Before

Write a short (no more than a couple of paragraphs) testimony and email it to baptism@nbccoly.org. Tell us what your life was like before you knew Jesus, how you encountered Him, and what your life is like now that you're walking with Him.

Day of Baptism

Please arrive 20 minutes before service to meet with the Pastor and receive last minute instructions. Wear dark, loose fitting clothes (shorts, sweatshirt). Bring a towel, change of clothes, family and friends.

Please fill out a Connect Card at Connection Central or sign up at nbccoly.org/baptism if you are interested in being baptized.



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If you have any comments or questions please contact us at (360) 486-9029 or baptism@nbccoly.org.



What is Baptism?

There are two uses of the word “baptism” that are applied to people in the New Testament. One is Holy Spirit baptism and the other is water baptism.

Holy Spirit baptism, or salvation, occurs at the salvation of *every Christian* (1 Corinthians 12:13). Salvation happens when our eyes are opened to the gospel, we repent of our sins and believe in Jesus. Salvation takes place in the *spiritual* realm; it is visible to God, but invisible to man. Salvation is an actual change in a person’s identity, position and eternity. Jesus baptizes the person (John 1:33), and in doing so transfers their citizenship from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of Heaven. In this baptism the individual spiritually dies to their old way of life, spiritually is buried, and spiritually receives new life (Romans 6). They are pronounced dead to sin, and alive in Christ. Salvation, conversion, and Holy Spirit baptism refer to exactly the same event – the point in time when a person is fully and finally identified with Jesus. We are saved from sin and into the body of Christ (the Church).

Water baptism takes place after salvation, and points back to the Holy Spirit baptism that was part of salvation. Water baptism is a visible experience that points back to the spiritual experience of salvation. Water baptism symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection that happened to Jesus and then to us as believers. Baptism is a public declaration that we have identified with and believed in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Baptism is ideally done by dunking the person under water and bringing them back out, which is what the word baptize means (submerge). This method best mirrors what baptism is supposed to symbolize – a change in identity. Immersion in water is also the consistent pattern of Scripture (Matthew 3:16, Acts 8:38-39).

Who should be baptized?

Anyone who has repented and believed in Jesus as their Savior should be baptized (Acts 2:41).

What about children?

We recommend that parents encourage their child to wait until they are middle school age (12-13) before considering baptism. We believe it’s best to wait until there is evidence of new life in Christ and enough maturity to articulate the gospel and give a credible profession of faith. On the opposite page are guidelines and suggestions for helping parents determine if their child is ready for baptism.

- 1. A child’s faith is primarily nurtured by his or her parents.** God created children in such a way that they naturally want to respond to the instruction and example of their parents. The danger of baptizing children is that it may falsely affirm that they are a follower of Christ when they are not. It can even present an obstacle to genuine faith later in life, as some people are confused by their earlier baptism experience and equate it with saving faith.
- 2. Due to immaturity, children have had little chance to express their trust in Christ independent of their parents.** For example, they have had few opportunities to choose between Christ and their peers in a deep way. Because of this, it can be difficult to discern if a child’s public profession of faith is credible. Therefore, a child should wait to be baptized until they reach a level of maturity that demonstrates some independent thought from their parents. We believe this begins to happen in the middle school years. While we wholeheartedly affirm that children can be saved at an early age, we believe that baptism should only be considered when there is evidence that a child’s confession of faith is authentic.
- 3. God’s saving grace is not given through baptism.** There is no danger to children in waiting. In fact, waiting can increase the honor associated with this event as well as allow time for your child’s faith to grow. What fruits of conversion should a parent look for in their child before presenting him or her for baptism? Here are a few:
 - Does your child demonstrate sorrow and remorse for his or her sin?
 - Does your child recognize that he/she has sinned against God and not just against others?
 - Does your child confess his/her sins to God and ask for His mercy without your prompting?
 - Does your child understand that he/she is saved only by God’s grace and not because of any good within himself/herself?
 - Does your child demonstrate a genuine interest in spiritual things apart from your prompting?
 - What sins has your child repented of? Are these sins of the heart or merely a recognition that they have failed to comply outwardly with the laws of God?
 - How does your child demonstrate that he/she trusts Jesus?
 - Does your child demonstrate a genuine desire to tell others about Jesus? Is he/she interested in inviting friends to church and helping others with their spiritual lives?