Baptism Worksheet

What is baptism?

Very simply, baptism is the immersion or dipping of a person in water upon the profession of their faith in the gospel. Our statement of faith says:

"Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus, obligatory upon every believer, wherein he is immersed in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, as a sign of his fellowship with the death and resurrection of Christ, of remission of sins, and of giving himself up to God, to live and walk in newness of life. It is prerequisite to church fellowship, and to participation in the Lord's Supper."

Baptism is:

- 1. A necessary step for all disciples (Matt 28:18-20).
- 2. A symbol of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection—and yours (Romans 6:1-11).
- 3. Preceded by repentance and faith (Acts 2:38-41).1
- 4. The front door of the church (Acts 2:38-47).

After someone has professed faith and repentance, and their lives do not contradict that profession, they are right candidates for baptism. Upon their baptism, they enter into the life of the church; a life of devotion to biblical teaching, fellowship, communion, and prayer (Acts 2:42-47).

Are you ready to be baptized?

Some have various hang-ups about baptism that are not warranted. But some want to be baptized for the wrong reason. Some Christians unnecessarily put off their baptism for too long, while many can look back at a baptism that did not occur upon saving faith and then need to be re-baptized. How do you know if you are ready to be baptized? These questions may help you sort it out further.

1. Have you begun to trust in Christ and turn from your sin? Have you seen yourself as an unworthy sinner before a holy God and trusted in Christ alone to save you, calling out to him? Have you begun to fight against sin in your life, though you know you are still imperfect? If you are not trusting in Christ or you are happy to live on in sin, then baptism is not for you. But if you have come to faith in Christ, even if just very recently, you are a candidate for baptism. You don't have to reach a certain level of maturity to be baptized.

¹Faith is trust in Jesus Christ based on who he is and what he has done. Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change in behaviour. Real (though imperfect) change begins to take place when someone becomes a Christian. Thomas Watson wrote of 6 ingredients of repentance: (1) sight of sin, (2) sorrow for sin, (3) confession of sin, (4) shame for sin, (5) hatred for sin, and (6) turning from sin (Thomas Watson, *The Doctrine of Repentance* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, reprint 2016), 18).

- 2. Has the Holy Spirit come into your life? When a person is saved, the Holy Spirit comes into them, changes their hearts, and begins producing changes in their lives. Some of those new changes are: (1) a desire and effort to be obedient to God and his Word (Ezekiel 36:27; Romans 6:17); (2) a prayer life, depending on God as your Father (Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6); (3) conviction of sin and a desire to fight it (John 16:8; Galatians 5:16-17); (4) a love for the Lord Jesus (John 8:44; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 16:22); (5) a love for fellow Christians (Ephesians 1:15; 1 John 4:7-8, 20).
- 3. **Do you understand what baptism is?** Some people have false understandings of what baptism is. They think it is what saves them. Or that it has some power in and of itself to change their life. This is not what baptism is. Go back and read the previous page if you are having trouble understanding what it is.
- 4. **Do you have wrong motivations to be baptized?** Sometimes, people get baptized for the wrong reasons. Again, they think it will save or change them in some way. They think it will make them look good in the eyes of others. They don't want to miss out when all their friends are doing it or have done it. They think it will be an opportunity to turn over a new leaf. Those are bad motives. The only good motives for baptism are: (1) a desire to obey God since he has saved you, (2) a desire to proclaim what Christ has done for you, and (3) a desire to whole-heartedly follow him no matter what other people think.
- 5. **Do you want to join this local church?** Baptism is the front door of a committed church life. If you don't want to join a church, why would you knock on the front door? But if you do want to fully join the church, then you should be baptized.

Questions for Homework

1. Who is Jesus Christ?		

2. What is the good news (gospel)?
3. What has Jesus done for you?
4. Do you know what following Christ might cost you?

5.	people?

Writing a Testimony

- 1. **Be brief**. About one page double-spaced is probably average, though there is nothing wrong with going even shorter. If you are reading it out loud at your baptism, then it should take about 3-5 minutes.
- 2. **Give a general timeline of when and how God saved you**. Some people know the exact date and time, while to some people it seemed more gradual. But give us an idea of when and how you came to know Christ—how you came to repentance and faith. You don't need to get into graphic detail—share as much as you feel is necessary.
- 3. *Give some idea of how your life has changed since knowing Christ*. Your life before and after. How you have been changing since you began walking with Christ.
- 4. *Make sure you include something about the gospel message*. This is the reason you are saved, and it is upon hearing this message that people are saved.
- 5. *Make your commitment to Christ known*. Make it clear that you are now following Christ, and that is why you are being baptized.