

# Radiant Church

## Baptism Class

### I. Answers to Common Questions about Baptism

#### A. Why Baptism?

- 1. Baptism is commanded in the New Testament.** Matt 28:19, Mark 16:15, Acts 2:38
- 2. Baptism is a Sign for the People of God.** People were baptized to show they put their faith in Christ and were now following him. Those who believed on Peter's preaching (Acts 2:41), those who believed Phillip in Samaria (8:12), Saul when he was converted (Acts 9:18), Cornelius at the preaching of Peter (Acts 10:47), Lydia (Acts 16:15), the jailer (Acts 16:33), the Corinthians (Acts 18:8).
- 3. Baptism shows the need for cleansing.** In the Old Testament baptism of various washing or cleansing of objects for the temple. Naaman the Syrian was baptized (cleansed) in the Jordan River (2 Kings 5:14).

In the New Testament John the Baptist came preaching a baptism of repentance for Israel, which shows the people of God recognizing their need to undergo a cleansing that was not merely physical (Ezek 36:25, Mark 1:4, 1 Cor 6:11).

Baptism points to a need for spiritual cleansing and is to be administered to those who have recognized their need for the cleansing of sin that comes only through Jesus Christ. Baptism is for those who have experienced a change of heart and have turned from the way of sin and trusted in Jesus Christ.



4. **Baptism is a Sign of the Gospel.** Baptism points to what Christ has done for us. Romans 6:4 shows that in going under the water it is as though we were buried with Christ, and being raised from the water anticipates our resurrection with Christ.
5. **Baptism is a way to Identify with Christ.** Romans 6:5 shows that in baptism there is a union with Christ. We have crucified the old self so that we might live to him. *Baptism is outward expression of an inner change.*

## **B. Who Should be Baptized?**

1. **The requirement for baptism is faith in Christ.** In the book of Acts the Spirit moves in a demonstrable way and shows that baptism is for any who have believed in Jesus (Acts 10:47). Baptism is for those who have turned from their sin and put their faith in Jesus for the forgiveness of their sin (Acts 2:38).

Baptism is for believers and not for those who either do not understand or have not trusted in Jesus Christ.

2. **Baptism is not a repeatable action.** As an act of entrance into the faith and the people of God, baptism is done upon believing and should not be pursued repeatedly (Eph 4:5).

## **C. What Happens in Baptism?**

1. **Blessed for obedience.** Like prayer, reading God's word, etc there is a real benefit to it.



- 2. It is not a change of nature.** It is the pledge of a good conscience (1 Peter 3:21), and there is not an internal change or infusion of grace that happens in baptism. It is a pledge of what already happened.

**D. When should baptism be done?** Baptism should be done upon believing in Christ and when one identifies with him and his people. Baptism has historically been connected with entrance into the church. Those who get baptized should devote themselves to the church (Acts 2:41-42)

**E. Verses to Memorize**

- 1. So those who received his word were baptized,** and there were added that day about three thousand souls. <sup>42</sup> **And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.** <sup>43</sup> And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. <sup>44</sup> And all who believed were together and had all things in common. <sup>45</sup> And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup> And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. (Act 2:41 ESV)
- 2. Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup> And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.** (1 Corinthians 6:9-11 ESV)



## II. Testimonies

**A. Why do we do Testimonies?** Testimonies are done for the strengthening of the church and the one being baptized: the church witness a person turning from sin to Christ and the individual receives the embrace of the church.

### **B. What is important for a testimony?**

- 1. Faith and Repentance.** The most important part of a baptism testimony is professing faith in Christ and repentance for sin. Everything else (how you came to hear the gospel, how God got your attention) is secondary to this.
- 2.** It can be very encouraging for the church to hear how God has worked in your life and what led to you putting your faith in Christ so please share this where appropriate, but make sure it doesn't over shadow what is really important.

### **C. Options for Testimonies**

- 1. A brief statement of faith.** "I am getting baptized today to declare that I have turned from my sins and trusted in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior."
- 2. A longer testimony.** This provides an opportunity for you to encourage others with how God has worked in your life, to confess what you are turning from, and explain why you have trusted in Christ.
  - a. What was your life like before Christ?
  - b. Why did you trust in Jesus and what led you to this?
  - c. How has Jesus changed you?



### **III. How do I know if I should be Baptized**

#### **A. You should be baptized if:**

1. You believe you are a sinner, Jesus died for your sins, and you are now living for him.
2. You are fighting against your sin and seeking to follow Christ.
3. You have not already been baptized as a believer

#### **B. You should not be baptized if:**

1. You have not turned from your sins and trusted in Jesus Christ.
2. You think being baptized will change your life or give you favor with God.
3. You have already been baptized as a believer.
4. You are still uncertain about baptism and faith in Christ.

#### **C. Some bad excuses for not being baptized:**

1. The water is too cold.
2. Scared to be in front of other people.
3. Wait to get your life more in order.

#### **D. Question to Answer**

1. Is Jesus Christ your Lord and Savior? Explain.
2. What does it mean to get baptized?
3. Does your life reflect a commitment to Jesus and his church?

