
The Sacrament of Baptism

Policy & Guidelines

Effective 1.1.2008





The Sacrament of Baptism

Baptism is a sign and seal of our Covenant of eternal salvation in Jesus Christ. It is an outward sign of our spiritual union with Christ. An outward sign of an inward Grace. It is one of only two Sacraments that our Lord Jesus commanded we keep, the other being Holy Communion or the Lord's Supper. All who have accepted Jesus Christ, as Lord and Savior should be baptized as soon as possible. All children should be Baptized as a sign that they too are under Covenant with God. Baptism may be administered by pouring, sprinkling or immersion.

Mark 16:15- 16 The Holy Bible, New King James Version

¹⁵And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

Children and Infants are baptized under the covering of their Parents, Grandparents, or Godparents and the Church. It becomes the responsibility of the parents, grandparents, and/or godparents and the Church to ensure that infants and children are brought up in the fear and admonition of the Lord. That they be kept under the covering of the Church, that they be instructed in the Word of God, taught how to pray, and raised participating in every aspect of Christian life, so that when they are able to make a decision for themselves, they too will accept Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.

Understanding this we offer the sacrament of Baptism to all who profess Jesus Christ as Lord or are willing to vow before God and bear the responsibility for an infant or child they wish to be baptized.

WHY DO WE BAPTIZE?

We believe Baptism is a Sacrament (a sign/seal of God's Covenant of Grace) and not just an Ordinance (a testimony of the person being baptized). When viewed as sacramental, baptism is more than an act of man - it is a means by which God conveys grace. When viewed as an ordinance, baptism is the testimony of the person being baptized. As a Sacramental sign it points to what God has done for us and beyond just how we respond. Likewise we do not dedicate babies and children for in a dedication we make a gift of a life to God for God to accept, while in a sacrament God offers the gift of God's unfailing grace for us to accept. Christian baptism is rooted in the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his death and in his resurrection. It is incorporation into Christ, who is the crucified and risen Lord; it is entry into the New Covenant between God and God's people. Baptism is a gift of God, and is administered in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. St Matthew records that the risen Lord, when sending his disciples into the world, commanded them to baptize (Matt. 28:18-20). The universal practice of baptism is attested in the New Testament, the Acts of the Apostles, and today continues in practice as a commitment to the Lord who bestows grace upon his people. For Adult Candidates Baptism requires the renunciation of satan and his work and all evil; an affirmation of faith in Jesus Christ and the application of water.

THE MEANING OF BAPTISM

Baptism is the sign of new life through Jesus Christ. It unites the one baptized with Christ and with his people. The New Testament and the liturgy of the Church unfold the meaning of baptism

in various images which express the riches of Christ and the gifts of his salvation. These images are linked with the symbolic uses of water in the Old Testament. Baptism is participation in Christ's death and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12); a washing away of sin (1 Cor. 6:11); a new birth (John 3:5); an enlightenment by Christ (Eph. 5:14); a reclothing in Christ (Gal. 3:27); a renewal by the Spirit (Titus 3:5); the experience of salvation from the flood (1 Peter 3:20-21); an exodus from bondage (1 Cor. 10:1-2) and a liberation into a new humanity in which barriers of division whether of sex or race or social status are transcended (Gal. 3:27-28; 1 Cor. 12:13).

Participation in Christ's Death and Resurrection

Baptism means participating in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus went into the river Jordan and was baptized in solidarity with sinners fulfill all righteousness (Matt. 3:15). This baptism led Jesus along the way of the Suffering Servant, made manifest in his sufferings, death and resurrection (Mark 10:38-40, 45). By baptism, Christians are immersed in the liberating death of Christ where their sins are buried, where the "old Adam" is crucified with Christ, and where the power of sin is broken. Thus those baptized are no longer slaves to sin, but free. Fully identified with the death of Christ, they are buried with him and are raised here and now to a new life in the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, confident that they will also ultimately be one with him in a resurrection like his (Rom. 6:3-11; Col. 2:13, 3:1; Eph. 2:5-6).

INFANT BAPTISM

The practice of infant baptism emphasizes both the agreement of corporate faith and the faith which the parents will share with their child. Parents and/or God-Parents must be believers in Jesus Christ and must have already been baptized and taken their own personal vow renouncing sin and affirming their personal belief in Jesus Christ as Savior. The infant is born into a broken world and shares in its brokenness. Through baptism, the promise and claim of the Gospel are laid upon the child. The personal faith of the recipient of baptism and faithful participation in the life of the Church are essential for the full fruit of baptism. Infant Baptism is followed by a profession of faith as the child comes to know and accept God for him/herself. No amount of water at any age is sufficient to save. Only Jesus Saves! Each person must confess Jesus as Lord personally and trust Him for Salvation. Although the Bible does not say that infants should be baptized it does in fact speak of whole households being baptized. And the early church certainly practiced infant baptism. Polycarp, a disciple of the Apostle John was baptized as an infant. If this was not valid, don't you think that the Apostle John would have required him to be baptized again once he was "old enough" to believe? Tombs have also been uncovered of infants from the 1st and 2nd century that speak of the baptism of that child. If you look at the history of baptism... the idea of immersion only and "believer" baptism, came along 1500 years after the church had been in existence. If we are wrong about infant baptism, then so was the Early Church and all the 1st century Christians.

Mutual Recognition of Baptism

Mutual recognition of baptism is acknowledged as an important sign and means of expressing the baptismal unity in the Body of Christ. Any person who has already been baptized in a Christian Church does not need to be rebaptized. To do so is to disregard the supernatural union that has already taken place. Our doctrine prohibits being baptized more than once.

Baptism is administered with water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit by an ordained minister, authorized by the church to baptize. Since baptism is intimately connected with the corporate life and worship of the Church, it is administered during public worship, so that the members of the congregation may be reminded of their own baptism, and commit to sharing a role in the nurture of the Baptized person as they grow in Christian faith in Jesus, and to welcome them into the Victory family.



INFANT/YOUTH BAPTISMAL DATA FORM

Today's Date _____

Child's Full name _____
First Middle Last Name

Date of birth ____/____/____ Hospital _____ City/State _____

Have they ever been baptized? _____ (yes) _____ (no) If yes, list date _____

When would you like the baptism to take place? _____

Father's full name _____ Baptized? _____ (yes or no)

Mother's full name _____ Baptized? _____ (yes or no)

Address, including zip code _____

Telephone number _____ Email _____

Names/address of grandparents _____

Addr: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Have the grandparents been Baptized _____ (yes or no?)

Names/address of godparents _____

Addr: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Have the godparents been Baptized _____ (yes or no?)

Please answer yes or no in the boxes as appropriate. Please read the notes. Bolded questions indicate required information.

I have read the Guidelines for Baptism and understand my responsibilities as a Parent, Grandparent, Godparent or Guardian and am willing to abide by them.

Yes No

Signature of the Baptized Parent or Guardian of the Infant or Child being Baptized

_____ Date _____



ADULT BAPTISMAL DATA FORM

Today's Date _____

Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior? _____ (yes/no)

If not are you ready to do so? _____

Full name _____
First Middle Last Name

Date of birth ____ / ____ / ____ Where? _____ City/State _____

Have you ever been baptized? _____ (yes) _____ (no) If yes, list date _____

When would you like the baptism to take place? _____

Father's full name _____

Mother's full name _____

Please answer yes or no in the boxes as appropriate. Please read the notes. Bolded questions indicate required information.

I have read the Guidelines for Baptism and understand the significance of my actions and my responsibility to live a Godly life and I am willing to do so.

Yes No

Candidate's Signature _____ Date _____

Baptism Guidelines for Infants/Children

As a parent or godparent you should ask yourself:

- Are you prepared to the best of your ability to give the child a Christian upbringing within the family of God and Christ' church?
 - Will you teach your child how to pray?
 - Will you teach your child as soon as they are able to learn about Salvation in Jesus Christ?
 - Will you teach your child as soon as they are able to learn the meaning of this baptism?
 - Will you help your child to grow and develop a Godly life by being in regular attendance and participating in worship services and private prayer and also by the life you lead and your prayer life?
 - Will you encourage your child as he/she grows to attend Church regularly, participate in youth activities and take Holy Communion?
 - Will you help to instruct the child in learning the meaning of Salvation, the Lord's Prayer, the 23rd Psalm, the Books of the Bible, how to read the Bible daily and all other things a Christian ought to know?
1. Church law requires that a parent, grandparent or godparent of the child being baptized be an active member of the body of Christ, having confess Jesus as Lord and been themselves baptized.
 2. The usual time for baptism is during Sunday Worship Service at the Victory Temple Christian Life Center. .
 - Please note that it may not be possible to accommodate your preferred date, and as much notice as possible is requested.
 3. Please return the completed data form as soon as possible to the Steward on Duty or you may e-mail an electronic version of this form to info@vtclife.org or mail the completed form to P. O. Box 380337, Duncanville, TX 75138.

Please Note:

Shortly after the Baptism Sacrament you will be issued a Baptism Certificate. **This is a legal document and should be kept in a safe and secure place.** This document can often be presented in the place of a Birth Certificate when one is unavailable and should be treated as such. Because of this the information you provide must be truthful and legally accurate.

Thank You

*The Board of Stewards
of the Victory Temple Christian Life Center*