



What is Baptism?

At FBC Pflugerville we hold Believer's Baptism as a core value. Believer's Baptism is simply baptism by immersion after salvation. It is an outward demonstration of an interior reality. We don't baptize for someone to be saved; we baptize because they are saved!

There are a lot of beliefs on baptism, and there are a lot of practices of baptism depending on the denomination of Christian church. All members of FBCPf have been baptized by immersion. In the Bible, the word for baptize is *baptizo* and it means to be taken under.

When Jesus was baptized, the Bible says that He was baptized (taken under the water) and then came back up and out of the water. The same is said of the first new Christians including the Ethiopian official baptized by Philip.

Here is why FBCPf values Believer's Baptism as a doctrinal distinctive:

1. Baptism (immersed under the water) is following Jesus' pattern as well as the first Christians.
2. Baptism is a perfect picture of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. He was taken under unto death, but then rose again in victory. Baptism by immersion paints that picture.
3. Baptism is a great illustration of your own salvation. You were once dead in sin, but because of Christ's grace and salvation you have been raised into new life in Him (Rom. 6:11 and Col. 2:12).
4. Baptism at FBCPf comes with the opportunity to share your testimony, to boast in what the Lord has done. The video of your faith declaration and baptism becomes a living sermon that all either need to hear as they consider salvation themselves or need to celebrate!

FAQs about Baptism

1. Why is baptism important?

Baptism is important because Christ commanded it as a part of the Great Commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). Baptism is where a believer publicly confesses Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and identifies with Christ and His church.

2. What is the meaning of baptism?

For us, baptism symbolizes our identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, our identification with Christ's church, and our cleansing from sin. This is Paul's point in Romans 6:3-4: "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life." We were baptized into Christ by the Holy Spirit, but water baptism is the public declaration of what Christ, by the Spirit, has done in us.

3. Is baptism necessary for salvation?

No, the overwhelming testimony of Scripture is that salvation is by grace through faith alone (Eph. 2:8-9). Romans and Galatians deal extensively with the theme that we are justified (declared righteous by God) through faith in Jesus Christ, not by any works of righteousness.

Baptism is the symbol, not the means, of salvation.

4. Who should be baptized? Does FBCPf baptize infants?

Those who are saved, who have called upon the name of the Lord for salvation (Romans 10:13) should be baptized. Because we value Believer's Baptism at FBCPf, we do not baptize infants.

5. How old should children who believe be before they are baptized?

This depends on the child's maturity. Children and adults should give some evidence, both in understanding and behavior, of being truly saved. While full understanding of the meaning of baptism and salvation is not necessary (what adult can say that he/she *fully* understands?), some comprehension of the meaning and transformation is needed. We shouldn't put pressure on a child, but rather let it be their decision in response to their understanding of the matter with guidance from parents and the church. If a child is old enough to make an informed decision to confess his/her faith in Christ publicly, they are old enough to be baptized.

7. Should a person who was baptized as an infant or as a non-Christian be re-baptized as a Christian? Should a Christian be re-baptized after falling into sin and repenting?

At FBCPf, we want to be very clear that if you were sprinkled as a child, christened as a child or young person, and/or confirmed.... that is incredible! We take nothing away from that decision of your upbringing. However, that is different than Believer's Baptism, and we ask for you to prayerfully consider being baptized at FBCPf to be a covenant member here.

There is no indication in the Bible of any baptized by immersion believer in Christ being re-baptized after a lapse of faith or when the person came to a deeper understanding of the real meaning of baptism. The way of restoration for a person who has fallen away from the Lord is confession of sin (1 John 1:9).

8. What is the right mode of baptism?

FBCPf does not take a stand that one of the three methods of baptism (immersion, sprinkling, or pouring) is more "right" than the other. But at FBCPf we practice our very name (First *Baptist* Church) and our church value of baptism by immersion.

The Greek word for baptize was used of a ship which had sunk or of a person who had drowned. It means to submerge. We simply and strongly believe that immersion *best* represents the total identification with Christ that baptism symbolizes. When a believer goes into the water, it paints a picture of death (separation) to their old way of life. When they come out of the water, it speaks of the fact they are raised to new life in Christ. Immersion illustrates total cleansing from sin.