

BAPTISM @ EKKLESIA

GOD'S STORY

God created human beings in his own _____ with the capacity for love and relationship. (*Genesis 1-3*)

- God's intention was and God's desire is to be in relationship with the people he created and loves.
- But God did not create robots that would automatically obey him; rather God created humans with free will.
- This means that people have freedom to choose to love and worship God and also the freedom to reject him.

Because God is holy and cannot tolerate evil, _____ separated people from God. (*Isaiah 59:2*)

- Sin started with Adam and Eve who chose to disobey God in the Garden of Eden.
- But the Bible says, *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23)*.
- Through the centuries, people have tried many ways to get to God, including meditation, education, incantations, good works, and rituals. (*Proverbs 14:12*)
- But no amount of human effort ever resulted in human beings finding God on their own.

God made a plan, however, to restore _____ with his creation.

- The Bible says, *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16)*.
- The Bible tells us that Jesus was fully God and that Jesus was fully human.
- Because Jesus was fully God, he was sinless.
- Because Jesus was fully human and sinless, he could die for the sins of the world on the cross. (*Hebrews 2:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5*)
- When Jesus died on the cross and rose from the grave, he conquered sin and death for all time.
- Through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, God has opened the way for humans to connect with him.

The _____ Testament tells the story of creation, God's relationship with his chosen people, the nation of Israel and God's plan to send a Savior through their lineage.

The _____ Testament begins with the story of Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection told from four different vantage points in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These books are known as "Gospels," which means "good news."

After Jesus arose from the dead and before he ascended into heaven, Jesus commissioned his followers to share the _____ of his life, death and resurrection with the whole world.

- In Acts 1, Jesus said to his disciples, *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."* Acts 1:8
- The book of Acts tells how the Holy Spirit came and empowered the followers of Jesus to literally take the good news of Jesus Christ to the known world.

A BAPTISM STORY | Acts 2:1-41

The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost

1 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. 5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken.

Q. What happened to the disciples (v. 4) that enabled them to speak in foreign tongues?

A. They were filled with the _____.

Q. Where were the people from (v. 5)?

A. They were from every _____ under heaven.

Q. What did the people hear (v. 6)?

A. They heard their own _____ being spoken.

Peter Addresses the Crowd

14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say." 22 "Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. 23 This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. 24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him." 32 "God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. 33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear." 36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."

Q. What, in essence, was Peter's message to the people?

A. The truth about _____: Jesus is God in the flesh, the promised Savior, and he lived, died, and was raised from the dead.

37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" 38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call." 41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Q. What were the promises of baptism (v. 38 – 39)?

A. Forgiveness of _____. The _____ of the Holy Spirit. Available for _____.

The steps of faith in Acts 2 were as follows:

1. The people _____ and understood the truth about Jesus Christ.
2. The people _____ that Jesus was God in the flesh and that he died and rose again for their sins.

3. The people understood that their _____ separated them from God.

4. The people _____ of their sin.

Repenting of sin means that they agreed with God about sin and were willing to turn from it.

5. The people _____ the Gospel message.

Accepting the Gospel message means that they trusted in Christ's death, burial and resurrection to provide forgiveness of sin and relationship with God.

6. The people _____ him as Lord.

Trusting Jesus as Lord means that they were willing to surrender their lives to him in obedience.

7. The people were _____ into Christ.

Baptism is not a religious ritual nor is there any magic in the water, but baptism is a step of obedience in one's faith walk with Jesus. It is rich with Christian symbolism and meaning.

8. The people _____ in faith and obedience, in relationship with God and God's church.

The Christian faith is not rooted in fear and duty, but in faith and love. God loves you and desires to be in relationship with you.

YOUR STORY

Where are you in your faith walk?

Have you heard and do you understand the gospel?

Do you believe that Jesus was God in the flesh and that he died and rose again?

Yes ____ No ____

Do you understand that you are separated from God because of your sin?

Have you repented of your sin?

Yes ____ No ____

Do you accept the Gospel message, trusting Jesus as your Lord?

Yes ____ No ____

If you understand the truth about Jesus, if you have repented of your sins and if you have accepted the Gospel message, then you are ready to be baptized.

Would you like to make any of these decisions today?

Yes ____ No ____

WHY BE BAPTIZED?

Jesus was baptized.

(Matthew 3:13-17)

Baptism was part of Jesus' ministry.

(John 3:22; John 4:2)

Jesus commanded baptism.

(Matthew 28:18-20)

The early church practiced baptism.

(Acts 2:38-41)

Baptism was a first response in every recorded conversion in the book of Acts.

(Acts 8:12-13; Acts 8:36-39; Acts 9:18; Acts 10:47-48; Acts 16:15; Acts 16:33; Acts 18:8)

Baptism was named an essential part of Christianity.

(Ephesians 4:4-6)

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?

Baptism is a personal identification with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

(Romans 6:3-5)

Baptism into Christ is clothing oneself with Christ.

(Galatians 3:26-27)

Baptism is identified with circumcision, the putting off of the sinful nature.

(Colossians 2:9-15)

Baptism is likened to salvation that came through the ark of Noah.

(1 Peter 3:21-22)

Baptism is associated with the washing away of sins.

(Acts 22:16; Acts 9)

WHY IMMERSION?

In the Original Greek

The Greek word translated "baptism" is "baptizo," which means "to immerse" or "to submerge." A related word "bapto" means "to dip." "Rhantizo" means "to sprinkle." When Jesus issued the command to "go and baptize," Jesus used the word "baptizo." The word "rhantizo" never appears in the New Testament with regard to baptism.

Biblical Practice

In the early church, baptism was always the response of a person who had heard and believed the gospel and immersion was the only known and recognized mode of baptism. The practice of sprinkling came about in later centuries in response to some unbiblical beliefs. One such erroneous belief was that infants were born sinners and should be baptized soon after their birth. The Bible, however, teaches that infants are born innocent and will become sinners eventually by their own choices. In fact, Jesus said little children are examples for adults to follow *(Matthew 18:1-4)*.

Bible Inferences

- *As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. [Matthew 3:16](#)*
- *Now John was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water.... [John 3:23](#)*
- *When they came up out of the water.... [Acts 8:39](#)*
- *We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death.... [Romans 6:4](#)*

Meaning of Baptism

- Death, burial and resurrection are portrayed by immersion. ([Romans 6:3-5](#))
- Clothing oneself with Christ is portrayed by immersion. ([Galatians 3:26-27](#))
- Washing away of sins is portrayed by immersion. ([Acts 22:16](#))

FAQs

Q. What church should I be baptized into?

A. A believer is baptized into Jesus Christ, not a specific denomination.

Q. Who can baptize me?

A. Any baptized Christian (family, friend or pastor) can baptize you. We encourage you to ask the person who led you to the Lord or a believing family member to baptize you.

Q. When should I be baptized?

A. Immediately after you believe in Christ.

Q. Where should I be baptized?

A. Any body of water will do. There should always be witnesses to your baptism. The church receives a tremendous blessing when all can share in your decision. The baptistry in the Worship Center is ready at all times.

Q. What about children?

A. Because baptism is always the response of a believer in faith, children may be baptized at Ekklesia when they are old enough to understand, believe and respond to the gospel in faith. Special baptism studies have been designed for children and students who feel they are ready for or have questions about baptism. Ekklesia offers Baby Dedication for parents who wish to commit themselves to raise their child/ren in a God-honoring way.

BAPTISM @ EKKLESIA

Baptism is an important step in the life of a Christ-follower and Ekklesia considers it an honor to share in this event with you. If you are ready to be baptized, please visit ekkchurch.com/baptism and click on the [I Would Like to be Baptized](#) link. Someone will be in contact with you to arrange your baptism.

On the day of your baptism:

- Feel free to invite your friends and family.
- A member of the Soul Care Team will assist you.
- Ekklesia will provide a private changing room and towels.
- Wear whatever you are comfortable in.
- After your baptism, you will receive a Baptism Certificate.
- Ekklesia will recognize your baptism publicly in social media posts.

YOUR TESTIMONY

If you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and if you have repented of your sins, confessed him as Lord, and been joined with him in Christian baptism, then it is important to be able to share your testimony with others. The Bible says, *But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. 1 Peter 3:15*

To prepare your testimony, please take some time to think through and answer the following questions.

- What was my life like before I entered a saving relationship with Jesus?
- What got my attention spiritually?
- What drew me to Christ?
- How did other believers encourage or influence me in my journey to Christ?
- What has God done in my life?

It is a good idea to practice your testimony with a friend who will listen and give you feedback.

NEXT STEPS | Acts 2:42-47

The Fellowship of the Believers

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone

who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

What happened in the lives of believers after they were baptized?

THEY MET TO WORSHIP [WE UNITE]

The early believers met regularly to praise God, hear teaching from God's word, fellowship with other believers, celebrate the Lord's Supper, give and pray. Participating in worship regularly will encourage and strengthen you in your faith and will encourage others.

THEY GREW IN FAITH [WE DISCIPLE]

- **Spend time with God**
Start by reading your Bible every day.
- **Connect with Believers**
One of the best ways to grow in faith is to join a group.

THEY SERVED & THEY GAVE [WE GIVE]

The Bible teaches that Christians should use their time, talents, experiences, and treasure in service for Christ and others. The Bible teaches that when we serve and give, God will bless our efforts and our generosity. Visit ekkchurch.com/give for ways to give at Ekklesia.

THEY SHARED THEIR FAITH AND THE CHURCH GREW [WE EXPAND]

Start your life in Christ not only by connecting with believers but also by maintaining relationships with friends and family who do not know Jesus. Pray for them and be ready to share your testimony when God opens the door.

THEY PRAYED AND THEY PERSEVERED [WE DARE]

There will be times of discouragement and disappointment in life, but do not give up on God. God loves you. Talk with God about your problems and praise God for your blessings. When you pray, God may not change your circumstances; but he will be with you, and he will strengthen and encourage you.

A GOOD PLACE TO START

- **CONNECT @ EKKLESIA** is designed to help you learn all about Ekklesia — who we are, what we do, and why we do it. Visit ekkchurch.com/connect to sign up.

- **GROW GROUPS** for men, women, couples and singles meet on and off campus. Grow Groups give you the opportunity to find a belonging place and grow in Christ. To find a group that's right for you, visit ekkchurch.com/grow-groups.
- **SERVE @ EKKLESIA** offers the opportunity to learn all about serving opportunities at Ekklesia. Serving is a great way to grow in your relationship with God, show God's love to others, and have fun in the process. To register, visit ekkchurch.com/serve.