

PUBLIC

NEW



WATER BAPTISM MANUAL

water baptism

Baptism is a public testimony of what God has done in your life as a new Christ-follower. It is a symbolic picture of death, burial and resurrection - and your new life! When you are baptized, you are obeying Christ's command in the Bible for all believers and you are telling the world that you've submitted to Jesus Christ as the Lord over your life. No matter what your age or background, baptism is a natural and important step in your journey as a Christ-follower.

At North Central Church we believe that biblical baptism is symbolic & important. And though it doesn't "save" you, it's very important in the life of every believer. It's a symbol of both your trust in Christ and your crossing over into His church. We require that those desiring membership at North Central be baptized. So either previously baptism (at the time of your commitment to Christ) or when you desire membership at North Central.

Because baptism is a public display of an inward work, our baptism process also requires each candidate to prepare a brief video testimony to accompany your baptism. Now don't get nervous if you don't like video cameras--our great team of volunteers and staff will make your video story painless and enjoyable. This video testimony extends to all ages (parents, you can benefit from a great learning experience when helping to prepare you child for their baptism testimony.) We'll get you more details about the preparations later.



getting baptized@ north central

step 1

Notify the church office of your desire to be baptized with a:

- Call during the week at (315) 458-0896 or
- Email office at Main Office
- Online registration at <http://ncagc.org/next-steps/baptism-by-immersion/>
- Use the “Contact Card” found in seat backs on Sunday morning Services. Simply mark “Water Baptism” & drop the card in the offering basket or at the Welcome Wall.

step 2

After being contacted with specific Baptism dates and times, **read** through this packet and **complete** the Grace Story Worksheet as thoroughly as you can.

step 3

Attend 2 Water Baptism Classes (45 minutes each) for teaching & coaching.

You will be notified by the Church office of the class dates & time.

step 4

Attend the scheduled filming of your Grace Story. (Allow about an hour to complete the filming)



1. Why should I be baptized?

A. To Follow The Example Set By Christ. “At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river.” (Mark 1:9)

B. Because Christ Commanded It. “Jesus said, ‘Go then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciple, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.’” (Matthew 28:19-20)

C. It Demonstrates That I Really Am A Believer. “We know that we have come to know Him, if we obey His commands.” (1 John 2:3)

2. What is the meaning of baptism?

A. It Illuminates Christ’s Death, Burial, And Resurrection.

“Christ died for our sins...He was buried...and He rose again.” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

“For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ.” (Colossians 2:12)

B. It Illustrates My New Life As A Christian

“When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

C. Baptism Doesn’t Make You A Christian.

“Only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring—it’s the outward sign of the commitment you made in your heart.” (See Ephesians 2:8-9)

3. Why be baptized by immersion?

A. Because Jesus Was Baptized That Way.

“As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water.” (Matthew 3:16)

B. Every Baptism In The Bible Was By Immersion.

“(for example) “...then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water...” (Acts 8:38-39)

C. The Word “Baptize” Means To “Dip Under Water”

D. It Best Symbolizes A Burial & Resurrection

(see Romans 6:1-11)

4. Who should be baptized?

Every person who has believed in Christ.

A believer is someone who has realized that their sin separated them from God. They have given up all efforts to reach God through good works or religious activity. They have concluded that Jesus Christ’s death on the cross for their sins is the only thing that can bridge the gap between them and God. A believer is someone who has decided to trust Christ alone for their salvation. If you have come to that point in your spiritual journey, then you are ready to be baptized. (Acts 2:41; 8:12-13)



Tell Your Story

grace story worksheet

Communicating your life experience with Jesus.

You will have an opportunity, in your baptism video, to share how God's grace was made evident in your life through personal response to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The questions below will help you put together a clear presentation of your personal testimony by bringing clarity and organization to the events surrounding your conversion.

I. SIN:: BEFORE I RECEIVED NEW BIRTH in CHRIST (OR GAVE HIM COMPLETE CONTROL)

A. What was life like before I accepted Christ? What attitudes, hurts, habits, or hang-ups were in control of me? (Describe in a way that communicates well to non-Christians. Don't use religious terminology i.e. "sinner", "backslidden").

B. What "idol" did my life revolve around? What did I get my security, value or happiness from? (remember, the non-Christian is relying on something external to give him happiness)

C. How did those idols begin to let me down?

grace story worksheet

II. REPENTANCE:: HOW I TURNED FROM MY SIN OF SELF-RELIANCE AND TURNED TO TRUST JESUS (OR GAVE HIM COMPLETE CONTROL).

A. When was the first time I fully understood the gospel? Or describe how I was exposed to a significant experience with Jesus.

B. What were my initial reactions when I clearly understood God's grace?

C. When did my attitude about Christ and/or the gospel begin to change? Why?

D. Were there any final struggles that went through my mind just before I accepted Jesus?

E. Why did I finally go ahead & repent of my sin & put my faith in Jesus to save me by grace?

grace story worksheet

III. TRANSFORMATION:: AFTER I RECEIVED NEW BIRTH IN CHRIST AND / OR FINALLY SUBMITTED TO HIS CONTROL.

A. Specific changes in my thinking or attitudes I have seen in my life since surrendering my life to God? (include a personal illustration or example)

B. Why am I motivated differently? How does my relationship with Jesus now affect my attitudes or decisions regarding life, death, relationships, my future, etc.?

C. Why did you decide to get water baptized at this time? (Go public...Jesus said REPENT, & BE BAPTIZED.)

how to tell your story

Always...

1. Make your rescue story about Jesus saving you, instead of about your sin, scars, or learning to improve yourself.
2. Make the hero of your story Jesus, instead of your church, you, or anything other than Jesus.
3. Write it down like the way you speak--make your story naturally and authentically yours. Write and share from your heart, not from the paper.
4. Consider your audience (their ages, interests, goals in life, etc.)
5. Think of your rescue story plot as a Jesus-centered love story about God saving you from sin, death and the grave & into a new life of joy and peace.
6. Practice it over and over until it becomes natural & free from distractions (like mindless gestures or the words "...like..." or "ummm").
7. Set a time limit. Aim for three minutes. Boil it down, down, & down some more. Share compelling highlights about ATTITUDES, LOVE, SELFISHNESS, FORGIVENESS & LIFE TRANSFORMATION...not unnecessary details about who, what, where and when, etc .

for further study

water baptism def: immersion

After His baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on Him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy." Matthew 1:16-17

Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19

The baptism of Jesus.

A. With water by John (Mt. 3:15).

B. With the Holy Spirit by the Father (Mt. 3:16).

The scriptural view on baptism.

A. That all believers be baptized. F.F. Bruce writes: "The idea of an unbaptized Christian is simply not entertained in the New Testament" (The Book of the Acts, p. 77). Baptism is therefore not a personal choice, but a divine command.

B. That only believers be baptized. The two words belief and baptism are inseparably linked together in the New Testament. Belief is always assumed to be the root of which baptism becomes the fruit.

Note:

"Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all." (Acts 2:41).

"But now the people believed Philip's message of Good News concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. As a result, many men and women were baptized." (Acts 8:12).

"As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, 'Look! There's some water! Why can't I be baptized?' He ordered the carriage to stop, and they went down into the water, and Philip baptized him." (Acts 8:36-38).

"One of them was Lydia from Thyatira, a merchant of expensive purple cloth, who worshiped God. As she listened to us, the Lord opened her heart, and she accepted what Paul was saying. She was baptized along with other members of her household, and she asked us to be her guests. 'If you agree that I am a true believer in the Lord,' she said, 'come and stay at my home.' And she urged us until we agreed." (Acts 16:14, 15).

"Then he brought them out and asked, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' They replied, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household.' And they shared the word of the Lord with him and with all who lived in his household. Even at that hour of the night, the jailer cared for them and washed their wounds. Then he and everyone in his household were immediately baptized.

" (Acts 16:30-33).

"Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, and everyone in his household believed in the Lord. Many others in Corinth also heard Paul, became believers, and were baptized." (Acts 18:8).

"Paul said, 'John's baptism called for repentance from sin. But John himself told the people to believe in the one who would come later, meaning Jesus.' As soon as they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 19:4, 5).

In the light of the Scriptures the practice of baptizing infants must be completely ruled out.

for further study

the purpose of baptism

Robert L. Saucy suggests a twofold purpose.

A. Identification with the Savior.

“Baptism is, therefore, first and foremost, identification with Jesus Christ. By this act the initiate indicated that he was entering the realm of Christ’s lordship and power. But not only was the name of Christ pronounced over the baptized, but the baptized also called upon the name of the Lord (Acts 22:16). In doing so, he openly confessed in penitence and faith his submission to the lordship of Jesus (cf. Rom. 10:9). It is, as Beasley-Murray aptly notes, the time when one who has been an enemy of Christ makes ‘his final surrender.’ Baptism is therefore the sign of the working of the gospel in which God unites the believer to Himself through Christ, and the believer testifies to the subjective reality of that union in his life.

Identification with Christ is also identification with His great saving acts. The waters of baptism are thus related to washing or cleansing from the defilement of sin (Acts 22:16; 1 Cor. 6:11; Heb. 10:22; cf. Acts 2:38). Even more often, however, in Scripture the baptismal act signifies the believer’s death to the old life and his resurrection as a new creature in union with Christ. The apostle bases his appeal to a holy life on the fact that ‘we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life’ (Rom. 6:4). Similarly, to the Colossians he writes, ‘having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead’ (Col. 2:12, nasb). Peter sees an analogy to baptism in the flood waters of judgment and death through which Noah was borne by the ark to a new life (1 Pet. 3:20ff.). While cleansing from sin is the result of this participation with Christ, the salvation experience is, at its heart, the death of the old life and the resurrection to a new life in union with Christ. The importance of this understanding and its significance in understanding baptism is emphasized by Moule when he notes that ‘as soon as baptism is treated chiefly as a cleansing, the tendency is to interpret it as a cleansing from past sins, with the corollary that thereafter the baptized must keep himself clean. But as long as membership in Christ is treated as a new life—the supernatural, wholly divine agency is more prominent.’”

for further study

B. Identification with the Church.

“Identification with Christ is at the same time identification with His body, the church. Death and resurrection with Christ refer not only to union with Christ but to a unity of Christ composed of many members. ‘For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ’ (1 Cor. 12:12; cf. Rom. 12:4, 5). One is not united to the Head without at the same time being united with the body. So Paul writes that all believers in Christ are made into ‘one new man’ (Eph. 2:15).

Since baptism signifies the inward reality of the participation into His body, it was the normal initiatory rite into the visible body. In this act the new converts were identified outwardly with the fellowship of believers (Acts 2:41). Not only is the individual transition from the old life to new life made public in baptism, but the transition from union with the world to that of the community of believers is proclaimed as well. In the rite of baptism the believer took his stand with the disciples of Christ.” (The Church in God’s Program, pp. 194, 1

The water baptism of new converts in the book of Acts.

- a. At Pentecost. Here 3,000 were baptized by Peter and the apostles (Acts 2:41).
- b. At Samaria. Here many were baptized by Philip the evangelist (Acts 8:12).
- c. At Gaza. Here the Ethiopian eunuch was baptized by Philip (Acts 8:38).
- d. At Damascus. Here Paul was baptized by Ananias (Acts 9:18).
- e. At Caesarea. Here Peter baptized Cornelius and his friends (Acts 10:48).
- f. At Philippi. Here Paul baptized Lydia and the Philippian jailor (Acts 16:15, 33).
- g. At Corinth. Here Paul baptized Crispus, Gaius, Stephanas, and others (Acts 18:8; 1 Cor. 1:14, 16).
- h. At Ephesus. Here Paul baptized some followers of John the Baptist (Acts 19:3-5).

for further study

THE SYMBOLISM OF BAPTISM

What exactly does baptism symbolize? One's interpretation of this will determine his view on the mode of baptism also. Here are two views concerning the symbolism of baptism.

a. The view of the affusionist.

He is one who sprinkles or pours the baptismal water. The affusionist believes the object lying behind baptism is to represent the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the believer. He reasons that inasmuch as Calvary is represented by one ordinance (the Lord's Supper) then there would be no need of a second ordinance representing the same event.

b. The view of the immersionist.

He is one who requires the complete submerging of the believer in water. The immersionist relates baptism to Christ's death, burial, and resurrection on the grounds that the believer is said to have been baptized into his death, burial, and resurrection, according to Romans 6:1-10 and Colossians 2:11-13.

"Therefore, we are buried with Him by baptism into death, that as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

FALSE VIEWS ON BAPTISM

a. The view of the affusionist.

This is totally erroneous. Dozens of key passages, such as Romans 4:1-6; Ephesians 2:8, 9; Titus 3:5, and many others make it clear that salvation is by grace through faith plus nothing.

The strongest refutation of baptismal regeneration is found in 1 Corinthians 1:17: "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." In 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 Paul explains what the gospel is, and baptism is definitely not a part of it (see also 1 Cor. 4:15).

An oft-repeated "proof-text" for baptismal regeneration is Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." The Greek preposition *eis* (here translated "for") can also be rendered, "because of," as it is in Matthew 12:41.

for further study

In addition, the question asked in the preceding verse (Acts 2:37) is not the restricted “What must I do to be saved?” of Acts 16:30, but the broader: “What shall we do?” Hence, it is not strange that we have here a broader answer than in Acts 16:30.

b. That it replaces circumcision. This cannot be, however, for several reasons:

- (1) Circumcision was performed upon male babies only, but in the New Testament we have the baptism of women mentioned (Acts 8:12; 16:14, 15).
- (2) Circumcision had nothing to do with the faith of the baby. Only his nationality was in mind.
- (3) Baptism has nothing to do with the nationality of the believer. Only his faith is in mind.
- (4) Circumcision continued to be practiced among Jewish believers even after the institution of baptism (Acts 16:3).

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