



UNDERSTANDING
THE BASICS OF
BAPTISM

INTRODUCTION

WE ARE EXCITED THAT YOU WANT TO BE BAPTIZED! THIS IS EVIDENCE OF GOD'S SPIRIT CONTINUING TO LEAD YOU AND DEMONSTRATES YOUR OBEDIENCE TO JESUS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO CELEBRATING AS YOUR CHURCH FAMILY WITH YOU!

In this study we will cover several topics as you prepare for your baptism. We will start with an understanding of the gospel, followed by what sin is, why we need salvation, and ultimately how baptism becomes a beautiful step of obedience once we are saved. If you have any questions please ask your small group leader or call the church office to speak with a member of the staff at 425-255-4751.

"Jesus came near and said to them, 'All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'" Matthew 28:18–20

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

The word gospel just means "good news." It is the central message of Christianity. It is beautiful good news for the whole world when understood in light of the reality of the bad news of sin that impacts everything.

BAD NEWS: SIN

In the beginning, God made a good world and placed mankind in charge of it. People are uniquely made to be like God – making decisions and experiencing emotions. But rather than participate with God in this responsibility that He had given us, we stopped trusting Him and rebelled against Him. When we did that, we traded life with God for death without him. But even in our sin, he promised to make it right and someday a Savior would come who would bring us, and all creation, back into right relationship with God. (Genesis 3, Romans 5:8)

GOOD NEWS: SALVATION

At the right time, God sent His Son Jesus to become a perfect man and live on earth to make everything right. Jesus lived without sin and met every standard that we need to meet. Rather than fall to temptation, He obeyed His Father all of the time. But then, rather than receiving a blessing for His obedience, He willingly went to a cross and paid the price for our sin, so that we could have life with God again.

After Jesus had been dead for three days, the Spirit of God brought Him back to life. The Father highly exalted Him, giving Him authority over everything. Jesus promised that He would return someday to judge the world, but that He would save everyone who trusts Him so that they can live with Him forever.

THE GOSPEL = BAD NEWS (WE SIN) + GOOD NEWS (JESUS SAVES)

A lot of people think that Christianity is primarily about doing something for God – that being a Christian is based on what a person does for God. But the reality is that Christianity is about what God has done for us. Even while we were sinners, God pursued us. He sent His Son to live, die and rise for us. And now He has given us His Spirit to help us follow Him (Ephesians 2:8-9).

That's the gospel. And the right response to the gospel is faith, simply believing the message.

THE BAD NEWS: UNDERSTANDING SIN

Have you ever shot a bow and arrow? If you have, then you have a picture of what the word “sin” means, “to miss the mark.” When you shoot an arrow, your goal is to hit the center of the target. If you hit the mark, it is considered a perfect shot.

However, if you miss the mark of perfection in life, it is called sin. We see this in the way tragedy and harm impact people all around us even before we open the pages of the Bible that explains why. Jesus was the only perfect person to ever live. He never sinned.

WE, ON THE OTHER HAND, SIN EVERY DAY THROUGH THOUGHT, ACTION, AND INACTION, AND ARE ALL IN NEED OF FORGIVENESS.

■ Read Romans 3:23 | Who has sinned?

■ Romans 6:20–23 | What is a fair “wage” for sinful actions?

■ Read 1 John 1:9–10 | What is the right response to sin?

THE GOOD NEWS: UNDERSTANDING SALVATION

Once a person recognizes what sin is, they have a choice to make. Fully embrace the sin and reject God’s invitation or run fully towards God and accept salvation to bring transformation and life!

SALVATION IS THE SAVING WORK OF GOD THROUGH JESUS WHEN WE CONFESS.

■ Read Romans 5:8 | When and how did God demonstrate His love?

■ Read John 3:16 | Who does God love?

■ Read Ephesians 2:8–9 | How are we saved? Why is it significant we can’t earn salvation?

■ Read Romans 10:9 | How are we saved? What does it mean to call Jesus Lord?

■ Read John 10:28–30 | Can you “lose” your salvation?

■ Are you saved? Briefly explain your answer:

BAPTISM

The Bible teaches about two kinds of baptism. The first is the baptism of the Holy Spirit to seal us with our new identity of being “in Christ.” The second is baptism by water where we publicly identify with God’s family.

BAPTISM BY THE HOLY SPIRIT is a special ministry of God’s Spirit. It happens at the moment of salvation. Romans 6:1–10 makes clear that if you are a Christian then you are identified or immersed into Jesus’ family. That means you are identified with Jesus and His death on the cross, His burial, and His resurrection.

SINCE JESUS CONQUERED SIN AND DEATH, HE PAID THE PENALTY FOR YOUR SINS AND GIVES YOU HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

BAPTISM BY WATER is done after salvation as an outward sign of the inward transformation a person has undergone. It is symbolic of Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection and now our identification with Him and placement into the family of God. It has been a normal practice of believers from the beginning of the Church in the book of Acts.

Read the following passages and write down what you observe about the people being baptized:

■ Matthew 3:13–17 | Notice Jesus’ example.

■ Acts 8:35–38 | Notice how quickly he was baptized.

■ Acts 16:13–15 | Notice how quickly she was baptized.

■ Acts 18:8 | Notice the order: heard, believed, then baptized.

Based on the passages above, what qualifies a person to be baptized?

HIGHLANDS' BELIEF'S ABOUT BAPTISM

- We believe that baptism does not make someone saved, but it is an outward action which comes after being saved. (Acts 2:41)
- Jesus showed us that baptism is a very important way a Christian can show their obedience to God. (Matthew 28:19)
- We believe that baptism by water immersion is taught in the New Testament as a symbol of our faith in Jesus Christ.
- Baptism shows others that we believe in Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.

UNDERSTANDING BAPTISM COMES AFTER SALVATION, I AM READY TO BE BAPTIZED. PLEASE TAKE TIME TO WRITE OUT YOUR SALVATION STORY HERE:

SOUND IT OUT

- B** **BAPTISM** cannot get you to heaven
We can only get to heaven through our faith in Jesus.
Read Ephesians 2:8–9.
- A** **ACT** of obedience
Matthew 28:18–20 tells us to obey all the commands that Jesus gave us.
- P** **PICTURE** of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection
Read Colossians 2:12 for the big picture.
- T** **THOSE** who believe in Christ
Only those who have asked Christ into their life need to be baptized. Read Mark 16:16.
- I** **IDENTIFIES** you with Christ
According to Romans 6:4, we are connected with Christ when we are baptized.
- S** **SYMBOL** of belief
When we are baptized, we represent Christ dying, being buried, and then being raised from the dead on the third day when we go under the water and come back up again.
Read 1 Corinthians 15:3–4.
- M** **MUST** be underwater
God was pleased with Jesus' baptism. He showed His Son how much He loved Him when Jesus came up out of the water. It is described in Matthew 3:16–17.

PLANNING FOR YOUR BAPTISM AT HIGHLANDS

NEXT STEPS



CONTACT

Once you have completed this study, please indicate your interest to be baptized at Highlands online at **highlandsc.org/baptism** or contact the main office at **425-255-4751** to schedule your baptism.



MEETING

We will set up a meeting with a Highlands Team Member. We will confirm your understanding of baptism, answer any additional questions and explain what to expect on the day of your baptism at Highlands.



BAPTISM

We will contact you with the specifics of what day and time you will be baptized.

WHAT TO BRING

HIGHLANDS WILL PROVIDE A SHIRT FOR YOU TO KEEP ON THE DAY OF YOUR BAPTISM



☐ Towel

☐ Change of dry clothes

☐ Dark shorts

☐ Plastic bag for wet clothes

INFORMATION SHEET

Full Name _____

(This will be the name we put on your baptism certificate presented to you after your baptism.)

Male ☐ Female ☐

Email _____

Phone _____

Baptism Date _____ Preferred Service Time _____

T-Shirt Adult Size: Small ☐ Medium ☐ Large ☐ X-Large ☐

Notes for Prompt Card:

(2–4 sentences from your salvation story that sum up why you want to be baptized now)



HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY CHURCH

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