

**WATER BAPTISM**

and

**COMMUNION**

“The Lord’s Supper”

By Pastor Bill Vasilakis

# WATER BAPTISM

## THE IMPORTANCE OF BAPTISM

### I. Why should I be baptised?

#### 1. To follow the example set by Christ

*“At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised by John in the Jordan.”*  
Mark 1:9

#### 2. Because Christ commands it

*“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”*

Matthew 28:19-20

#### 3. It demonstrates that I really am a believer

*“... and many (of the Corinthians) who heard him believed and were baptised.”*

Acts 18:8

*“We know that we have come to know Him if we obey His commands.”*  
1 John 2:3

### II. What is the meaning of baptism?

#### 1. It illustrates Christ’s death, burial and resurrection

*“For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.”*  
1 Corinthians 15:3-4

*“Having been buried with Him in baptism and raised with Him through your faith in the power of God, who raised Him from the dead.”*  
Colossians 2:12

#### 2. It illustrates my new life as a Christian

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”*  
2 Corinthians 5:17

Baptism doesn’t make you a believer - it shows that you already believe. Baptism is like a wedding ring - it’s the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart.

*“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no-one can boast.”*  
Ephesians 2:8-9

### III. Why be baptised by immersion?

#### 1. Because Jesus was baptised that way

*“As soon as Jesus was baptised, He went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on Him.”*  
Matthew 3:16

#### 2. Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion

*“And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptised him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.”*  
Acts 8:38-39

#### 3. The word “baptise” means “to dip under water”

It best symbolises a burial and resurrection.

### IV. Who should be baptised?

#### Every person who has believed in Christ

*“Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.”* Acts 2:41

At the Christian Family Centre, we wait until our children are old enough to believe and understand the true meaning of faith in Christ before we baptise them. *For us, it is also a membership requirement that every member must have been baptised the way Jesus demonstrated, even though many of us were ‘confirmed’ as children.* Hundreds of people have been baptised at the Christian Family Centre.

### V. When should I be baptised?

#### As soon as you have believed.

*“Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.”* Acts 2:41

*“Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they travelled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, ‘Look, here is water. Why shouldn’t I be baptised?’ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptised him.”* Acts 8:35-38

There is no reason to delay. As soon as you have decided to receive Christ into your life, you can and should be baptised.

## **VI. Can my family be baptised together?**

Yes! If each family member understands fully the meaning of baptism, and each one has personally placed his/her trust in Christ for salvation, we encourage families to be baptised at the same time. It is a wonderful expression of commitment. Young children who wish to be baptised are asked to meet with our Children's Minister for a pre-baptism conversation.

However, it is important to remember that baptism is a personal statement of faith, not a family tradition.

It is not usually wise to delay your baptism while waiting on other family members to accept Christ, particularly children. This puts an undue pressure on them, and delays your obedience.

## **VII. What should I wear when I am baptised?**

Men should wear shorts and a top rather than a flimsy swimsuit. Women can be provided with a special baptismal gown that fully covers their swimsuit or they can wear a shirt and board shorts over a swimsuit. Bring a change of clothes, a towel, a plastic bag for your wet clothes. We provide changing rooms.

## **VIII. Will I have to say anything?**

Yes. At the beginning of the service, one of the Pastors will explain the meaning of baptism. You will wait at the edge of the pool for your turn to be baptised. A Pastor will introduce you and you will be given opportunity to affirm your personal faith in Christ. Then after a short prayer for you, you will be briefly lowered just under the water, and then you can leave the pool, dry off, and watch the others. Later you will be given a certificate of your baptism. We encourage you to invite all your relatives and friends to attend your baptism. It's a great opportunity to invite them to a church service, where a good witness can be made about Jesus.

## **IX. Special Needs?**

All of our Pastors can perform a private baptism in special circumstances.

# COMMUNION

## “The Lord’s Supper

### THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNION

Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth. But He did instruct them to remember His death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols (called “ordinances”) as reminders of His death, burial and resurrection. These two ordinances are: Baptism and Communion. Communion is an object lesson that represents a great spiritual truth.

#### I. What is Communion?

(1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

1. It is a simple act, not an elaborate ceremony

*“For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took bread” (verse 23)*

2. It is a reminder or memory tool

*“...and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’” (verse 24)*

3. It is a symbol

*“In the same way, after supper He took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of Me.’” (verse 25)*

4. It is a statement of faith

*“For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.” (verse 26)*

#### II. Who should take the Lord’s Supper?

1. Those who are disciples of Christ

*“While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, ‘Take it; this is My body.’”  
Mark 14:22*

2. Those whom Paul classifies as enquirers

*“So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and some who do not understand (enquirers) or some unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind? But if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand (an*

*enquirer) comes in while every-body is prophesying, he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, 'God is really among you!'" 1 Corinthians 14:23-25*

It is hard to imagine Paul excluding these people in the worship practices of the Corinthian church which in context (1 Corinthians 11 - 15) involved taking the Lord's Supper and the operating of the gifts of the Spirit within the context of a loving, caring, self-ministering and outreaching local church.

The Christian Family Centre has sensitively embraced folks who are on the journey to saving faith and reaped them into God's kingdom through the proclamation of Christ's death that comes from taking the Lord's Supper.

We also need to keep in mind that Paul's very strong statements on self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:27-32) are geared towards Spirit-filled, born-again believers who were making a mockery of spiritual matters and which necessitated this corrective letter in the first place.

Many see Jesus' feeding of the 5,000 and His statements about eating His body and drinking His blood (John 6) as a preparatory allusion to the ordinance of Communion, which He would later institute. Again, there seems to be a strong evangelistic mandate connected which embraces

all seeking people. This ordinance greatly helps them to believe upon Jesus.

### **III. When and how often should we observe Communion?**

Jesus never said when or how often believers should observe Communion. He instituted it at a night supper amongst a few of His friends. Since it was first a 'supper', it may seem more appropriate to observe it in a home or in smaller fellowship groups.

Our Sunday Services are designed so you can bring your non-believing friends (as well as being a positive celebratory environment where believers can be greatly encouraged and strengthened), so we take Communion monthly in our morning services and ensure that it embraces enquirers.

We also take Communion at our monthly after service worship hours on Sunday evenings.

All our Home Groups and other relational groups take Communion on a monthly basis which provides an ideal environment for personal ministry and Spiritual gifts.