



**COLONIAL WOODS MISSIONARY CHURCH**

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# **BAPTISM WORKBOOK**

**OUTWARD SIGN // INWARD DECISION**

## BAPTISM CLASS

Welcome to our Baptism Class! This class will prepare you for and acquaint you with one of the most meaningful experiences in your Christian life. Together we'll look at the Biblical significance of baptism, help you prepare your personal testimony, and explain the details of the service. I've seen God use this service of public testimony to firmly seal the faith of many people, and *I believe this is what God wants to do in your life!* Furthermore, God will invariably use this service of public witness as well as your personal testimony to lead others into His kingdom. We pray that as a result of this service and your participation those who come to faith will be your family, friends and neighbors. Let's be praying for these folks!

## BAPTISM: WHAT IS IT?

Baptism – A public testimony that demonstrates you have made Jesus Christ your Lord and Savior. In doing so, you publicly declare that you have put to death the past life and have determined to live for Christ. You publicly declare your allegiance to Christ and your determination to no longer live according to flesh or follow after the ways of this world. As a believer in Christ, you declare to the world that you are a follower of Christ and intend to follow Him and His ways for the rest of your life.

## HOW

Share the “good news” in your testimony. Tell how you realized you were a sinner. How you needed Jesus’ forgiveness and how you invited Christ to be your Savior and leader of your life. Don’t forget to use the key word “prayed”. People don’t automatically know that the way to ask God for forgiveness is through prayer. This is to eliminate any misconceptions that we can be forgiven apart from the grace of God through prayer (Ephesians 2:8-9).

## AFTER

Name two or three benefits of being a Christian and how your life has changed.

- Make it sound conversational; use informal vocabulary.
- Use “I” and “we”, not “you”. Share, don’t preach.
- Be careful of “religious” words such as “went forward”, “under the blood”, and “prayed through”. These and others are not understood by non church people and they are the target of this testimony.
- Share humorous situations if they were part of your life.
- Use “word pictures” to describe a situation so it can be easily understood.
- If an adult then speak as an adult, not as a child.
- Simplify—avoid unnecessary wordiness; get directly to the point.

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## HOW LONG SHOULD MY TESTIMONY BE?

Testimonies should be a maximum of two minutes in length. A pastor will review your testimony prior to the baptism and contact you if they have any suggestions. If you prefer you may read your testimony or use cue notes. The important thing is that others get to hear what Christ has done in your life and how He is making a difference.

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## YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY

### PREPARING YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY

The purpose of sharing your testimony is to enable others to be compelled to make Christ their Savior and Lord. Therefore the primary focus should be on Him and not you.

We encourage you to write out your testimony to assist you in thinking through what you want to say before you get to the service.

#### Three ingredients to an effective Testimony:

- **“Before”** - life before you became a Christ-follower.
- **“How”** - the steps you took to become a Christ-follower
- **“After”** - the changes or benefits of becoming a Christ-follower.

#### BEFORE

What was it about your life before Christ that made you want to invite Christ into your life? What brought you to realize that you were a sinner and needed Christ's forgiveness?

It's OK to include both the positive and the negative aspects of your life, but don't let the focus be on all the bad or negative. For example, the positive might have been your desire to excel, concern for others, hard worker, raised in a good home, etc. The negative aspects might be that you were selfish, greedy, had a bad temper, rebelled against God, etc. Don't dwell on the wrong that others have done because your testimony is about your response to life not the wrong of others.

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## WHY BE BAPTIZED?

### 1. Jesus gave us the example.

*Matthew 3:13-17 (NIV) “Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?’ Jesus replied, ‘Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, 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. And a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.’”*

### 2. Jesus commands us to be baptized.

*Matthew 28:19-20 NIV “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing 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. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize those they had led to Christ as they went about preaching the Gospel. He also commanded them to observe communion as a memorial to Him (1 Cor. 11:24). Baptism and communion are called ordinances by the Missionary Church and other evangelical churches.

The Bible never teaches that salvation is a result of taking communion or being baptized, but is a result of God's grace being applied to our lives. God's grace is yours when you put your faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. Any rituals Christians participate in are only aids in worship, and is a reminder of what Christ has done (communion), or a testimony to others of what Jesus has done in our lives (baptism).

### 3. The early churches example .

*Acts 2:41 (NIV) "Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day."*

### 4. It is a sign of identification.

A mile marker along the road of your spiritual journey.  
Examples: Genesis 9:14-16; Joshua 4:9

*John 12:42-43 "Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved praise from men more than praise from God."*

### 5. Baptism identifies the believer with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

*Romans 6:3-4 (NIV) "Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."*

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## THE MEANING AND SYMBOLISM OF BAPTISM

Baptism is a symbolic act of washing. Christians understand that the water does not wash the sins away. Jesus takes away our sins by grace through faith.

*Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV) "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."*

*1 John 1:9 (NIV) "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."*

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## CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

1. Do you believe Jesus is the Son of the Living God?
2. Have you accepted Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior?

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## CAN MY FAMILY BE BAPTISED TOGETHER?

Yes! If each family member understands fully the meaning of baptism, and each one has personally placed their trust in Christ for salvation. In fact, being baptized as a family can be a great testimony and can be a wonderful expression of commitment. The only word of caution is to be careful not to pressure others by the feeling of being left out of a family function causing them to do something they are not ready for. If all members are believers then go ahead, but if not, wait until all have come to that point on their own. Remember this is a personal statement of faith.

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## REASONS PEOPLE ARE HESITANT

1. "I don't know enough." Here's what you need to know: "Jesus is my Savior."
2. "I'm not good enough." But Jesus accepts us just as we are and loves us too much to let us stay there.
3. "I'm embarrassed." Because it is out of the ordinary, there is some apprehension but others are not concerned with what you look like, they will celebrate your decision to follow Christ.
4. "I'm afraid of water." If you are afraid of water, please let the attending pastor know so he/she may be sensitive to your concerns.

Baptism is a physical picture of what has happened in the heart of all who put their faith in Christ.

1. Baptism symbolizes the death, burial and resurrection of Christ Jesus. Romans 6:3-4, Col. 2:12
    - Death—to the old way of life no longer controlled by sin.
    - Burial—the yielding of ourselves totally to God.
    - Resurrection to newness of life—controlled by God.
    - Jesus died, was buried and rose again to live a totally new kind of life. When a person becomes a Christian they are to identify themselves with Christ.
  2. Every believer in the New Testament was baptized by immersion.
  3. The word "baptized" means to "dip under" water. "baptize"- to make "whelmed" (as in 'overwhelmed', to cover wholly with a fluid, to immerse completely)
  4. Baptism is also a sign to unbelievers of our new life in Christ.
    - Baptism identifies us as belonging to Christ.
    - Baptism is a public display, serving as a testimony, a decision to follow Christ and no longer follow the ways of satan and the influence of this world.
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## WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

Everyone who has put their faith in Christ.

Acts 2:41 "Those who believed and accepted His message were baptized."

Acts 8:13 "*Simon himself believed and was baptized.*"

Acts 8:12 "But when they believed Philip as he preached the Good News...And the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."

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## BABY BAPTISM/DEDICATION

Some churches practice a “baptism of confirmation” for children or referred to as “baby baptism”. This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. In doing so, the parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make their own personal confession of Christ. This custom began about 300 years after the Bible was completed. This is different from the baptism talked about in the Bible which was only for those old enough to believe in Jesus as their personal Savior. The purpose of Believer’s Baptism is to publicly confess our personal commitment to following Christ and in doing so we testify to the world that we have turned our back on sinful ways and have chosen to follow Christ for the rest of our life. In the Missionary Church, we also conduct what is called Child Dedication. This event is where parents acknowledge that God has given their children to them; they publicly commit to parenting as a steward and declare their commitment to raising their children in the ways of the Lord. Because these are two totally different functions we are concerned with the confusion that can arise when we use baptism when the intent is to dedicate, we as a Missionary Church do not baptize babies.

**Please note:** *We recommend that children be at least eight (8) years old before requesting baptism. Children are able to accept Christ at an earlier age, however, we suggest waiting so that they more fully understand its significance. A booklet is available for parents and children to assist them in working through this decision. The goal of the booklet is to assist in explaining what baptism is and how it can effect their life in an age appropriate way.*

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## SHOULD I WAIT UNTIL I KNOW ALL THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT BEING A CHRISTIAN?

Acts 2:41 *“Those who believed were baptized that day”.*

Philip was sent by God to witness to a man and he in turn chose to believe in Christ for salvation.

Acts 8:35-38 *“Then Philip began with the Scripture and told him the Good News about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water, and the man said, ‘Look, here is water! Why shouldn’t I be baptized right now?’ Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, you may.’ The man answered, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’ So they went down into the water and Philip baptized him.”*

There is no reason to delay. As soon as you have decided to receive Christ into your life, you can be baptized. If you wait until you are “perfect”, you’ll never feel “good enough”! The issue isn’t what you know. It is do you love the Lord with all you heart and have you chosen to follow Him fully? If you are determined to make an about face, no longer follow the ways of Satan and this world then you are a candidate for baptism. It’s about making a commitment to follow Christ and Him only.