

# BAPTISM

AT REDEMPTION CHURCH





## **BAPTISM PROCESS OVERVIEW**

We are excited that you are considering being baptized as a believer in Christ! Baptism is a significant step in your spiritual journey and we look forward to sharing this experience with you. If you would like to be baptized at Redemption Church, below is the process for preparing for and scheduling your baptism:

- 1. Pray and read through the Baptism Study Guide (pages 2-7)**
- 2. If you are a parent with a child who is interested in baptism, please read through the section on Talking With Your Child About Baptism (page 8-9)**
- 3. Familiarize yourself with the Baptism Day Logistics (page 10)**
- 4. Complete/Submit the Baptism Sign Up Form and Redemption Story (pages 11-12)**
- 5. Schedule a time to share your redemption story with a pastor (see contact information listed below for Pastor Chris Gray)**
- 6. Schedule a time to be baptized (contact Pastor Chris Gray)**

If you have any questions or concerns as you work through this process, we are here to help. Please don't hesitate to call! We look forward to celebrating your baptism with you!

Chris Gray

Executive Pastor  
Redemption Church  
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## BAPTISM STUDY GUIDE

People come to Redemption Church from various backgrounds. Some have never attended church regularly and some have a long history in a church. Some people at our church have attended churches with different points of view on baptism. The information in this guide should help you understand what Redemption Church believes about baptism. Whether you are new to the Christian faith or you are a Christian who was never baptized after trusting Jesus Christ as your Savior, it is important to understand what baptism means and doesn't mean.

### **What does baptism mean and what doesn't it mean?**

Every time a person enters into a new life with Jesus, the Bible tells us that all of heaven rejoices. Baptism is a visible symbol of the new life that Jesus has already created in your life. Water baptism serves as a public identification with Jesus—a visual demonstration of a person's connection to Christ's death, burial and resurrection. It signifies that a person's former way of life has been put to death and that he is now a new creation of God. When a person is immersed under the water, he is announcing that his old life of unbelief and sin has died, because of the sacrificial death of Jesus. When a person is raised up out of the water, he is announcing that he has a new life in Jesus and has been raised by the resurrection of Jesus.

Baptism is a spiritually significant union with the church community, uniting you with all believers through the ancient practice that has taken place for centuries in churches around the globe. In many ways, it is public announcement similar to an initiation ceremony, joining you with other followers of Jesus. The water of baptism does not save you, only faith in Jesus Christ saves, but those who are saved by Jesus are to be baptized. It is an outward sign that a person has entered into a relationship with Jesus Christ. It symbolizes what takes place inwardly at the time of salvation:

- Repentance from trying to do life on your own.
- Embrace of Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.
- Trusting in His death and resurrection for you.
- Being washed clean and made new through the sacrifice of Jesus.

Because Jesus instructed us to be baptized, baptism is also an act of obedience. It demonstrates submission to God. A good way to understand baptism is to look at a wedding ring. A wedding ring is worn by people who've committed their life in marriage to their mate. The ring doesn't make them married but shows a reality (their marriage) that has already taken place and so it is with baptism. It announces the reality of your salvation in Jesus Christ.

## **Does baptism save you?**

We are saved solely by grace through faith in Jesus' life, death, resurrection. Our salvation is not accomplished through our morality, goodness, good deeds, loving heart, religious ceremony, church commitment or any other works which we could do. We are not baptized *in order to* be saved, but we are baptized because we *already have been* saved.

*Ephesians 2:8-9 - For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

## **Who should be baptized?**

All who have trusted Jesus Christ for their salvation and life should be baptized. Baptism was given to those who believe in Jesus Christ as their Rescuer and King. It is an expression of one's faith in Jesus Christ, trusting in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Baptism is your opportunity to stand with Jesus, to make a decisive public announcement of your faith in him, your love for him, and your commitment to live for him. Baptism is the way that Jesus asked us to follow him and stand with him. When we are baptized, we are announcing three things to our world:

- To God we are saying, "Thank you for saving me and giving me new life! I belong to you. I want to live for you."
- To our church family we are saying, "Come celebrate with me what God has done! I'm connected to you now. I'm counting on you to walk with me, encourage me, and help me grow as a follower of Jesus."
- To those who don't know Jesus we are saying, "I want you to know who Jesus is and understand the grace that he offers. I'm not a Christian because I am good. I am a Christian because Jesus was good. Any good you see in my life isn't my doing—it's something God is doing in me."

### THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

*Why do you want to get baptized?*

*Who are you going to invite to your baptism?*

*What are you most excited about in regards to your baptism?*

## **What should I understand about salvation before we are baptized?**

Baptism is a public statement about your belief in Jesus and trust in him to rescue you from sin and death and deliver you to new life and eternal life. Before being baptized, we want people to have an understanding of foundational beliefs so that they comprehend the importance of what they are professing. This section includes some essential beliefs along with passages of scriptures where these beliefs are taught.

### **Essential Beliefs about the Person of Jesus**

#### **1. Jesus is God.**

*John 1:1 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John sometimes calls Jesus the "Word."*

*Colossians 1:13-20 [God the Father] has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.*

#### **2. Jesus became a man.**

*John 1:14 - And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

*Philippians 2:7 - [Jesus] made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.*

#### **3. Jesus is the only way to heaven.**

*John 14:6 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

*Acts 4:12 - And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*

*1 Timothy 2:5-6 - For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all.*

### **Essential Beliefs about the Work of Jesus**

#### **1. Jesus lived a perfectly obedient life.**

*Hebrews 4:15 - For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

## **2. Jesus died as a substitute for me.**

*1 Peter 3:18 - For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit*

*1 Corinthians 15:3-4 - I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.*

## **3. Jesus rose from the grave.**

*1 Corinthians 15:17 - And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.*

*Romans 10:9 - If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*

### THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

*Do you believe you have been saved by Jesus?*

*Have you learned anything new about salvation from this study?*

*How would you explain salvation to someone else?*

## **Why should I be baptized?**

### **1. Christ commanded it.**

*Matthew 28:19-20 – 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.*

### **2. It follows Christ's example.**

*Mark 1:9-10 – At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.*

### **3. It is a public profession of your faith.**

*Acts 18:8 – Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized.*

## **When should I be baptized?**

One should be baptized as soon as possible after accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

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

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

## **How is a person baptized?**

The Greek word for baptism, *baptizo*, means to immerse or dunk, and this is the word used to describe Jesus Christ's own baptism by John the Baptist. Because Jesus modeled this act for us, we baptize by immersion. Not all Christians agree, but we believe the Bible shows immersion as the normative method of baptism in the baptism of Jesus. The Bible uses language like going "into the water" and "coming up out of the water" associated with baptism.

*Matthew 3:16 – 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.*

*Colossians 2:12 – For when you were baptized you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ.*

### THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

*What do you believe about baptism?*

*What is difficult for you to believe?*

*Are you ready to be baptized?*

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Should all church members be baptized?**

Since Jesus commands that all of his disciples be baptized, baptism is a requirement for all Redemption Church members ([Matt. 28:19](#); [Acts 2:38](#); [10:48](#); [1 Peter 3:21](#)).

### **Is it necessary to be baptized in a church building or in a worship service?**

There is nothing more “spiritual” about being baptized in a church building or in a church service. In the teaching of the Bible and the church, the emphasis is on a public statement of faith in Jesus as a part of the church community. We may offer baptism in different times and venues. Please keep this in mind as we work out a time and place for our celebration with you.

### **What about being baptized again?**

Redemption Baptism is a public proclamation of a person’s faith. Our baptism proclamation is a confession of our sinfulness and repentance, a statement of faith in Jesus death and resurrection, and our commitment to live new life in Christ. We do not believe that infants or unbelievers can make this proclamation of faith.

For this reason, Redemption Church encourages those that were “baptized” as infants or baptized before they actually became Christians by faith to be “re-baptized,” or baptized again.

We understand that not everyone will agree with our view of baptism. If a person does not want to be re-baptized due to reasons of theological conviction, he or she should schedule a meeting with a pastor to discuss this decision.

If you have been baptized as a believer but have struggled spiritually and are now renewing your commitment to Christ, you don’t need to be baptized again. If you are seeking to rededicate your life to God the best action is to get connected in a Redemption Group and focus on growing your relationship with God through full involvement in the church community. If you are sensing that you need to repent of wandering from Jesus and recommit to walking with Christ, it is important that you tell someone about this choice so that someone can celebrate this decision with you and encourage you along the way. Please seek out your group leader, a pastor, or some other church leader to let them know how God is working in your life.

### **What about infant baptism?**

While we celebrate the love and blessing of parents, in the Bible we see baptism occurring only after a person has made a conscious choice to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. For this reason, Redemption Church performs believer baptisms only, which means we don’t baptize infants. If a person was baptized as a baby and does not want to be re-baptized due to reasons of theological conviction, he or she should schedule a meeting with a pastor to discuss this decision.

### **What if I’m not sure what I believe and want to study this further?**

We can provide resources to assist you in further study. The following website is good place to start: <http://www.desiringgod.org/resource/infant-baptism-and-the-new-covenant-community>

## TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT BAPTISM

As your child grows, matures and is around other followers of Christ, they are likely to start asking many questions about baptism and what it means. Here are some simple ways to talk about and explain baptism with your kids and hopefully facilitate discussion for your family.

First, it is important for your child to understand that baptism is a picture of what it means to believe in Jesus Christ who died and rose again. It is something that is supposed to remind us of what Jesus has done for us. It represents something that has already happened in our hearts as we believed the gospel, placed our trust in Jesus for our salvation, and were brought spiritually from death to life.

Here is some language that may be helpful to guide you as you talk with your child about baptism:

*Baptism happens one time in a person's life. It usually happens when we first put our trust in Jesus, but sometimes it's better to wait until we really understand. When a person is baptized, we all get to rejoice and celebrate because they are trusting Jesus. Baptism is an outward moving picture of what Jesus has done in our hearts. When someone gets baptized, he or she is dipped under the water and then immediately raised back up. When one is dipped completely under the water, it is a picture of someone so close to Jesus that they trust that he died for them. This is a picture of how Jesus' death washed our sins away. Jesus paid for our sins by dying on the cross. When we go under the water, it is also a picture of how Jesus was buried. That is why you will often hear someone say, "Buried with Christ." Jesus died and was buried for us, and our going under the water gives everyone that watches us a picture of what we believe about Jesus.*

*Now when a person is baptized, he or she does not stay under water for long, they immediately come back up. This is to remind us that Jesus was raised from the dead. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we get to be raised from the dead with Him. We have been given new life because Jesus paid for our sin, and when He rose from the dead He gave us the chance to have a new life. That is why when a person is coming up out of the water, you will often hear someone say, "Raised to walk in the newness of life." We have a new life in Christ. Jesus now lives in us. Sin does not have control anymore. Baptism is a picture of how we are connected to Christ and trusting His death and His resurrection to save us.*

It is important to make sure that your child understands that being baptized does not save them. It is just a picture of an inward spiritual change that has already occurred. People get baptized because Jesus told us to do so in order that we could show the world our commitment to Christ. And everyone else gets to rejoice and worship, remembering what Christ has done for them. That is why we cheer. Baptism is more than just watching someone get dunked under water, it a worship experience in which we remember the greatest event in human history, the cross and resurrection!

### *Scripture References:*

*Matthew 3:13–17*

*Romans 6:1–11*

*Galatians 2:20*

*Colossians 2:11–15*

## WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR CHILD WANTS TO BE BAPTIZED

Be sure to teach your child what baptism is and why we do it. Our greatest desire is for our kids to come to faith in Christ, trust Jesus with their whole lives, rest in Jesus' grace, love Jesus, serve Jesus, and live for Jesus. Keep a long term perspective on your child's faith, growth and discipleship. We don't want to pressure a child into being baptized before they understand because that may not be the best aid to their faith and life.

### **Baptism should be your child's idea, not your idea.**

Sometimes suggesting baptism to your child means that they will only say yes because they want to please you.

### **Be sure your child understands the gospel.**

Even though they do not understand all the implications of the gospel, be sure they understand that Jesus is the only way they can be saved – not good works, not church, not by behaving well.

### **Is there evidence of the Holy Spirit's work in your child's life?**

Do you see any fruit of the spirit? (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control - Galatians 5) We want to make sure that this is not just mere religious obedience for approval or applause. If you are not sure, it is okay to wait. Remember, baptism does not save your child; it is just an outward expression of what God has done.

### **To wait or not to wait? That is the question.**

There is not a set age or time that we feel is right for a child to be baptized. We will lean heavily on you as your child's parents and spiritual leader, but we are here to help you process that decision if it will help.

It is okay to wait. Some prefer to wait until they see more understanding or spiritual change in their child's life. Some want to wait until they know the child is old enough to remember their baptism. Waiting also allows for the child to embrace and understand the commitments they are making as their own. Some want to baptize their child as soon as they know they are believers. All are reasonable options. Baptism is an act of obedience to Jesus and a testimony of what he has done. It is NOT a saving act. Waiting a little while will not hurt your child.

If your child can articulate what Jesus has done for them, you have seen fruit in their lives, and you and your spouse (if applicable) feel the time is right, then it sounds like your child is ready for baptism. Let us know what you decide so that we can help spread the word of the Lord's faithfulness.

### **Take time to patiently walk through this entire booklet and process this decision with your child.**

A child that is mature enough to be baptized should also be mature enough to go through the same process for baptism as adults. If you feel your child is ready for baptism, please take time to walk through the rest of this booklet with your child, helping them to write or type their redemption story and baptism sign up form.

## BAPTISM DAY LOGISTICS

**Make it a party:** Baptism is a celebration! Please invite as many people as you want to the celebration—invite family and friends, invite believers and non-believers, invite your redemption group, invite anyone you want. Get the word out through emails, phone calls, Facebook, Twitter, and word-of-mouth. This is an amazing opportunity for unbelievers to better understand God’s grace and all that Jesus has done for us!

**Clothing:** Please wear your Redemption Church T-Shirt to your baptism. Wear comfortable, modest clothing, i.e., dark colored shorts, bathing suit, or pants (no white, please). Bring a towel, a plastic bag for your wet clothes, and some dry clothing to change into after your baptism. You may also want to bring flip-flops or similar footwear.

**Arrival Time:** Please arrive at 9:45am on the Sunday you are scheduled to be baptized. When you arrive, go to the worship center and wait near the stage, where a pastor will meet you.

**Before Baptism:** Arriving at 9:45 will give us time to walk through the logistics before the worship service begins. We will show you the baptistry, talk through how things will work, and answer any questions you may have. You will have a chance during your baptism celebration to answer a question from a pastor about why you want to be baptized. The pastor will discuss this with you beforehand so that you know what to expect and are comfortable with the process.

**During Baptism:** Here is the process for the actual physical immersion in water.

- A pastor will help you step into the baptistry.
- You will be seated on the seat in the water.
- The pastor stands to one side of the person to be baptized, usually to the left.
- The person to be baptized plugs their nose and puts other hand on chest or arm.
- The pastor puts one hand on the person’s back and the other on his/her arm or hand.
- The pastor will hold the person as he/she is dunked.
- The person being baptized needs to lean backwards into the water with the pastor’s support until he or she is completely under water. Just relax and lean back, and then the pastor will help you sit back up.
- While you are being baptized, the pastor will say something along these lines:  
“I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.  
Buried with Christ [immerse in water],  
Raised to walk in new life [emerge from water].”  
This follows the patterns set forward in Matthew 28:19-20.
- Feel free to express your joy, look out at your friends, wave at your family, and cheer if you want. Just be yourself. This is a community celebration, so feel free to celebrate with your friends and your church.
- After your baptism, a pastor will help you step out of the baptistry, and a helper will hand you a towel and help you off the stage so that you can go and change your clothes.

**Contact Person:** On baptism day, if for any reason you cannot be there as scheduled or need some help, please contact Pastor Chris Gray at (405) 408-0377.

## PREPARING AND SHARING YOUR REDEMPTION STORY

Communicating how you entered into a relationship with Jesus Christ is vitally important. On a separate sheet of paper take some time now to tell us more about that experience in your life. You may either hand write your testimony or type it on a computer. Either way, please include this document when you submit your paperwork.

While you have the freedom to write your testimony in any form that you deem appropriate, many have found it easier to share their story of salvation by breaking down their testimony into the following three stages:

### **Before I received Christ:**

Describe your lifestyle, value system, and motivations prior to your conversion. Identify the events and circumstances that caused you to consider Jesus Christ as the solution to your spiritual need and ultimately led to your decision to accept Him as Savior. In some cases this process may have taken place over a long period of time.

### **How I received Christ:**

Please include the specific steps that you took to become a Christian and why you believe that you have eternal life. As much as possible, try to avoid religious lingo or church clichés (“born again”, “asked Jesus into my heart”, “walked an aisle”, “raised my hand”, etc.) as this will prepare you to communicate your story more clearly and authentically to your friends. Describe how it was that you come to understand and receive the grace of Jesus.

### **After I received Christ:**

Describe the difference that Christ has made in your thinking, motivation, values, and actions. For some this may be a dramatic change from the “before” description. For others who accepted Christ at an early age, this step will allow you to think through and describe how your life is different than what it could have been and to describe the transformation that is continuing to take place in your life. In either case, please state what assurances that you have of forgiveness and eternal life.

We understand that this may be the first time you have ever written out your testimony and it can be a challenging task. If you need help, please feel free to contact Pastor Chris at (405) 285-8146 or [chris.gray@redemptionokc.com](mailto:chris.gray@redemptionokc.com).

We look forward to reading your story of faith and we hope that you will take the time to share it with someone else who may not know the truth of the Gospel.

## SCHEDULING A TIME TO SHARE YOUR STORY

A time will need to be set up for you to share your story, or testimony with a pastor or leader. This is a time when you can tell others how God has been at work bringing you to this point of being baptized. This is one of the greatest times for a church to celebrate together, and a wonderful privilege for us to celebrate God’s work with you personally. When you have turned in your baptism request form and your written redemption story, we will work with you to schedule a time to share your testimony.

## BAPTISM SIGN UP FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Home # \_\_\_\_\_ Cell # \_\_\_\_\_ Work # \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete all information requested. This information is important to us in communicating with you as we prepare for your baptism.

- I read and considered the Baptism Study Guide included in this packet.
- I completed my redemption story/testimony, and I have included it with this application.
- I feel that I am ready to be baptized.
- I have questions and would like to speak with someone before proceeding with my baptism.

State briefly why you want to be baptized:

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**PLEASE TURN IN THIS FORM AND YOUR REDEMPTION STORY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**

After completing this form, you may bring it to the church service, email a copy of it to Pastor Chris (chris.gray@redemptionokc.com), or mail it to Redemption Church, P.O. Box 1127, Edmond, OK 73083.

If you have questions or concerns regarding baptism, please contact Pastor Chris at (405) 285-8146 or chris.gray@redemptionokc.com.



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