

# Baptism

**Preparing to take the next step**

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# What does the Bible say about Baptism?

At the beginning of the Gospels we see John, Jesus' cousin baptising people.

*"John was baptising people in the desert and preaching a baptism of changed hearts and lives for the forgiveness of sins."*

*Mark 1 v 4*

Matthew, Mark and Luke all record how Jesus himself was baptised by John in the river Jordan.

*"When all the people were being baptised by John, Jesus also was baptised. While Jesus was praying, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit came down on him in the form of a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, saying, "You are my Son, whom I love, and I am very pleased with you."*

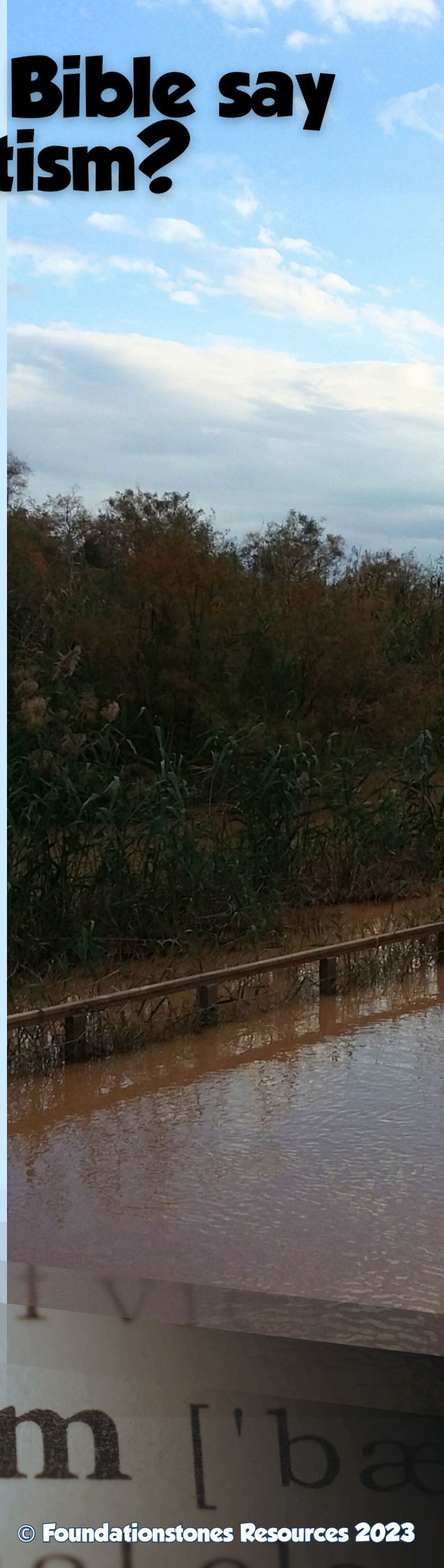
*Luke 3 v 21-22*

At first John wasn't sure that he was the right person to baptise Jesus, but Jesus told him that baptism was part of God's will.

*"John tried to stop him, saying, "Why do you come to me to be baptised? I need to be baptised by you!"*

*Jesus answered, "Let it be this way for now. We should do all things that are God's will." So John agreed to baptise Jesus."*

*Matthew 3 v 14- 15*



Baptism



When Jesus returned to heaven he gave the disciples instructions, The Great Commission, about how to continue his work on the earth. This included baptising those who chose to follow Jesus.

**"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All power in heaven and on earth is given to me. So go and make followers of all people in the world. Baptise them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything that I have taught you, and I will be with you always, even until the end of this age."  
Matthew 28 v 18-20**

We can read in the book of Acts, stories of those who responded to the Good News and were baptised, Jews and gentiles, old and young, people from all over the world came to faith and were baptised.

Peter in his letter to the early church explained that the water of baptism is not washing away physical dirt, it is a symbol of a promise made to God to live differently because of what Jesus has done for us.

**Christ himself suffered for sins once. He was not guilty, but he suffered for those who are guilty to bring you to God. His body was killed, but he was made alive in the spirit....And that water is like baptism that now saves you—not the washing of dirt from the body, but the promise made to God from a good conscience. And this is because Jesus Christ was raised from the dead.  
1 Peter 3 v 18-21**

Paul in his letter to the church in Rome explained that just as Jesus was buried and came back to life, baptism is a picture of us burying our old way of life and beginning anew.

**"Did you forget that all of us became part of Christ when we were baptised? We shared his death in our baptism. When we were baptised, we were buried with Christ and shared his death. So, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the wonderful power of the Father, we also can live a new life."  
Romans 6 v 3-4**

The **River Jordan** where Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist. People still visit this site today to be baptised.

# Should I get baptised?

Some churches baptise babies using just a sprinkling of water, but Jesus was baptised by full immersion, that means going completely under the water and coming back up. As Paul wrote in the book of Romans, this is a picture of death and resurrection, the old life being buried and a new life beginning.

Baptism is important for three reasons.

# 1

It is what Jesus did and as Christians we want to follow his example - Jesus himself said that it was God's will that he be baptised so we know it is part of God's plans for those He knows and loves.

# 2

Baptism is an opportunity to publicly share with others that you have heard and believed the Good News of Jesus' life, death and resurrection and have chosen to follow Jesus and live as a friend of God.

# 3

Baptism is a milestone, an opportunity for you to make a decision about how you want to spend the rest of your life, committing to living for God and loving those around you, sharing the Good News through your words and actions.

If you have responded to the Good News about Jesus' life, death and resurrection and chosen to give your life to God to live in relationship with Him then the Bible says getting baptised is the next step.



**Think about these questions for yourself.**

Have you responded to the Good News about Jesus - that means believing that he died on the cross and came back to life for you and choosing to change your life accepting God as your friend?.

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*Do you have questions about the Good News and what it means for you? Make a note of them here.*

**"While they were traveling down the road, they came to some water. The officer said, "Look, here is water. What is stopping me from being baptised?" Philip answered, "If you believe with all your heart, you can."**

**Acts 8 v 36-37**

The Bible tells us that if you believe, you can be baptised. Is there anything that worries you about being baptised or makes you wonder if you are ready?

Take a moment to write it here.

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# Preparing for your baptism

Your baptism marks a fresh start and a new beginning, it's good to take time to think about what this will look like for you.

We know that Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection made a way so that all our mistakes no matter how big or small can be forgiven. Are there any mistakes or bad habits that you need to say sorry to God for and choose to walk away from now?

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When John baptised people he invited them to repent of their sins and change their hearts and lives. Are there any positive behaviours or lifestyle changes that you want to commit to as you start afresh with God?

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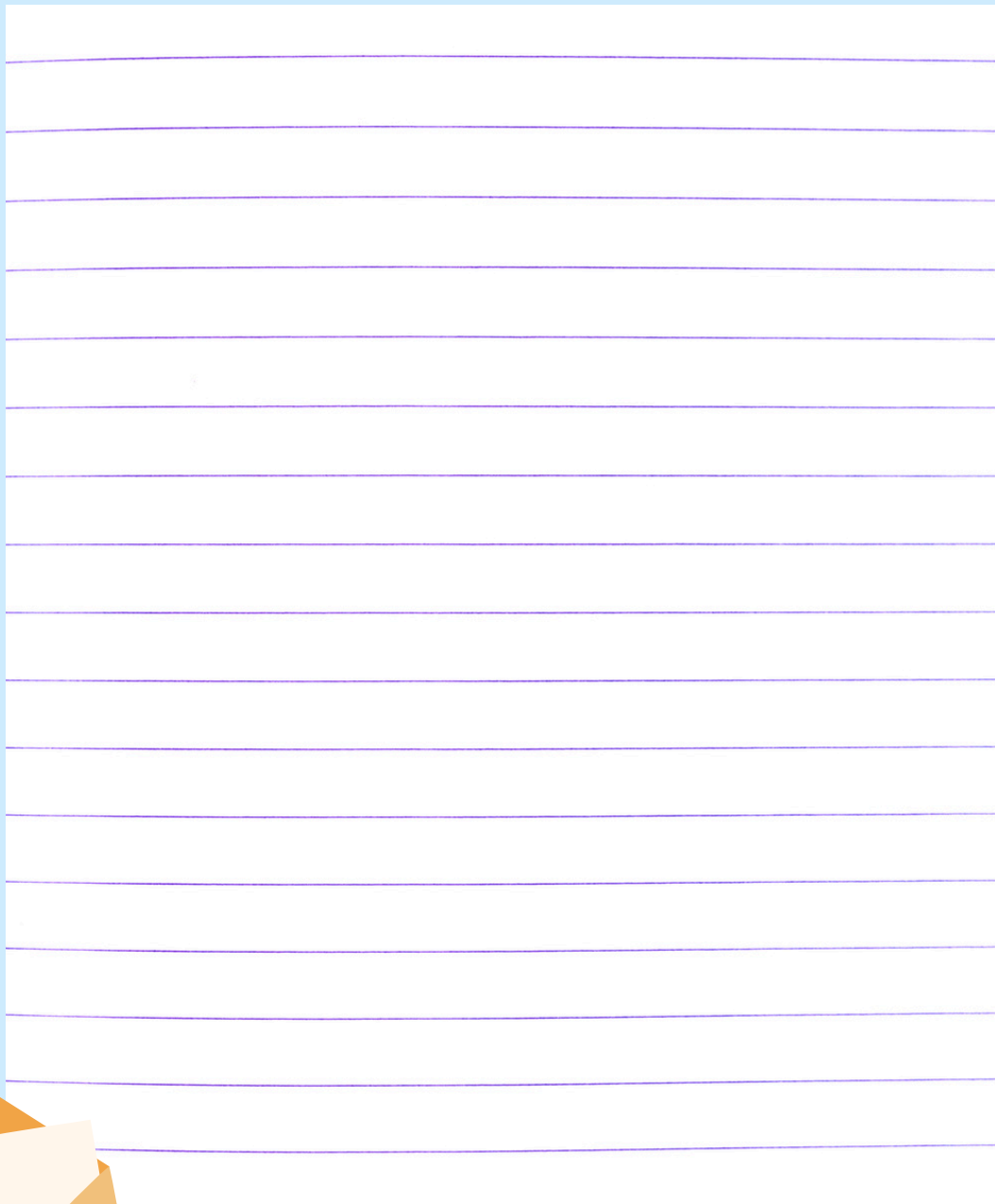
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## Sharing your story

Your baptism is an opportunity to tell others about your faith, to invite friends and family to join you in marking this important milestone. Even though it can be daunting it is good to publicly share your story, telling others why you have chosen to be baptised. Choose somebody you know and trust, write them a letter about why you have chosen to be baptised. This is a great starting point for thinking about how to share your story.

Think about including:

- The Good News about Jesus' life, death and resurrection!
- A personal story or experience where you connected to God and knew you wanted to choose to live for Him!
- A verse from the Bible or lyric from a song that has encouraged and blessed you.



**Who will you invite to celebrate your baptism with you?  
Why not ask God who He wants you to invite.**

# Next steps...

If you haven't already, it's time to talk to your church leader about being baptised.

They will talk you through all the steps you need to take and what will happen on the day of your baptism. Talk to them if you would like a specific person to be involved in baptising you or for a certain song to be included in the service.

## Get Prepared !

Spend time chatting with God, your church leadership, family and those who help build your faith – ask as many questions as you want!

Send out invitations to friends and family !

Write out your story, what you want to share at your baptism.

## Remember to pack !

- Your story!

Make sure you have this written down and are ready to share.

- Clothes to be baptised in!

Pick something that won't go see-through when wet!

- A Towel

- Dry clothes to change into . Don't forget underwear and socks!

# Baptised with the Holy Spirit

As well as being baptised in water we also see people throughout the New Testament being baptised with the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised his followers before Pentecost: **"John baptised people with water, but in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit."** - Acts 1 v 5

The Holy Spirit is our helper, God living in us helping us to follow Jesus' example, equipping us with amazing spiritual gifts and growing in us a fruitful character. If you aren't sure whether you've been baptised in the Holy Spirit just ask God now to come and live in your heart, filling you up. We can trust that God will always hear and respond.