

WHAT DOES FAROS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP BELIEVE ABOUT BAPTISM?

CELEBRATING YOUR NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

The first story we read about in the gospels concerning Jesus as an adult is his baptism. The last thing Jesus said to his disciples before ascending into heaven was that they should go throughout the world making disciples and baptising them. Baptism is obviously a very important activity in the New Testament, but it is one that Christians have some disputes about.

Here in **Faros Christian Fellowship** we allow some room for disagreement between sincere believers.

We have, nonetheless, tried to be faithful to both the Bible and to what the church has done historically as we have studied this subject.

Here is how we would answer some of the most frequently asked questions about baptism:

WHY SHOULD I BE BAPTISED?

● ***YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE BAPTISED TO BE SAVED.***

The New Testament teaches that a person is saved by repentance from sin and faith in Christ, with baptism being the next step after salvation.

In Luke 23, the thief on the cross recognized who Jesus was, reached out to him, and Jesus promised him salvation. That dying thief had no opportunity to be baptised.

● ***YOU DO NEED TO BE BAPTISED TO BE OBEDIENT TO JESUS.***

We are commanded to be baptised as a part of being his disciple. “Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.” (Mt. 28:19) Thus, we do not get baptised when we “feel like it,” or when we “get around to it” or when we are “led to it by the Lord.” Baptism is one of only two ordinances or rituals that Jesus commands us to observe for all time. The other is the Lord’s Supper or Breaking of Bread.

● ***BAPTISM IS THE PUBLIC PROFESSION OF YOUR FAITH.***

Baptism is done before a group of people who witness your confession of faith in Jesus Christ. Baptism is not the only way we profess to be a Christian, but it is an important way.

● ***BAPTISM SYMBOLISES YOUR CLEANING FROM SIN.***

Baptism throughout the New Testament indicated that a person had “repented” or turned away from sin. The apostles often referred to the fact that believers were washed from sin. Peter stated that the water in baptism symbolised, not the cleansing of the body from dirt, but the cleansing of the conscience. (1 Peter 3:21)

● BAPTISM SYMBOLISES YOUR UNION WITH CHRIST IN HIS DEATH, BURIAL, AND RESURRECTION. IT THEREFORE ALSO SYMBOLISES YOUR INCLUSION IN HIS CHURCH.

When you become a Christian, you die to sin and your old way of life and you begin a whole new life. Romans 6:8 states, “Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.” The very act of baptism (being immersed in the water and coming up out of the water) is a picture of what happens to you spiritually.

HOW SHOULD I BE BAPTISED?

We believe that people should be baptised by immersion as opposed to sprinkling or pouring. The term “baptise” literally means to immerse. This was how people in the Bible were baptised.

Also, immersion best symbolizes what happened spiritually when you became a Christian.

WHEN SHOULD I BE BAPTISED?

You should be baptised as soon as possible after you have personally trusted Christ for salvation and been “born again”. Remember, you are not baptised in order to become a Christian. You are baptised because you are a Christian. We should not put off baptism, since it is a command of Jesus. The pastors will be glad to arrange your baptism with you.

WHAT IF I WAS BAPTISED AS AN INFANT?

Among orthodox Christians there are different perspectives on infant baptism. Some denominations and traditions (such as Anglican and Presbyterian) baptise infants while others (such as most Baptists) do not. Perhaps you were baptised as an infant. How should you view that baptism? You certainly want to show respect to your parents and their viewpoints, as well as be grateful to God for any spiritual influence they had in your life.

However, our understanding of what the Bible teaches is that baptism is an action that follows, not precedes, conversion. So, if you have not been baptised since you have made a decision for Christ, we believe that you should be baptised as a believer.

SHOULD I BE RE-BAPTISED IF I WAS BAPTISED IN ANOTHER CHURCH?

As long as you were born again when you were baptised, with a proper intent and understanding, and the other church was an authentic Christian church, then you should not be re-baptised.

If however, your baptism was a church ritual done prior to your conversion (with or without a subsequent Confirmation), or if the church involved was outside the mainstream of Christianity, then we believe that you should be validly baptised for the first time.

CAN MY CHILDREN BE BAPTISED?

Yes, as long as they thoroughly understand what they are doing. We require that you wait until your children are at least 10 years old (preferably older) so they can make an intelligent profession of faith that is their own. We certainly believe that a young child can be saved, but the older a child is, the more they will understand and the more meaningful baptism will be for them.

Remember that they do not need to be baptised in order to be Christians.

If you are in any doubt about any aspect of this important subject, please speak to the pastors.