

Water Baptism



Water Baptism
celebrate new life in Christ

Faith  Tabernacle
CHURCH
of west los angeles

note from pastor loren

I am excited about your decision to follow the Lord in water baptism. It is an important step after conversion to indicate your commitment to serve and follow Jesus Christ.

This brochure is designed to give you the important information on this step in your Christian experience. By understanding this ordinance of the church, the baptismal service itself will hold much more meaning for you.

These are wonderful days to serve the Lord. Give him your whole life. What God has in store for you is far greater than you can ever imagine.

With anticipation,
Loren Hicks



Understanding Water Baptism

Water Baptism is one of the two ordinances of the church. It is a symbolic act practiced by Christ himself, taught to the disciples, and commanded to the new believers.

Baptism follows salvation. Those who believe in Christ are to be baptized with water. This represents their commitment to forsake their own sinful nature and to unreservedly commit themselves to Christ and His Kingdom purposes.

The practice of water baptism is a public testimony to the world, signifying the death of the individual's sinful nature, and the new birth in Jesus Christ.

It is an important event in the life of the believer, confirming the changing power of Jesus Christ.

What the Bible says about Water Baptism

Jesus commanded us saying:

"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"

~ Matthew 28:19

Why did Jesus think it was so important to be baptized? Because it is a symbol of our relationship with Him. Baptism illustrates what happened in your life when you accepted Jesus as your Savior.

Romans 6:3-4 says:

"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."

When you accepted Jesus, your old nature died (that nature that made you sin) and a new nature was born (read Romans 6:5-6). The Bible calls this being born again (John 3:3). Baptism illustrates this miracle of the new birth. When we go into the water, that symbolizes the death of our old nature, and when we come out of the water that illustrates the new birth.

The word baptism comes from an ancient Greek word that means to immerse. Therefore baptism is the immersion of the believer under water.

Matthew 3:13-17 says:

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John ... As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water..."

Baptism is an important step for every person who accepted Jesus as their Savior to take, because it is a public proclamation that they have Christ. When should you be baptized? If you have accepted Jesus into your heart, and you understand what baptism means and symbolizes, you should do it as soon as possible.

"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 Phillip and the eunuch went down into the water and Phillip baptized him."

~ Acts 8:36-38

Frequently Asked Questions

>> WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

Only people who have accepted Jesus as their Savior should be baptized, because baptism will not mean anything to those who have not been born again.

>> IS WATER BAPTISM VITAL TO BECOMING A CHRISTIAN?

Baptism doesn't make you a believer - it shows that you already believe. Baptism does not "save" you, only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring - it's the outward symbol of the commitment you make in your heart.

>> WHAT WILL ACTUALLY HAPPEN AT MY BAPTISM?

Here at Faith Tabernacle Church, we baptize by immersion. That means going completely under the water. This is how Jesus was baptized, and how people in Biblical examples were baptized. It also best illustrates the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and of you as you put aside your life as it was before Christ and begin living your life as a new person in Him.

The pastor will invite you into the water next to him. You will be introduced and asked about your decision to accept Christ's forgiveness and to be baptized. You will have the opportunity at that time to share your story of what God has done in your life.

The pastor will typically put one hand behind your upper back and will hold your hand with the other. This will enable him to guide you into the water and back up again. You will then lie back into and under the water. You will then be immediately raised back up and out by the pastor. Afterward, you will exit the water and dry off with a towel.

>> WILL I HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY?

You will be asked to share that you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. You will then be given the opportunity to briefly (one to two minutes) share your story of what God has done in your life and what led you to be baptized at this time. If you have questions about this, we can work with you on it.

>> WHAT SHOULD I WEAR WHEN I AM BAPTIZED?

You should wear a dark shirt with pants or long shorts. You may also want to wear a swimsuit underneath. The clothing should cover sufficiently and conservatively as you enter the water as well as once you are wet.

Bring a change of clothes, a towel, and a plastic bag for your wet clothes. There will be a location for you to change clothes if you would like.

>> WHO WILL BE THERE?

We encourage you to invite family and friends so that they can celebrate with you. You will especially want to invite those who don't yet know Christ, or that have not yet been baptized. Invitations will be available for your use at the resource table.

Baptisms are at the conclusion of the Sunday morning worship service so the congregation will be there to encourage you in this important step. You may invite someone to photograph and/or video the event if you desire.

>> SHOULD MY CHILD BE A CERTAIN AGE BEFORE BEING BAPTIZED?

We believe it is important to wait until children are old enough to believe and understand the true meaning of their relationship with Jesus Christ and the significance of baptism before we baptize them.

The age of 8-12 is a suggested age for baptism based on the maturity level of each child, and we typically do not baptize children younger. Some of the reasons we wait until this age are:

- It is more likely to be their decision rather than the desire of their parents.
- They are more likely to understand the impact and weight of what they are committing to.
- They will remember the event better and it will be more meaningful to them in future years.

Preparing for Baptism

- Your baptism will take place at the conclusion of the Sunday morning worship service.
- We will follow the Biblical pattern of water baptism by immersion in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- At Faith Tabernacle, the baptismal tank is located at the back of the platform (center).
- Changing rooms are to the left (men's) and right (women's) of the stage.

How do I sign up for the next Baptism?

Here are two ways that you can sign up or register for the next Baptism Class.

- Connection Card (inside Sunday Mornings Bulletin) - Mark the box indicating interest in Water Baptism and place the card in the offering plate or turn in at the First Impressions Registration Table following the service.
- Contact the church office by phone at (310) 473-3135 or by email at info@wlafaith.org for more information.

If you are considering baptism, you must attend a Baptism Class led by our Pastor or Deacons beforehand.

Baptism Checklist & Testimony Worksheet

1. **Arrival:** Plan to arrive at the church at 9:45 a.m. for a brief preliminary meeting with Pastor Loren before the Sunday Worship Service.
2. **Clothing:** It is preferred that you wear the clothes in which you will be baptized. Wearing clothes that will not retain much water is advised (jeans are not advised). It is better to wear darker colored clothing since white is "see-through" when wet. Also, make sure to bring a change of clothes, two towels and a plastic bag for wet clothing.
3. **Baptism Application:** Please be sure to turn in your Baptism Application Form to one of our staff or elders at the church as soon as possible.
4. **Invite Family/Friends to Attend:** We strongly encourage you to attend your baptism, even if they are not followers of Christ. It is an important day and you want them to celebrate with you. Only God knows what effect it may have on their own lives as well.
5. **Personal Testimony:** Water baptism provides a wonderful opportunity to testify about God's transforming work in our lives. Through the power of Jesus' death and resurrection we have been born again into a living hope (1 Peter 1:3).

Everyone is encouraged to share a brief testimony during the baptism service. Begin by praying for the guidance of the Holy Spirit; He wants to lead you through the process.

To help you develop an effective testimony, begin to write out simple, brief responses on an index card or small piece of paper. You may include:

1. Brief description of where you were spiritually before receiving Christ as your Savior. How did that condition affect your feelings, attitudes, actions or relationships?
2. Explain what motivated you to consider Christ and to receive Him into your life. Describe how your life has now changed since you trusted Christ.
3. As you consider your "before Christ" and "after Christ" conditions, look for a theme that can tie your testimony together. For example: "I used to live with a great deal of fear, but when I came to know God through Jesus Christ that fear disappeared."

Testimony Worksheet [continued]

It is suggested that you write out your thoughts from the worksheet onto a note card and that you read your testimony from this card at the baptism service.

Always keep your testimony positive by focusing on the good things the Lord has done for you rather than the bad things others have done to you. Avoid specific negative references to individuals or churches so that your emphasis is on God and His faithfulness!

**Remember to keep it brief — one or two minutes at most.
A few well-chosen words can have a powerful impact!**

We look forward to celebrating with you!



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