

The normal Christian birth



Acts 2:17-47

Having been filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter addresses a crowd who have witnessed the phenomenon of Pentecost. The crowd are convicted (by the Holy Spirit) and ask what they can do. Peter's reply is that they should repent and be baptised – each of them. Those who accepted Peter's words responded and were baptised immediately.

1. How do you understand repentance and has this happened in your life?
2. What two things are promised following repentance and baptism? (v38-39)
3. What kind of things followed on as normal Christian life in the days that followed? (vv42-47)

Jesus's baptism



Luke 3:21-23

Even Jesus was baptised by full immersion in the River Jordan. It was amazing that the Son of God was baptised and that he presented Himself to another person (John the Baptist) to do this. Knowing who Jesus was, even John struggled to bring himself to do this. Jesus was demonstrating 'death' to His own will and His willingness to be obedient to His Father.

1. What was Jesus' Father's response to His Son's baptism? (v22)
2. Can you hear your Heavenly Father saying the same words to you?

Philippian jailer and his family baptised



Acts 16:25-34

Paul and Silas are imprisoned after being flogged for casting a spirit out of a slave girl who was making money for her 'owners.' During the night there is an earthquake and prisoner's cell doors are opened. Thinking the prisoner's had escaped, the jailer is about to kill himself when Paul calls out that everyone's still

in their cells. The jailer is amazed and asks how he can be saved. He and his whole family come to faith.

1. How soon after coming to faith (believing) is the jailer and his family baptised? (v33)
2. What do you notice about the jailer after becoming a Christian? (v34)

Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch



Acts 8:26-40

An Angel of the Lord leads Philip into the desert for an encounter with a Eunuch. The Holy Spirit tells Philip to stay near the chariot in which the Eunuch is travelling back from a visit to Jerusalem. He is reading from Isaiah and Philip catches up with him and asks an open question about whether he can understand what he is reading. The Eunuch explains that without help he cannot understand. Philip explains the good news about Jesus and on sight of water; the Eunuch asks why he should not be baptised. Philip baptises him and then is taken away literally instantly by the Holy Spirit.

1. How soon after believing is Philip baptised? (vv36-38)
2. Who initiates the idea of being baptised? (vv36-38)

Gentiles filled with the Holy Spirit and baptised



Acts 10:34-47

Up to this point only Jews had come to faith in Jesus. Now non-Jews, or Gentiles had come to faith and were filled with the Holy Spirit before they had been baptised. Peter would have a lot of explaining to do to his fellow leaders back in Jerusalem but once he saw what the Holy Spirit was doing he immediately said that those who had come to faith and were filled with the Spirit should be baptised.

1. How did Peter's friends know that these Gentiles had been filled with the Holy Spirit? (v46)
2. What question did Peter ask of his friends and ministry companions? (v47)

Is Baptism for me?

We can see from the examples given that once a person decides to believe in Jesus and comes to faith through repentance, they can, and perhaps should be baptised at the earliest opportunity. Baptism is demonstrating publicly to Father God and to friends and church family that you are laying down your own life and will wholeheartedly to God. Baptism is in a sense an outward sign of something that has happened internally and spiritually.

The promise of God is the complete forgiveness of sins and a new life empowered by the Holy Spirit. There is a sense of a greater completeness in the obedient step of water baptism. It is not true that a person isn't saved by believing alone and not being baptised but when so much is offered by way of promises from God, why would a person NOT want to be baptised as soon as possible?

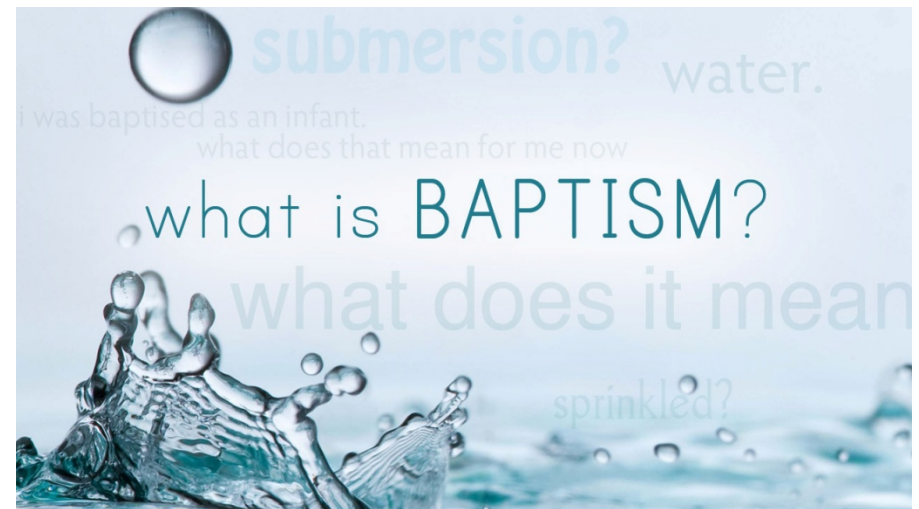
Sometimes people say they don't 'feel ready' to be baptised but in reality the bigger decision is coming to faith in Jesus Christ in the first place. This is the act that requires us to lay down our lives to Him completely. If Jesus was baptised there is a good example and reason for us to do the same.

It can be good to ask yourself the question asked by the Eunuch – why shouldn't I be baptised?

We look forward to helping you prepare to be baptised and some practical aspects of the baptism itself can be found in our booklet, *Getting Baptised at Brookside*. Please arrange to speak with someone in leadership at Brookside if you would like to speak further about baptism.

www.brooksidechurch.org.uk

Tel: 0118 9664 474



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