



considering baptism



the baptist church
www.bromleybaptist.com

Should I consider baptism?

The best way to answer this question is to look at what the Bible says:

Read Luke 3:1–22 Why did John baptise people? What did those coming to be baptised have to do? Why do you think Jesus got baptised? Jot some thoughts in the box.

Baptism is about beginnings. It's about leaving an old way of life behind and starting a new one with God. When John baptised people, he told them to get ready (Luke 3:4–6). And the way they got ready was by repenting (v3).

Repentance means changing our minds and as a result changing the way we live. We need to change our minds about God and Jesus by listening and responding to the gospel. Then we need to change the way we live, which as John points out has very practical implications (v8, 10–14).

As we repent, John assures us that God forgives (v3). Baptism symbolises that. Getting wet is a picture of being washed clean; going in and out of the water is a picture of ending an old life and beginning a new one.

What were they getting ready for? Jesus. And when Jesus was baptised by John, he was saying two things. Firstly, that he identified with us in our sinfulness (while not sharing our sinful nature). Secondly, that everything John said was true – including what he said about Jesus (Luke 3:15–17; see John 1:19–34).

Read Acts 2:37-47 Why did people in this story get baptised? What's the link between getting baptised and joining the church? Jot some thoughts in the box.

God was doing a new thing on the Day of Pentecost: pouring the Spirit of his glorified Son onto all who put their trust in him. So Peter baptised all who repented – changed their mind about Jesus and how they were going to live their lives (v38, 41) – who received from God at that moment forgiveness and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

And everyone who was baptised joined the church and devoted themselves to learning how to live as a Christian and to supporting one another in spiritual and practical ways (v42-47).

Baptism, then, is a public declaration that from now on we are going to follow Jesus and join the company of those committed to living his way.

Read Romans 6:1-14 What does this tell us about the meaning of baptism? Jot some thoughts in the box.

Paul says baptism is the drama of Christian beginnings. It is a special act, symbolising what happens to us when we put our trust in Jesus and enabling us to declare publicly that Jesus is our Lord.

Going down into the water is a picture of dying. When we die, we can no longer live the life we used to. Going under the water is a picture of being buried – a definite full stop to an old way of life. Coming out of the water symbolises our being raised to new life through faith in Jesus (v1-4).

Being a Christian is about living a new life in the power of God’s Spirit, where we no longer want to behave in the self-centred ways that we used to. Baptism dramatises the moment we move from one way of living to another. It demonstrates that we are under new management – from running our own lives, we have handed control over to Jesus.

Time was when our glands and desires controlled us. Now, says Paul, we have a choice: because of the power of God at work in us, we are able to choose not to sin but to live lives that reflect something of the loveliness of Jesus.

Such a life begins when we trust in Jesus – and baptism is a picture of that. So, should I consider baptism?

Please do talk to one of our ministry team if you are thinking about taking this step of public commitment to Jesus Christ.

Bromley Baptist Church, Park Road, Bromley, BR1 3HJ
www.bromleybaptist.com

Ministry team:

Glenis Ruston: 020 8464 4112: glenis.ruston@bromleybaptist.com
Andrew Burnham: 020 8460 2958: andrew.burnham@bromleybaptist.com
Office: 020 8460 3307: office@bromleybaptist.com

