

Baptism

What is the purpose of Baptism?

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

--Report of the Baptist Faith and Message Study Committee to the Southern Baptist Convention Adopted, June 14th, 2000

Why Do Baptists Baptize Only By Immersion?

For two reasons:

(1) Immersion was the mode of baptism in the New Testament; John the Baptist immersed his converts in the Jordan River; Christ Himself was so immersed.

(2) Baptists regard baptism as a public confession of Christian faith and a symbol of the burial and resurrection of Christ, as stated by Paul in his Epistle to the Colossians. Hence, Baptists look upon immersion as realistic symbolic, through which the life of sin is buried in baptism and the new life of faith emerges.

Immersion is limited to adults and to such children as have reached an age where they can understand the meaning of baptism.

"Baptize" is a transliteration of the Greek word *baptizein* (meaning "to immerse"), not a translation. To say that Baptists baptize by immersion is redundant, since baptism originally was immersion.