

Baptism

One of the most difficult decisions some people ever must make is to get baptised. I do not know whether the battle before-hand is due to the fear of man, a Satanic attack, or a fear of what full commitment will cost. However, others find it the most natural step to take to follow in His footsteps.

Preparation

Careful preparation is important for the candidate. We are not in the 'numbers game' but are out to make disciples; people who will love Jesus Christ and own Him as Lord.

Candidates for baptism need to-

- Have repented of sin and have a personal trust and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Understand what Biblical baptism means, so teaching, questioning and explanation is necessary.
- Seek to have a personal, disciplined daily time with the Lord where they spend time in prayer and meditation upon the Scriptures.
- Have a personal testimony which gives credibility to their faith.
- Be of an age whereby they have some understanding of what they are doing.

Points to note

Children and young people who have committed their lives to the Lord should receive the consent of their parents, especially if the parents are pre-believers. This should also apply to a marriage partner, where the spouse is a pre-believer. To ignore this principle could very easily invoke needless hostility, while on the other hand, when pre-believers give their consent, it may in time lead to their conversion. Most often consent is given even if the baptism is delayed for a few weeks or months.

Do not be coerced into giving your consent for someone to be baptised if you feel that the candidate is unprepared or has wrong motives. Time will determine how serious they are in this matter.

The pastor is not the only person qualified to baptise people. By encouraging Home Group leaders and others to baptise, they will respect you for it and find personal satisfaction in ministry. Involve two people in the baptism. This is especially helpful in praying with the person being baptised.

Some people have a chronic fear of water. If after receiving personal ministry for fear and it remains, do not get legalistic as to the mode of baptism: would Jesus? Consider having them stand in a pool of water and pour a bucket of water over them.

Women need to be careful about what they wear when they get baptised as wet clothes are very easy to see through. Bathers under a dress are satisfactory.

Should people get baptised a second time? A few may want that especially if they were very young when first baptised or were pre-believers. Occasionally, I will reluctantly rebaptise them if it will help them grow in the Lord.

The Baptismal Service

The candidate should invite their pre-Christian and Christian friends to the Baptismal Service. Some churches print special invitations inviting people to attend. Having pre-Christians at the service can prove to be a very worthwhile evangelistic opportunity.

Baptismal Services should be in a public place, as part of the significance of the service is the open declaration of the believer that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Keep the ceremony as authentic and natural as possible. For the first service I officiated at, I wore a gown and waders- never again hopefully! Not only were the waders clumsy, but the dress made it unnatural. Neither Paul, nor John the Baptist would have worn special gowns.

It is useful to share Scripture outlining the purpose of baptism and to allow the candidate to share their testimony. Their baptism must be in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).

Over the next week or so after the baptisms, it is particularly important that someone keeps in close personal contact with those recently baptised. Sometimes they can experience an emotional low, or strong Satanic opposition, as Jesus did after His baptism (Matthew 4:1).

It is a wonderful joy to make disciples for Jesus, especially when they take this important step of baptism.

Extra teaching

My baptism study found on my website:

https://ministrywithpurpose.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/baptism.web-a4.dox_.pdf