

# Dressed for the Wedding

## Baptism ...

- ‡ IDENTIFIES US WITH THE CROSS OF CHRIST
- ‡ UNITES US WITH THE CHURCH OF CHRIST
- ‡ CLOTHES US WITH THE BEAUTY OF CHRIST

“Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’” John 3:5-7

Being “born of the water” refers to our baptism – our acceptance of God’s gift of forgiveness. Being “born of the Spirit” refers to God coming to live in our hearts – His gift to us.

### A. Baptism identifies us with the cross of Christ -

When we personally make the decision to be baptized and are immersed, we demonstrate that we are taking on the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus as our only hope and means for salvation. Baptism marks the moment of our breaking away from the kingdoms of this world and being citizens of God’s kingdom, subject to His authority alone. Our baptism says to the world “*I have died to you and from now on I will live my life for God through Jesus Christ.*”

“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.” Romans 6:3-4

### B. Baptism unites us with the church of Christ -

“For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body - whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free - and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.” Corinthians 12:13

“There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called— one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” Ephesians 4:4-6

There can only be one baptism that all Christians have in common. God’s Word explains it and, like the Nike ads: we “just do it.” Parents cannot make the conversion decision for their infant children and churches do not add members through baptism -- The Lord does the adding through immersion and through the gift of His Holy Spirit. If you have been immersed into Christ, then you are already a member of His church.

At BCC, we will honor that and will continue to teach, encourage, and equip you to be an active part of the church.

### **C. Baptism clothes us with the beauty of Christ**

“You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” Gal. 3:26-27

**He is beautiful: pure, holy, and righteous. We come to Him dressed in rags, ugliness - sin. He has the riches of heaven. We come in spiritual poverty.**

**What happens when we trust Him in faith and obey Him in baptism?**

We put Him on: now cleansing where there was filthiness, forgiveness where there was guilt, royal son-ship where there was satanic slavery – what a beautiful moment! Jesus refers to Himself as the Bridegroom – and to the church as His bride.

**When we “put on” Christ as a body of believers, we are all dressed for the wedding!**



## **AUTHORITY**

The key to understanding baptism is “authority” – Who commands us to be baptized? The Lord.

God designed the ceremony of baptism for us to remember when we “put on Christ” and were “born of the Spirit;” His Son provided an example for us to follow – and it can be said of us when we do what He did that God says: “This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3:13-17)

*Baptism is an important first act of obedience for a believer – yet Christ does it all! By laying yourself down in the water of baptism you are appealing to God, offering your body to Him as a living sacrifice, accepting what He has promised you – the forgiveness of your sins and the gift of His Holy Spirit. The moment of baptism should mark a change in your life. When you come up out of the water God will give you the power to live life in a new way.*

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When the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.”

Titus 3:4-7

***If you want to discuss your personal decision concerning baptism – please contact us.***



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