



## FAMILY LIFE CHURCH OF SHREVEPORT BAPTISM INSTRUCTIONS

**Why Should I Be Water Baptized?** Jesus commanded His followers to baptize new believers. In Matthew 28: 19-20, Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" Since these were the final instructions Jesus gave his disciples before He ascended to heaven, we know this is important. Water baptism is not an optional afterthought, but a vital step in the life of every person who has a relationship with Christ. Through baptism, we demonstrate that we identify with Him and are now a member of God's family.

**When Should I Be Water Baptized?** In Scriptures such as Acts 2:34, 2:41, 8:12, and 10:47-48, it is evident that the act of water baptism came after an individual made a decision for Christ and not before. Water baptism is one of the first steps to be taken after committing your life to Christ. Even if you have been a follower of Christ for many years, but have not yet been baptized, it is still important to follow the Lord's command to be baptized.

**What About Baptism of Young Children?** We believe baptism is appropriate only for those who have made a personal and conscious decision to trust Christ for their salvation. If your child is of age where he or she is knowledgeable and aware of this important decision, then they should be baptized.

**How Should I Be Water Baptized?** All examples of baptism in Scripture were by immersion in water, not sprinkling. Acts 8:36-39, states that "Philip went down into the

water..." In the account of Jesus' baptism in Mark 1:12, the Scripture says, "And immediately coming up out of the water..." Baptism by immersion is the symbol of what happens spiritually to a believer. It signifies the complete death of the old nature as we go under the water, and the new life that is ours through the resurrection of Christ as we come up out of the water. Baptism by immersion is a picture of the complete cleansing of our sins. (Romans 6:4)

**Is Water Baptism Essential for Salvation?** It does not determine our salvation. Our salvation is secured by the faith and belief in our hearts, not by an external work. The thief on the cross in Luke 23: 39-43, is an example of someone who believed in Jesus but didn't have the opportunity to be baptized. Jesus told him, "...today you shall be with Me in Paradise." He was obviously going to heaven without being baptized. However, this does not excuse us from baptism. As we become aware of the commands in Scripture, we are obligated to obey them as we have opportunity.

**The Mandate...**It is important that you understand the mandates of scripture regarding the area of water baptism. Water baptism is a symbolic act of Christ commanded of new believers, it follows salvation. At Family Life Church; believers are baptized by immersing them in water. This practice of water baptism is a public testimony to the world signifying the death of the individual's sinful nature, and the new birth in Jesus Christ. It is an important event in the life of the believer, confirming the changing power of Jesus Christ.

**When are Baptism Services Held?** We provide the opportunity for water baptism based on new converts. The baptism is held Sunday's on the property of the church at the end of worship.

**PRACTICAL INSTRUCTIONS:** What should I bring with me to the service?

1. Men/boys – long shorts (near the knees) and dark t-shirt.
2. Women/girls – long dresses no slacks, dark t-shirt and bra.
3. All clothing should be modest revealing; t-shirts should be a darker color without any writing or designs.
4. No ear rings & jewelry.
5. Bring towel, sheet and extra set of clothing to change into after the baptism. 6. Ear plugs if needed.
6. The church restroom is where you can change out of your wet clothing. 8. Hair dryer. (optional)
7. Arrive at least 60 minutes before service.
8. Proceed to the designated class to meet with Ministers.
9. Leave your change of clothes in the designated changing area. (women in youth room men in kidslife)

10. Be perfectly relaxed when it is your turn to be baptized.
11. Do NOT touch the microphone.
12. Hold your breath and pinch your nose as you are gently lowered into the water. The pastor will lift you up out of the water with this method described.
13. Immediately following baptism, go to the changing rooms.
14. Baptismal Certificate given the next Sunday during morning worship.

This is a sacred occasion; it is a time of rejoicing and gladness in what God has done for you! This is an important event in the life of every believer, confirming the changing power of Jesus Christ. (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Romans 6:4).

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