

# From the Bible

The Lord opened Lydia's heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. **When she and her household were baptized.**  
Acts 16:14-15

The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then **he and his entire family were baptized** without delay.  
Acts 16:29-33

Crispus ... became a believer in the Lord, **together with all his household**; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul became believers **and were baptized.**  
Acts 18:8

Were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius ... **(I did baptize also the household of Stephanas ... )**  
1 Corinthians 1:13-16

# Being Baptized

## What?

Jesus asked all people to be baptized and so, to join in God's family. Even Jesus was baptized, though Christians believe Jesus never sinned. He gave an example for all others to follow.

◆ Baptism is a "once-in-a-lifetime" event which takes the rest of your life to fulfill. If you have already been baptized, you never need to be baptized again, unless you join one of many "Christian" type cults.

◆ When you're baptized, you become a Christian, not a member of any one denomination. Being baptized is good for life – and should be accepted at any Christian church you attend in the future.

◆ Baptism is the first step you take closer to God. It also provides you with many benefits.

## How?

Our baptisms take place on special Sundays throughout the year. Ask when the next one will be.

◆ In preparation for the next baptism service, you will meet with Pastor Roger for a short while to discuss your questions or concerns about the service. It's also a good time for the sponsors to have any of their questions answered.

◆ You can often choose at which of the Sunday services you would prefer to have the baptism.

◆ We pour a small amount of water over the heads of those being baptized during the service. Sponsors (also known as Godparents) stand next to the person being baptized, to pray for them and support them.

## Jesus said, "Let the children come."

Some churches will only baptize adults, and others will only baptize babies. Here, we do both.

When an adult is baptized, we celebrate that this person has given their heart and life to follow Jesus. Yet our focus is not on the choice the adult has made, but on the power of God to save. God accepts us not because of anything we have said or done, but he accepts us before we could ever earn it or buy it with good works. In the baptism service we believe God fills this adult with the Holy Spirit and gives them a new sense of life, based on the freedom God's forgiveness offers

When we baptize infants or small children, we celebrate the same thing -- not the infant's choice of God so much as the power of God to save. Since God accepts us before we can earn it, there's no need to wait for a child to come to a specific age when they can choose what to do for themselves. That makes baptism sound like something we do that guarantees God will love us. Only, God has already made that promise to love us first ...

So why bother with baptism? In baptism God changes you. He gives you the power of his Holy Spirit, and with the Holy Spirit come the gifts and fruit of the Spirit (See Galatians, chapter 5). By not baptizing a child, you will restrict their spiritual growth and their ability to share in the love, joy, peace, patience and other gifts God can offer your child. Why exactly would you want to do that?

Our prayer and expectation is that as the child grows, he or she will soon come to embrace Christ personally. The child is marked with the sign of the cross as belonging to our Lord, from the beginning. We pray the Holy Spirit will draw this little one to Christ in a dynamic relationship in the years to come. There may come either a moment of some dramatic conversion or a quiet series of small steps which lead eventually to mature faith and discipleship. We pledge our own efforts to help the child along Christ's way.

# Infant Baptism?



There are many churches that teach different things about the sacrament of baptism, and certainly about whether or not to baptize infants. Since not all well-meaning Christians will agree on this topic, we wish to outline what we believe about infant baptism and how/why we celebrate it.

This issue first became argued during the Protestant Reformation in the 1500's as a reaction to some abuses then current in the Roman Catholic church. However, the tradition of baptizing infants and children stretches back over 1000 years before that, reaching back to the earliest records of the Christian church, to the first century itself.

In addition to the historical records of the earliest churches, there are references to baptizing "whole households" in the Bible (*see next page*). The word "household" in Greek referred to all who lived under one roof: adults, slaves, and children alike. Some churches interpret these verses to refer only to the adult members of the household, but that's not the usual Greek use of the word. You can see this in the way the word "household" gets used in 1 Timothy 3:4. In this part of the Bible we hear how a bishop needs to care for his household, and then it specifically gives instructions about the care of his children. It's clear children were part of households -- and also clear that some of them were baptized by no less than Paul himself.



*We invite you to join us  
for the journey of a lifetime.*

**Experience the difference that knowing  
God's promises can make in your life.**

# FAQ's

## Frequently Asked Questions

■ **Do I really need to be baptized to be a Christian?**

**Yes. Baptism is how God adopts you into his family.** Years ago, those who were not baptized were not even taught the Lord's Prayer because it's hard to call God "Our Father" until you're part of the family.

■ **Do I (or does my child) need to wear anything special for the baptism service?**

**Please wear whatever is comfortable for you.** White has been traditional, but it is not necessary. Be prepared to kneel. Be prepared to get wet.

■ **Does it cost anything?**

**All of God's gifts are free.** So are all of the services of this church. You may wish to make a gift to the church in thanksgiving for being baptized. We do that each week as we pass the baskets in the middle of the service.

**For more information,  
call us at 703.971.5242  
or visit us online at  
[www.dovefromabove.org](http://www.dovefromabove.org)**

# About Infant Baptism

*... learn why we baptize  
children as well as adults  
at Church of the Spirit*

**Believe in the Lord  
Jesus, and you will be  
saved – you and  
your household.  
– Acts 16:31**



**Church of the Spirit**

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