

# BELONGING

JESUS | BAPTISM | MINISTRY PARTNERSHIP

## Belonging with Jesus in Baptism

BELONGING is a sermon series happening the 5 Sundays in January, focusing on the gospel, baptism, and the church.

*Opportunity to be baptized and to become a ministry partner (known as membership in some contexts) on Sunday, February 7<sup>th</sup> exists for those desiring to take that step of faith. The Baptism & Ministry Partnership Application form is available online and at our Welcome Centres.*

BELONGING is about belonging to *Jesus* (responding to the gospel), belonging with *Jesus in baptism*, and belonging to Christ's body, *the church*. We will focus on the centre of our faith and the individual and corporate outworking of it.

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### OPENING COMMENT

The famous baptism preacher Charles Spurgeon on baptism: "I know that believer's baptism itself does not wash away sin, yet it is so the outward sign and emblem of it to the believer, that the thing visible may be described as the thing signified. Just as our Saviour said, "This is my body," when it was not his body, but bread; yet, inasmuch as it represented his body, it was fair and right according to the usage of language to say, "Take, eat, this is my body." And so, inasmuch as baptism to the believer represent[s] the washing of sin— it may be called the washing of sin; not that it is so, but that it is to saved souls the outward symbol and representation of what is done by the power of the Holy Spirit in the man who believes in Christ."

What stood out to you from Sunday's sermon?

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## READ THE TEXT: Romans 6:1-4

“What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the father, we too might walk in newness of life.”

## TWO CASES FOR BAPTISM

The sermon on Sunday made *The Case for Baptizing Believers and their infants*, which included *Objections to Infant Baptism* and ended with pointing us to *The Case for Baptizing Believers*.

Take some time to review what the Bible teaches about Baptism for the believer: Read together Matthew 28:18-20 (commanded of Jesus/sign of discipleship, the Christian life); Acts 2:38-42 (Belief in Baptism/Belonging with Jesus); Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:1-4 (union with Christ). Discuss how these passages point to the importance of Baptism as a demonstration of a believer's devotion to Jesus.

1. What is the meaning of baptism?
2. What's the big deal about believers' baptism?
3. What does believers' baptism symbolize for the follower of Jesus?
4. What is the Bible asking of a follower of Jesus regarding believers' Baptism? Before being baptized & after being baptized?
5. Which case seems more compelling to you: The case for believers' *and* infant baptism, or the case for believers' baptism?
6. What are the implications of *dying with Christ*, and being *raised with Christ* (Romans 6:1-4)? How does this image influence how you understand the Christian life?
7. In the group allow time to share if some have or have not been baptized as a believer. If some in your group have chosen to participate in believers' baptism, maybe share what it meant to you at the time and what it means now in your walk with Jesus. Allow for open conversation from all parties as this topic is prayerfully discussed, and be open to the Holy Spirit's leading as you share.



## CLOSING COMMENT

If you've never trusted in Christ as your Saviour, I hope that you will not think that because you have been baptized or that if you will get baptized, it will insure you of eternal life. Eternal life is the free gift God offers to you based on Christ's death for your sins. You can only receive it by faith, not by your good deeds (including baptism).

If you know Christ as your Saviour but you've never been baptized as a believer, I urge you to do so as a confession of your faith in obedience to Christ's command at the next opportunity.

If you are not already, consider getting baptized and/or becoming a Ministry Partner at Central. Have you looked at and possibly fill out the online form: [www.central365.org](http://www.central365.org)

## SHARE & PRAY

- Take some time to pray for those in the church who may be considering believers' baptism, following the command of Jesus, identifying with and belonging to Him.
- Conclude by spending some time praying for one another; the growth in grace you want to experience, and the needs among you.

