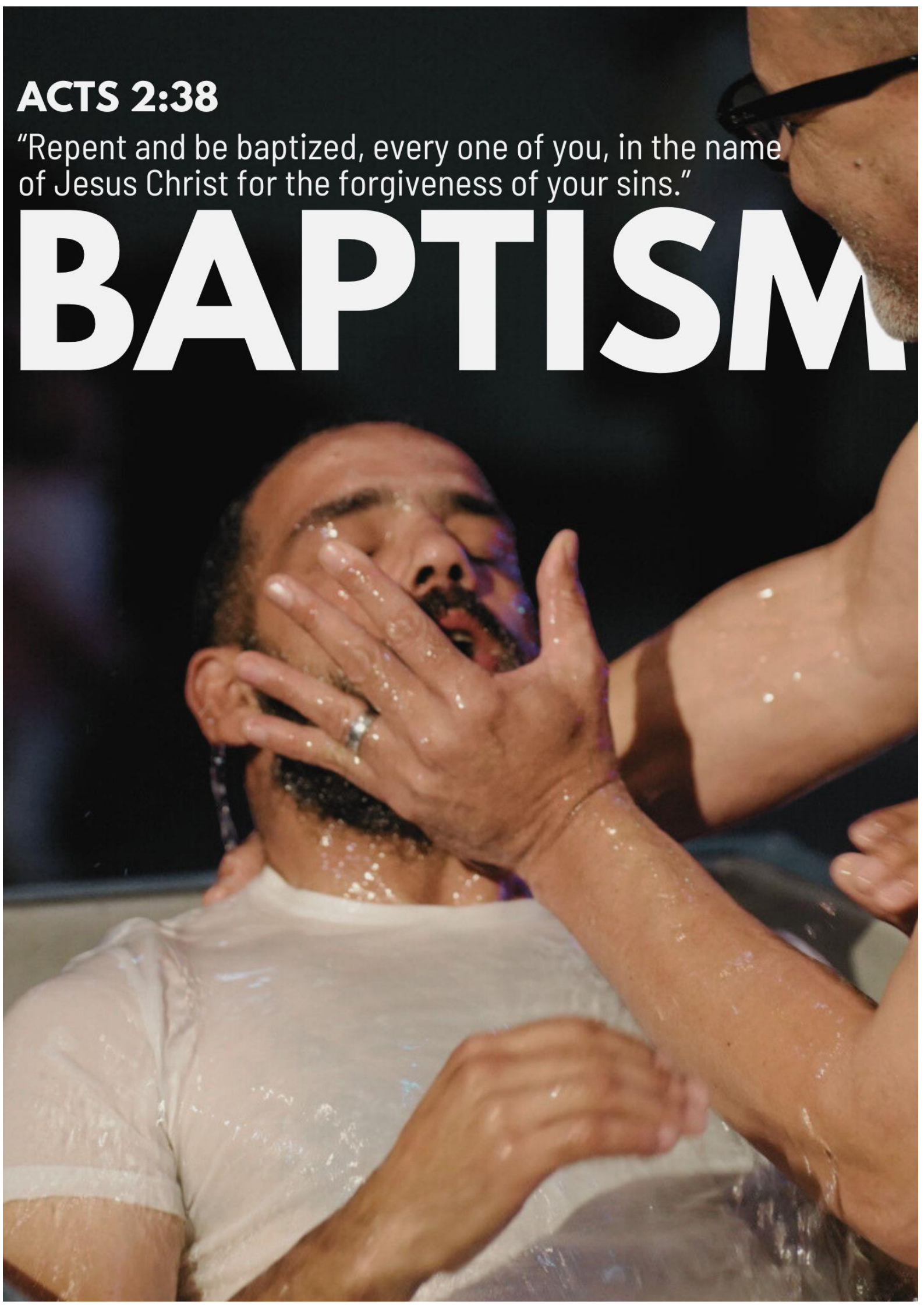


ACTS 2:38

"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins."

BAPTISM



BAPTISM

Congratulations on taking your next step in your journey with Jesus!

What is Water Baptism?

Water Baptism is the outward public demonstration of an inward personal transformation that started the moment you said, "Yes!", to following Jesus and invited Him to become Lord and Master of your life. Water Baptism demonstrates your unification (becoming one) with Jesus through *co-burial* with Him into His death, and *co-resurrection* into his overcoming life. Your spirit and God's Spirit becoming one. "*But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.*" 1 Corinthians 6:17 KJV

What is Water Baptism Not?

1. Baptism is not a naming ceremony.
2. Baptism is not a tradition, ritual or custom to follow.
3. Baptism is not about church membership.
4. Baptism is not a replacement of the Old Testament circumcision. There is no similarity between circumcision and baptism. Other church denominations believe this to be true, but there is no Scripture to support this belief. According to the Old Testament covenant, only Jewish boys were circumcised, would that mean that only boys could be baptized? If girls are baptised, it would also be contrary to the Word of God.

True circumcision, as Paul preaches in Romans 2:29, is that of the heart, and it is accomplished by the Spirit. In other words, a person today enters a covenant relationship with God not based on a physical act but on the Spirit's work in the heart.

Colossians 2:11-12 refers to this type of spiritual circumcision: "In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead." This circumcision does not involve the cutting of the body; it is a cutting away of our old nature. It is a spiritual act and refers to nothing less than salvation, effected by the Holy Spirit. Baptism, mentioned in verse 12, does not replace circumcision; it follows circumcision—and it is clearly a spiritual circumcision that is meant. Baptism, therefore, is a sign of inward, spiritual "circumcision."

Why Submersion?

The word “*Baptism*” originates from the Greek word “*baptizo*”, which means to be submerged in water. The word “*baptizo*” originated in the dye industry during which garments were dyed in dye to change the color of the material.

Jesus is our example. John the Baptist *baptized* Jesus in the Jordan River. Following this example, followers of Jesus are submerged in water, as the next step in their journey of obedience to God.

Submersion demonstrates the act of Jesus’ descending into death and taking our past sins and shame to a place where it can never rise again. When we are baptized into Jesus’ death through submersion, it therefore confirms that our old nature and all past negativities have been taken so far away from us, it can never surface again. When we emerge from the water it signifies our resurrection into a brand-new life of freedom in Jesus Christ.

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

Romans 6:3-4 KJV

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”

2 Corinthians 5:17

We believe that water baptism is a public declaration of 4 important things:

- You are baptized with Jesus into His death, and you desire a **FRIENDSHIP** with God.
- You are united with Jesus through His resurrection, and therefore you understand that **FORGIVENESS** has freely been offered to you by Jesus (Ephesians 2:8-9)
- You are hidden in Christ, and you understand that you have turned from your old way of life to **FOLLOW** Jesus (Acts 2:38; John 14:15; 1 John 2:3)
- You are part of the body of Christ and therefore also part of God's **FAMILY** (1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:26)

Why the big deal?

This is one of the very first steps of obedience that Jesus calls us to after we have chosen to follow Him. He even set the example by being baptized Himself (Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 1:9). By obeying His command, we identify with the power of the cross and the resurrection to deliver us from sin.

After Jesus was baptized, the coming of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove and the voice of the Father demonstrated that what was done on earth was approved in heaven. In a similar way, believers should take baptism very seriously. Jesus' baptism was an act of submission, a passive activity, in which He received God's sign. We must remember that baptism isn't only our testimony to God, but also God's testimony to us.

Why public?

For the same reason a couple invites loved ones to publicly witness the next step of committing their lives to one another and being joined together in marriage: Baptism allows your new family and loved ones to celebrate you taking the next steps in your union with Jesus (Matthew 10:32). However, in Acts chapter 8 we see a baptism taking place with only two people present according to Scripture. Therefore, the Bible doesn't explicitly state that a new believer should be baptized in public (in front of a crowd), but we do believe that when baptism takes place publicly, it also has the ability to stir faith in the hearts of other believers who hasn't taken that next step in their journey with Jesus.

When should I get baptized?

After you have come to repentance for your sinful nature and life without God, you have accepted Jesus' forgiveness of sins and decided to follow Jesus, the Bible teaches us that the next step of obedience is to be baptized (Acts 2:41; Acts 8:12; Acts 16:31-34).

*"Whoever believes **(condition)** and is baptized **(step of obedience)** will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."*

Mark 16:16

Can children get baptized?

Baptism requires accountability. At Friend of God Church, we encourage that children reach an age of accountability where they are mature enough to make their own decision to follow Jesus.

As parents, we set the example of knowing God, finding freedom, discovering our purpose, and living a life that makes a difference. Thereby we help pointing our children to step into a relationship with Jesus, but they are the ones to decide if they will commit their lives to Him.

Baptism is based on the inner conviction that the Holy Spirit brings and the personal decision of the individual to trust Jesus for his or her salvation. It is a

commitment to follow Him. If your child has already accepted Jesus into their life, continue to facilitate this process of relational learning by frequently talking about baptism, and what it means. We encourage you to facilitate the conversation, without dominating it.

Remember, walking with Jesus is not a race. Baptism is the first step after salvation for everyone, kids included. But it's possible your child might not be ready. And that's OK! It's always better to wait until your child is absolutely at peace and ready for this next step.

Can infants be baptized?

Throughout the New Testament, the Bible teaches that baptism is a public expression of worship symbolizing the new life we have when we follow Jesus. In the Bible we see that Jesus' parents dedicated him to the Lord (Luke 2:22–40), and he was later baptized as an adult (Matthew 3:16–17). So, at Friend of God Church, we provide opportunities for child dedication and believer's baptism. To schedule a child dedication, please send us a WhatsApp on 072 625 7226.

Do I need to be baptized again?

Your baptism should have signified wanting a friendship with God, accepting Jesus' forgiveness of sins, and choosing to follow Jesus. If your baptism did not reflect this change of life, then you should be baptized again. We practice baptism by immersion in water, which is the way Jesus was baptized and the way the Bible describes.

“At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw Heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.”
Mark 1:9-10

“Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”
Matthew 28:19

“Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in Heaven. But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in Heaven.”
Matthew 10:32-33

By being water baptized, you are:

- Following the EXAMPLE set by JESUS CHRIST
- Demonstrating your CHANGED LIFE
- Declaring your COMMITMENT PUBLICLY
- Water Baptism declares PUBLICLY what has happened PRIVATELY.

Think of it this way: *Baptism is the wedding ring of Christianity.*

Witnessing a baptism demands us to decide one way or the other. Do I believe in Jesus, or not? Being baptized means making the story of the Gospel the main story of our life and being baptized makes demands upon us. It's not like a sermon we can discuss at lunch and forget by supper. What does baptism do? Baptism calls us to the life of a disciple.