



A Helping Hand about Baptism

After a person places faith in Jesus Christ, calling on Him to forgive of sin and give eternal life, Jesus commands that the new believer be baptized. What is the meaning and importance of baptism? Here is a *Baptism Helping Hand, 5 Truths You Should Know About Baptism*.

1. **A Thumb Print** is a mark of **Identity** showing who you are. In salvation, each believer enters into the death, burial, and resurrection life of Christ. In baptism, each believer symbolizes that new **identity** going into the water—your death and burial in Christ’s death and burial—and coming out of the water—raised in Christ to walk a new walk. One baptized in the “*name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit*” is showing a new identity as a member of a new family, the family of God (Matthew 28:18-20).
2. **The Index finger**, the Pointer, speaks of your new **Direction** in life, following Jesus as Lord and Savior. In baptism, one comes out of the water to walk “*in newness of life*” (Romans 6:3-4).
3. **The Middle finger** stands out above the rest. In baptism, one gives a new **Testimony** about his or her life. What now stands out is a personal knowledge of Jesus as Lord and Savior. Through baptism, one gives a physical testimony of what has happened spiritually (Acts 10:47-48).
4. **The Ring finger** speaks of a **Relationship**. Baptism is like a wedding ring. Both are external symbols that point to an internal reality—each speaks of a new relationship of the heart. Just as a ring does not make one married, so baptism does not make one a Christian. As a wedding ring symbolizes the commitment of one’s life to another, so baptism tells of a heart surrendered to Jesus as Lord and Savior. (Romans 6:3-11).
5. **The Little finger** speaks of one small step of **Obedience** to the Lord’s command. In baptism, one simply goes into and out of the waters of a baptism pool, a river, creek, lake, or ocean as part of a new walk of obedience (Acts 16:27-34). Baptism symbolizes these five realities: 1) a new **identity**, 2) a new **direction**, 3) a new **testimony**, 4) a new **relationship**, and 5) a new walk of **obedience** to Jesus Christ and His Word.



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For Pastors, Deacons, Sunday School and Small Group Leaders, and any others involved in helping believers understand the meaning and importance of baptism...

Here are some ways to use *A Helping Hand* to guide a person in understanding the importance of baptism and what it means to his or her life as a Christian.

Individually—After a person has come to Christ, explain the meaning of baptism using *A Helping Hand*. For more detail, look at **Baptism Matters!** This is a booklet giving a fuller explanation of the meaning and importance of baptism. It is available from the Prayer and Spiritual Awakening Department of the Florida Baptist Convention.

In a New Believers' Class—Arrange a time to meet with new believers (or those who have been believers for some time, but never baptized according to the teachings of Scripture). Carefully walk through *A Helping Hand*. It will be helpful to look at each of the Scriptures to show how the first Christians applied these truths.

As part of a Sunday School lesson or Small Group time—Walk through the five truths presented in *A Helping Hand*, explaining each of the Scriptures given and how those apply to the believer.

As part of a Sermon on Baptism—Use *A Helping Hand* to explain the meaning and importance of baptism. This can help the new believer as well as the one who has been a Christian for some time.

In each of these situations, some may realize that they have not followed through in this important step of obedience since coming to faith in Christ. Others may find that they have never been baptized in a Scriptural manner. Still others may discover that they have misunderstood baptism. That includes those who have depended on baptism for salvation. Some may become aware that they have never personally trusted in Christ for salvation and they will have the opportunity to turn to Him in repentance and faith. Then, they too can follow their Lord in believer's baptism, joyfully testifying of their new faith in Him.

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