



Preparing for Baptism

We're Excited for You!

Turning from sin and trusting in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior in response to His gospel is the most important decision you will ever make. Following your personal commitment to receive His gift of salvation and submit your life to His lordship, an important next step in your spiritual journey is to be obedient with believer's baptism. When someone is baptized, the intention is that they are being baptized into the church. So, in addition to your baptism, we would also love to see you become a member and officially join The Station Church. This document has been prepared to outline for you the steps you need to take in preparing for your baptism, and at the end, we also identify the next step you can take to enter our membership process.

Understand the Meaning of Baptism

According to the Bible, baptism:

- Publicly demonstrates your identification with Christ (Acts 2:38; 19:4-5; 18:8; Romans 6:3-4;). You are showing the work of Christ—His death, burial, and resurrection—and your participation in that work by God's grace.
- Displays your union with Christ's body, His church (Acts 2:37-39; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 4:1-6).
- Follows both the example (Matthew 3:13-17) and the command of Christ (Matthew 28:19).

Thus, baptism is a celebration of the grace of Christ in your life that has occurred through salvation. It is an external celebration of an internal transformation. We are celebrating what God has accomplished in you by His grace.

Baptism and Membership

At The Station Church, we believe that biblical baptism is symbolic—it doesn't "save" you—but is very important in the life of every believer. It is your public profession of your faith where you are letting the world know that you belong to Christ. When someone is baptized, the intention is that they are being baptized into the church—the universal church which is God's people, everywhere; as well as the local church, this body of believers known as The Station Church. So, in addition to your baptism, our desire is to also see you become a member and officially join The Station. We require that those desiring membership at The Station be baptized by immersion—either previously at the time of your commitment to Christ or when you desire membership at The Station.

Prepare to Tell Your Story

When you are baptized, you are giving testimony to the work of grace God has accomplished in your life. While your actual baptism is a visual testimony, this is also a great time to think about your personal testimony or story. In this testimony, you publicly share with the church and the world your personal story about how God brought you to hear, understand, and believe the gospel and about arriving at your personal decision to submit your life to the lordship of Jesus Christ.

In preparation to tell your story, it's helpful to first review the good news of God's story in the Bible. Again, the goal of telling your story is to share how God's grace was made evident in your life through a personal response to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Take some time to pray for the Holy Spirit to guide your words so that everyone who hears you share your story in the future will hear and respond to the gospel. Your telling of God's story in your story can actually lead another person to trust in Christ!

PART ONE: GOD'S STORY

The gospel is the true story of God's good news for the world recorded within the pages of the Bible. For each of the five sections of God's Story below, read the biblical passages and biblical truth, and then utilizing what you've read, answer the question prompts.

Creation

Biblical Passages: Genesis 1:1; Genesis 1:26-31; Psalm 8:3-5; Psalm 90:2; Romans 1:20

Biblical Truth: The one, true, holy, and eternal God created everything in the universe. Everything he made was good and existed in perfect harmony. God made man and woman in his image and gave them a home where they could live in loving relationship with one another and with him.

HOW DID EVERYTHING BEGIN, AND WHAT DOES IT REVEAL ABOUT WHO GOD IS AND HOW HE RELATES TO HUMANKIND?

Fall

Biblical Passages: Romans 1:18, 25; Romans 3:10; Romans 3:20; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:1-3

Biblical Truth: Adam and Eve gave into temptation and disobeyed God's command. Disobedience of God is sin. We all sin. No one is innocent. As a result, we have all broken our relationship with God. No matter how hard we try or how much good we attempt to do, no one can do enough right to make up for all of the wrong in our lives, and everyone is deserving of God's just judgment.

WHAT WENT WRONG WITH THE WORLD, AND HOW ARE WE PART OF THE PROBLEM?

Rescue

Biblical Passages: Luke 2:10-11; John 1:1-5, 14; John 14:6-7; Romans 5:8-10; Ephesians 2:4-9

Biblical Truth: God promised one day someone would come to rescue humankind from sin. God kept his promise when he came himself. He became human in the person of Jesus. Fully God and fully man, Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross to pay the penalty all sinners deserve, and then rose again from the grave in victory over death. In this display of mercy and grace, God demonstrated his love and made a way for humankind to be restored to right relationship and new life with him through faith in Jesus Christ.

WHAT HOPE IS THERE FOR HUMANKIND, AND HOW DID GOD ACCOMPLISH IT IN JESUS?

Response

Biblical Passages: Proverbs 28:13; Mark 1:15; John 6:47; Acts 2:38-39; Romans 8:1-2, 12-16; Ephesians 2:10

Biblical Truth: Everyone who hears God's gospel will respond by either embracing his story and receiving his rescue or by rejecting him and continuing to live our own way confined by our own sin. We receive God's rescue when we respond to his call to repent and believe. When we repent, we turn from our sin, recognizing our offense against God and rejecting both our self-centeredness and our self-righteousness, and we turn to God, asking for his forgiveness and submitting to his correction. When we believe, we do more than say the right things about Jesus. We actually trust, deep down in our hearts, that Jesus' death and resurrection was enough to rescue us and make us right with God forever, and we commit to follow Jesus, striving to be more like him. The moment we do so, we become a part of God's family and his Spirit begins to live within us.

HOW CAN SOMEONE RECEIVE GOD'S RESCUE, AND HOW DOES DOING SO CHANGE US?

Restoration

Biblical Passages: Psalm 16:11; John 3:16; John 14:2-3; John 17:1-3; Revelation 21:1-5a

Biblical Truth: God also promised to make all things new. He will make a new heaven and a new earth completely free from sin where everything will be restored to the way it was meant to be. The most wonderful thing about this new world is that all those God has rescued by grace through faith in Jesus will live there with him forever, experiencing complete joy and fellowship with the One who created, loved, and died to rescue us. Until then, God calls each of us to be storytellers, to share with everyone around us and around the world what he has done so they might know that God's story is meant to be their story, too.

WHAT WILL THE FUTURE HOLD, AND WHAT ARE WE TO DO IN THE MEANTIME?

PART TWO: TELLING MY STORY

We all have a story to tell: how we came to know and believe and be changed forever by God's story. The details may be different, but the parts are all the same. When we tell our story we glorify God, point others to Jesus, rely on the Holy Spirit, encourage brothers and sisters in the faith, and invite others to join us in the gracious and merciful blessings of God's story.

Use the prompts below to identify the unique details of the major parts of your story with God.

I LEARNED ABOUT GOD'S STORY FROM (people, circumstances, books, etc.):

I RECOGNIZED GOD IS:

I REALIZED I NEEDED RESCUING BECAUSE:

I CAME TO UNDERSTAND THAT JESUS (DID WHAT FOR ME?):

I RESPONDED TO GOD'S STORY BY:

I NOW HAVE HOPE FOR MY FUTURE AND I CHOOSE TO LIVE MY LIFE BY:

This Is My Story

Use your responses above to write a coherent version of your story that could easily be told to others. Utilize the movements of Creation, Fall, Rescue, Restoration, and Response in the crafting of your story.

MY STORY:

EXAMPLE: God gave me parents who were Christians and who raised me in the church and taught me about God. I considered myself a Christian because they did and pretty much everyone else around me did, too, but it didn't make too much difference in my life. My freshman year in college, however, could be summed up in one word: do. I found myself in a place where I wanted to live a life for God in some way, but I thought that if I did things "right," I could earn favor with him and be accepted by him. Then I was introduced to Jesus. It wasn't the first time, but this time was different. I discovered that Christianity is not about what I do; it's about what Jesus has done. He paid the debt for my sin that I could never pay. By dying on the cross and rising again, he paid the penalty for my rebellion against God. I trusted in Christ and repented of my sins before a holy God. I wish I could say that since then, my life has been perfect, but, of course, it has not. However, no matter what I might face, how much I might stumble, or how hard I might fall, God is always there with me to comfort and guide me. He continuously and consistently grows me to be more and more who he created me to be. And because I've experienced his faithfulness to me over and over and over, my faith is even stronger as I look toward the future, trusting that whatever may come, he will work it all together for my good and for his glory.

Schedule Your Baptism

If you haven't already, make sure to sign up to be a part of one of our baptism services on an upcoming Sunday morning at The Station at www.thestationchurch.org/baptism. If you need have any questions or need to speak to a minister, contact Pastor Mark David Bradford at markdavid@thestationchurch.org.