

Why?

to follow His example:

"At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river." *Mark 1:9*

to honor His command:

"Jesus said, 'Go then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.'" *Matthew 28:19-20*



What does it mean?

It illustrates Christ's burial and resurrection

"Christ died for our sins... He was buried... and He rose again." *2 Corinthians 15:3-4*

"For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ." *Colossians 2:12*

It illustrates my new life as a Christ-follower

"When someone becomes a Christian, he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun!" *2 Corinthians 5:17*

"By our baptism then we were buried with Him and shared his death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead...so also we may live a new life!" *Romans 6:4*

Baptism does not "save" you; only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding reception; it's the public celebration of the "wedding" commitment you made with Jesus Christ in your heart.

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith... it is the gift of God—not by works—so that no one can boast." *Ephesians 2:8-9*

When is it time?

After the "wedding"—that is, after you have asked Christ into your life.

"Those who believed and accepted His message were baptized." "Simon himself believed and was baptized."

"But when they believed Philip as he preached the Good News... and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." *Acts 8:12*

Belief is more than just agreeing with information. It is entrusting your life and eternal destiny to the God who loved us enough to die for us. It works a lot like a marriage relationship. But it's a little out of place to have the reception before the wedding, right?

How to begin?

A relationship doesn't happen "accidentally" any more than a marriage does. We must choose to receive the gift of forgiveness and say, "I do" to God. It's as simple as **A, B, C**

Admit to him that you are "guilty as charged" of sin (living life on your own terms, not God's). See Romans 3:23.

Believe that the death of Jesus Christ was for you—payment for the penalty you owed for your sin. See Romans 6:23.

Commit to surrendering your life to him. Receive his forgiveness. Open the door to your heart and invite Jesus Christ to come in and take control, to be the leader and forgiver of your life. See John 1:12 and Revelation 3:20.

Your "wedding vows" with Christ might sound something like this:

I admit that I am guilty of sin, just as you say. I believe you are God's one and only son and that you died for my sin and rose from the dead. I trust now that Your death on the cross was payment in full for my sin. I open the door of my heart and ask You to come into my life by your Holy Spirit. Be the leader and forgiver of my life from now on.

These aren't magic words. They don't start a relationship with God just because you say them. But if you do pray this kind of thing to God from your heart, you can be assured He will hear you, come into your life, forgive you and make you a brand new creation, changing you from the inside out.