

## Ready, Set, Go! Starting Strong

**What are Faith, Repentance and Baptism and why is it so important to have these foundations when following Jesus?**

### 2 Tim 3

<sup>12</sup>In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, <sup>13</sup>while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. <sup>14</sup>But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, <sup>15</sup>and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup>All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup>so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

I have learnt being a Daddy that **in life there are basic things we learn when we are young**. For example **Talking, counting, walking, feeding yourself**. It is great fun seeing this as Zachary grows up!

In fact if you don't learn these basic things life would be a bit odd. **If we weren't potty trained we'd all be wearing nappies**, or how would we communicate if we couldn't talk?

**Our walk with Jesus is the same and we need to know and learn the basics.**

**Today we're going to look at the starting Point of our Faith in Jesus.  
So are you Ready? Are you Set? Let's Go!**

Hebrews 6 (Message)

**So come on, let's leave the preschool lessons about Christ and get on with growing up in Christ. The basic foundational teachings are in place: turning your back on "trying to save yourselves" and turning in trust toward God; teaching about baptism; laying on of hands to receive the Holy Spirit; resurrection of the dead; eternal judgment. God helping us, we'll stay true to all that. But there's so much more. Let's get on with it!**

Here in the book of Hebrews **we see the basic foundational teachings** that we are to know and move on from. Just like learning to eat or walk as a baby.

We have a **choice to stay as babies** and not really understand these things, or as I hope today that we will know what they are about and get it so that **we can move on from being babies to greater things**.

# So imagine we are all in a race!

## 2 Timothy 4

<sup>1</sup>In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: <sup>2</sup>Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. <sup>3</sup>For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. <sup>4</sup>They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. <sup>5</sup>But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

<sup>6</sup>For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. <sup>7</sup>I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Heb 12:1 let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

These basic foundations are like **the ready, set go in a race. It is the first thing that happens.**

Our lives following Jesus are like a race and **we can't start that race until we have certain these foundations in place.**

So what are the foundations we are going to look at today?

**They are: Repentance and Faith, and Baptism.**

### 1. Repentance and faith.

Before you take part in a **race you have to change what you are wearing.** You take off your normal clothes, your jeans, shoes, jumper, etc. And you then **put on shorts a t-shirt and running shoes.**

This enables you to **perform much better** and in fact you might not even be allowed to compete in the race if you didn't change into the correct clothes.

**If you don't wear the right gear you can't run in the race.**

So in our race following Jesus there is **stuff we have to take off like: Thinking "I'm good enough", if i run really hard "i can save myself", trying to be good, doing religious things like saying prayers, going to church, singing songs. We cannot earn our salvation** it is all down to God to be merciful. **What we deserve is God's punishment.** So we have to **take off this wrong way of thinking to take part in the race with God, and we have to put on the team kit that Jesus gives us,** Our kit shows us who we are representing, eg team GB.

**Have you changed into the new Kit, if you have then you have “repented” or changed from your old way of living to a new way of living?**

So we’ve seen some of the things that the old kit is, **but what is this new kit?** Well the new kit we wear is **knowing that you are completely forgiven for living your own way, knowing that you are a member of God’s family.** We put on this new kit, a new way of living by believing and trusting Jesus. **We get given the kit, we don’t earn or buy it.** By believing that Jesus died for us, by knowing that our sin was taken from us by Jesus when he died on the cross as our substitute. **Jesus offers us the kit, he offers us the new way of living. Are you ready to put it on? Sorry isn’t enough....**

The moment you put on your kit, the moment you decide to live God’s way you are saying that because God loved me so much to give his Son to die for me, his anger to my old ways has been dealt with, I give myself completely to Him and his way of life. I trust him and know I am accepted by him. **I put on my kit to start a new race with him, knowing that he is rooting and cheering for me.**

So here we have it, we have just described repentance and faith.

**Repentance is taking off the sorts of clothes everyone else wears  
Faith is putting on the kit Jesus has paid for and given you.**

You might have done this, you might have already changed the kit, **but you might not have started the race yet!**

**The way we start the race is by getting baptised.**

Maybe you’ve **prayed a prayer, grown up to believe** all this, you know you have taken off the world’s attitudes and believe different things. **But have you been baptised and really started the race?**

## **2. Baptism**

[Matthew 3 The Baptism of Jesus](#)

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. <sup>14</sup> But John tried to talk him out of it. “I am the one who needs to be baptized by you,” he said, “so why are you coming to me?”

<sup>15</sup> But Jesus said, “It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires.” So John agreed to baptize him.

<sup>16</sup> After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him. <sup>17</sup> And a voice from heaven said, “This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy.”

Here we see **how Jesus started his race**, his ministry, **he did it by getting baptised.**

John tried to stop him, but Jesus said: **“It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires”**.

Baptism is something God requires of us. So what is Baptism?

**1. Baptism is the way that we show that we want to get rid of our sins and that Jesus has cleansed us or washed us from this.**

**Acts 22:16**

**And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'**

Now that is strange, if that is the main reason for baptism, why did Jesus get baptised, he never sinned in his whole life?

**2. Baptism shows commitment to following God.**

For Jesus **baptism was a commitment** to do everything his father had called him to do in his life, to carry out God's purposes for him.

**God has got a purpose for each of our lives**, and we commit ourselves to letting God make that happen when we are baptised.

For Jesus it was that **he would die on a cross, be buried** and that God would **raise him from the dead** three days later.

I **wonder what he was thinking** as he went under the water in the river Jordan, knowing that he'd be nailed to a roman cross, a punishment he'd seen many times growing up, but also what he was thinking the moment he came out of the water, knowing his father God would not leave him dead in a tomb but would raise him to life.

So **when we get baptised we connect with Jesus and what he did for us in his death and resurrection.**

**3. Baptism is the way we bury our old life.**

**Romans 6 1-4 says:**

<sup>1</sup> **What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning, so that grace may increase?**

<sup>2</sup> **By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?**

<sup>3</sup> **Or don't you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death?**

<sup>4</sup> **We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.**

By being baptised we **are spiritually burying our old way of life**, it is our **spiritual funeral** for our old life without God. But the amazing thing is **we don't stay under** the water buried, we are **brought up out** and this signifies being **raised form the dead to live a new life!**

At this point **we start to really run our race with God. The race has begun!!**

So **what do we need to bury**, let me show you what I mean – **mannequin** – old way of life carry it around with us, we don't want to carry it around with us all the time. In Baptism it gets buried.

**So have you started the race yet?**

Wed night will be great opportunity for some of you to take off the old clothes, and put your new race kit on given by Jesus.

Others of you have already done that, but not really started the race by being baptised. Talk to your youth leaders, or parents **about getting baptised as soon as you can** when you get home.

**So are you Ready? Are you set! LETS GO!!**

PRAY.

## NOTES

Peter replied, "**Repent and be baptised**, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. *Acts 2:38*

Don't you know that all of us who were **baptised** into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were therefore **buried with him through baptism** into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. *Romans 6:3-4*

### *The Background*

- *Bapto* is Greek for dip (*Luke 16:24*) *Baptizo* is an intensive form that means to immerse, to plunge, to sink (a ship) or to drown. Our Bible translations put 'baptise' instead of translating the word as 'immerse'. It should read, "**Repent and be immersed**" or "**all of us who were immersed into Christ Jesus were immersed into his death? We were therefore buried with him through immersion.**"

- The Jews has various washing rituals that sometimes involved immersing the whole body in water to ceremonially wash away sin.

- John the Baptist (John the Plunger) was sent by God to prepare people for the coming of Jesus by preaching a message of repentance.

As a response to his message he introduced the practice of full immersion in water as a sign of washing away sins. (*Mark 1 :1-6*)

- At the outset of his public ministry Jesus came to be immersed by John in the river Jordan. But JESUS DID NOT HAVE ANY SINS TO WASH AWAY. In fact, John even objected to immersing Jesus, and said that he really needed to be immersed by Jesus. But Jesus insisted on being immersed in the Jordan. (*Matthew 3:13-15*)

### Jesus Baptism

Jesus answered, "**Let's do it now, for this is the right way to do all that God requires.**" So John agreed. *Matthew 3:15*

"I have **a baptism** to undergo and how distressed I am until it is completed!" *Luke 12:50*

Jesus said "Can you drink the cup I drink and be baptised with the baptism **I am baptised with?**" "We can," they answered. *Mark 10:38-39*

### **Matt 3 The Baptism of Jesus**

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<sup>15</sup> But Jesus said, "It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires."<sup>[f]</sup> So John agreed to baptize him.

<sup>16</sup> After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened<sup>[g]</sup> and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him. <sup>17</sup> And a voice from heaven said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy."

Jesus death and resurrection were his baptism. Jesus was immersed in water NOT to wash away any sins he had committed but as a commitment to the purpose for which he had come into this world – in water baptism he embraced the cross and acknowledged his willingness to die, knowing his Father would raise him from the dead.

Because he knows how essential water baptism is, Satan has opposed it and distorted it down through the years. In the 2nd Century AD believing children were often baptised by immersion if they had adult sponsorship. Infant baptism originated from a pagan Roman religious initiation rite that was 'Christianised' in the 3rd Century AD and was later defended theologically by St. Augustine in the 4th C. It first became obligatory in the Syrian Churches of the 5th C. During the Reformation of the 16th C. Anabaptists and Baptists tried to restore proper New Testament baptism but were

considered too radical by the partially reformed state churches and were often persecuted. Religious freedom allowed more and more believers to follow NT practices. Although some traditional churches today still practice the Roman ritual, the vast majority of born again believers world wide are baptised by immersion after becoming Christians. Baptism is the recognised New Testament way of becoming a disciple of Jesus. In baptism we identify with Jesus' death and resurrection and we bury our old self in the pool.

### **1. Repentance from Dead Works.**

Repentance is a change of minds, a complete u-turn in our beliefs and attitudes about how we can gain acceptance from God. Dead works, religious rituals, trying to be good or keep the law will not cut it with God. All our best actions are filthy rubbish to God. We have to recognise we are totally unworthy and in every part of our nature we are profoundly affected by sin. In our relationships, thinking, emotions and choices we are biased towards selfishness and even downright evil at times. It is vital to recognise our fallenness (depravity) and come to an end of every attempt to make ourselves acceptable to God. We deserve hell and our only hope is to throw ourselves wholly on the mercy of God.

### **2. Faith in God.**

God provided the only means of acceptance - the death of his own Son, Jesus Christ as a sacrifice for our sinfulness. As our substitute he bore the horror of the wrath of God for our sins so that we could be totally forgiven. Faith in God is faith in his provision for us. Faith that Jesus died for my sins in my place and now God's anger rightly directed at me has been turned away completely and I am absolved of all sin past, present and future. If God could love us so much to give his own beloved son for us, then what can we do but totally give ourselves into his hands in complete trust, believing that I am now completely accepted by God because of his Beloved One. I have no trust in myself or anyone else, no saints or angels but only Jesus who has enabled me to become one of God's own children and brothers and sisters with him in God's family.

Faith in God is faith that God is my heavenly Father who loves me so very much.

### **3**

### **3. Teaching about Baptisms**

This is the practice of immersing new believers in water as an indication of their repentance, forgiveness of sins and their faith in Christ. It is hugely important to be baptised as an expression of commitment to Christ but it is even more important to understanding what it means. When we turn to Christ and put our faith in him, we die to our old life. No longer are we 'in Adam' but are now 'in Christ.' When someone dies they need to be buried. In baptism we bury our old life, washing away our sins, so that we can live a new life, and we clothe ourselves with Christ. Through baptism we become a disciple of Christ and so become a part of his body the Church. So we can say 'baptism now saves us.' Satan hates baptism, practiced as Jesus taught it, and tries to discredit it and 'water it down'. If we are baptised knowing all that it means Satan loses his rights over us and we can begin to get free from his grip upon us.

Baptism is a way of expressing that we believe in Jesus, and a

Picture of falling in love and then marriage.... Revelation of Jesus leads to baptism.

Falling in love with someone

When people want to commit to one another they get married..... not the worlds way of no commitment.

God wants our commitment to follow him.

Journey of life – Living our own life – Revelation of Jesus - Faith in Jesus – Repentance turn around – Baptism, express all this – Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

All this is to live a new life.

There is no category in the bible for an unbaptized believer. Stef Liston.

Following Christ is being baptised, baptism is how we start following Christ.

If you don't want to get baptised, then do you really want to follow Jesus?

Personal story.

This is between you and God, forget your friends. Don't do it just because your friends are doing or don't hold back because of what your friends or family might say. If you want to follow Jesus get baptised.

If parents say no – if they are Christians they need to understand that getting baptised is not something you earn because you are mature or good enough, it is something you do as a first step in the Christian life. If they are not Christians – and they really oppose the idea of you getting baptised, you may need to wait until they give in or you are old enough to make the decision yourself e.g. 18? Its not about us getting ourselves ready as if we have to clean up our act or make changes in our life before we get baptised. It is the baptism that enables you to get things sorted.

If you're not willing to get your act together then you are not ready, but also you are not ready to follow Jesus

I went forward in a meeting and gave my life to Christ why do i need to be baptised?

Aren't I a Christian? Not yet married to Christ, not committed to him in the way the bible tells us we should. Believe and be baptised!