

**TALKING POINT #22**  
**LIFE'S TURNING POINTS #2: THE BAPTISING CHURCH**

**WHY BRING THIS UP?**

One of the great things about our Church is the diversity of backgrounds from which people have come. We have people who have come from different ethnic backgrounds, social backgrounds and, in particular, denominational and even religious backgrounds. Clearly, one of the differentiating factors for Baptist Churches (though not unique to us) is the practice of "Believers Baptism." Whereas some Christian groups will baptise babies ("Paedobaptism"), we practice baptism on the profession of faith ("Credobaptism").

But, it's important that we recognise baptism is less about our theological and denominational differences and more about celebrating this important step in a Christian's life. It is the celebration of a person making a step of faith and obedience.

**WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?**

Jesus Himself instituted baptism as something to be done on conversion (Matt 28:19) and, indeed, he blessed it when He was baptised by John in the Jordan River. The early Church practised it as the initiation into the Church (Acts 2:41) and it appears that the only real question about a person's criteria for being baptised was whether they had professed faith in Jesus Christ. Take, for example, the example of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8. Once the eunuch had expressed faith in Jesus, Phillip baptised him.

Additionally, it is clear from Scripture that Baptism was by immersion because the Greek word (βαπτίζω – baptizo) means "dip." Indeed, at Christ's baptism, he had to "come up out of the water" (Mk 1:10), which one hardly has to do if only being sprinkled!

Baptism is given as a practical symbol of the Christian's identification with Jesus' death and resurrection (1 Peter 3:21). Just as Jesus died, was buried and rose again, so the baptised Christian lays down in the water, is fully submerged and then comes up again. We express our faith in Jesus by identifying with Him. For the Bible, it is inconceivable that a believer is unbaptised. The two simply go together. Baptism is a Biblical step in declaring that Jesus is the Lord of our life. It is the "outward expression of an inward impression."

**NOW FOR US AT FOREST LAKE**

So, for us at FLBC, we simply practice Believer's Baptism. If someone can express a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and they are willing to do that publicly, we will baptise them. It is usually done by a pastor, as the recognised representative of the Church body. We don't have age-limits. We simply ask that people be willing to talk with a pastor about their faith and then move to the public declaration of that faith in baptism.

One of the advantages of not having our own building is that we celebrate baptisms in the pool of a Church member and these occasions turn into times of great celebration.

**CONCLUSION**

Perhaps you have not taken the step of baptism. If you have put your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, take the opportunity to consider baptism and speak to one of our pastors to take the next step.