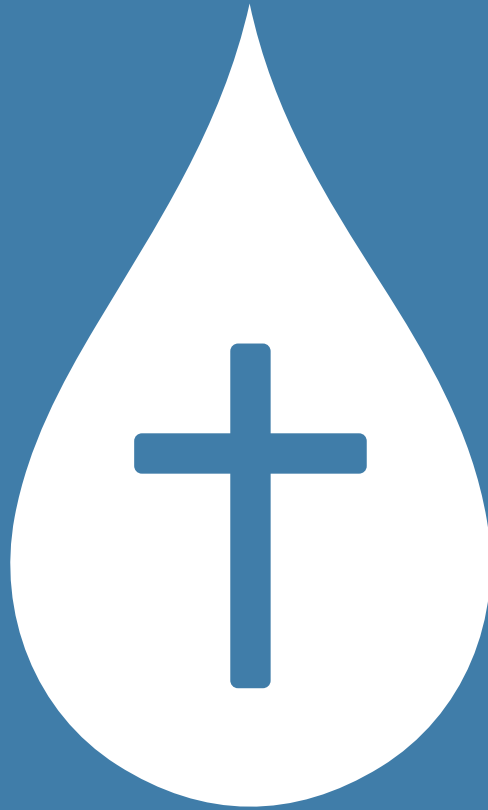




BAPTISM

The act of being baptized plays no part in the process of salvation (indeed, no work can justify us of our sin or merit salvation), but it is a step of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in the risen Savior, death to sin, and resurrection to walk in new life with Christ. It is an outward symbol of an inward change, and a sign of fellowship and identification with the church body. We believe that only people who have made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ should be baptized.

— COASTAL CHURCH STATEMENT OF FAITH —

WE ARE
committed
to developing
AUTHENTIC
FOLLOWERS
of Jesus Christ.



BAPTISM AT COASTAL

HOW TO USE THIS MATERIAL

This booklet is designed to give an overview of the theological convictions of Coastal Church on the topic of baptism. For those who wish to be baptized at Coastal or simply desire to learn more about our beliefs, we teach a bi-annual baptism class. Those who register for the class will receive a copy of this material when registering. Participants are asked to read the material prior to attending the class. As you read it, note any questions that you might have regarding the material and be prepared to ask those questions during the class.

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EXPLAINING THE GOSPEL

G O D

God is _____.

Genesis 1:26

"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

Matthew 28:19

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

John 1:1-3

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made."

2 Corinthians 13:14

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."

God is _____.

Wayne Grudem

"God is separated from sin and devoted to seeking His own honor."

Isaiah 6:3

"And one called to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory.'"

Psalms 71:22

"I will also praise you with the harp for your faithfulness, O my God; I will sing praises to you with the lyre, O Holy One of Israel.."

Exodus 20:1-21

God reveals His holiness through the Law.

God's _____ for Humanity

Westminster Confession of Faith

"Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

Genesis 1:27-28

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"



BAPTISM AT COASTAL

MAN'S REBELLION

What is Sin?

Sin is the failure to conform and abide by the _____. Sin is a failure to find one's ultimate trust and delight in the person and work of _____. (*1 John 3:4*)

Who Sins?

Man has a natural desire to _____ and ignore God's principles for living. (*Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12; 1 John 1:10*)

"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" – *Romans 3:23*

Sin's Consequence

_____ (*Romans 6:23a; Romans 1:22-25*)

"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord." – *Romans 6:23*

Man's Need

_____ from the penalty of sin and _____ to God the Father.

GOD'S PLAN FOR REDEMPTION

Jesus is fully _____ and fully _____.

(John 8:58; Philippians 2:5-7)

Wayne Grudem

"Jesus Christ was fully God and fully man in one person, and will be so forever."

Jesus is _____.

(Hebrews 4:14-16)

**Jesus's _____ to God for
the sins of man.**

Romans 3:23-26

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus."

Jesus Storybook Bible

"The full force of the storm of God's fierce anger at sin was coming down. On his own Son. Instead of his people. It was the only way God could destroy sin, and not destroy his children whose hearts were filled with sin."

Self _____ through _____.

**Jesus's Resurrection:
Defeating Sin's _____.**

1 Corinthians 15:20-22

"But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."



BAPTISM AT COASTAL

CONNECTING TO GOD THROUGH JESUS

Through a _____ — Jesus

John 14:6

"Jesus told him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.'"

_____ through _____

Romans 3:21-26

"But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it — the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus."

Ephesians 2:8-9

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

_____ and _____

Romans 10:9-10

"...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved."

1 John 1:9

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Baptism and communion (the Lord's Supper) are the two ordinances¹ prescribed by our Lord Jesus Christ as visible symbols of invisible grace. They are discernible and tangible representations of both the invisible realities of the gospel² and the Spirit's application of this gospel to our lives.

With both ordinances, believers have an opportunity to "remember" God's goodness and grace, especially as revealed in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Both baptism and communion picture Christ's death and resurrection and our participation in His death and resurrection through union to Him in faith. As we enter into the waters or watch another do so, we are reminded that Christ was crucified and raised from the dead and that we too have died to the old self in order to live for Christ.

What a person believes about baptism affects how they will perform the ordinance. Who should be baptized? When should they be baptized? How should they be baptized? All of these questions are answered as we reflect upon what baptism means.

Coastal's Statement of Faith describes baptism as a step of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in the risen Savior, death to sin, and resurrection to walk in new life with Christ. It is an outward symbol of an inward change, and a sign of fellowship and identification with the church body.

As a symbol, baptism illustrates a number of significant realities:

1. _____
2. _____

"Having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead." Col. 2:12 (ESV)

3. _____
4. _____

There are two parties involved in the act of baptism:

1. _____
2. _____

¹ Protestant theology has often chosen the term "ordinance" rather than "sacrament" in order to distance itself from the accompanying nuances of the Roman Catholic usage of that term. That said, if understood properly, either term is acceptable.

² Though there are various ways to describe the "good news," it centers on the provision of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as a substitute for our sins. He lived a perfect life, was crucified, and was raised three days later. Through faith in Him, we are united to Him and thus reconciled to God.

IS BAPTISM MERELY A SYMBOL?

Within the Reformation of the 16th and 17th centuries, the nature of the sacraments was fiercely debated, even between the various Reformers. Without attempting to justify any particular position, it is important to assert that baptism is in some mysterious sense a "means of grace," in which God sanctifies and encourages His people. That said, it is important to bear in mind a few helpful truths regarding what baptism is not and does not do:

1. [_____](#). Though grace is mysteriously mediated through the ordinance, it is not saving grace but rather sanctifying grace. We are more conformed to the image of Christ as we obey Him in the call to be baptized.¹

2. [_____](#). Without in any way diminishing the duty and delight of baptism for a believer, we must also warn against thinking which suggests that salvation is dependent upon baptism. The gospel is one of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone.²

¹ While 1 Peter 3 states, "baptism...saves you," it is important to note the context and particularly Peter's immediate clarification that it is not the water but the "appeal to God" which saves. This corresponds to passages such as Romans 10:13, which states that "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." We appeal to God and call upon Him as an expression of faith. Baptism is a symbol of this faith which alone saves.

² John 3 states that unless a person is "born of water and the Spirit" he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. Many point to this as evidence of the necessity of baptism. However, nothing in the context suggests that Jesus is speaking of baptism. Rather, He is alluding to the promise of the New Covenant in Ezekiel 36, which speaks of both "water" and "Spirit." Therefore, Jesus is saying that "new birth" or "regeneration" is necessary for salvation, not baptism.



WHY SHOULD ONE BE BAPTIZED?

MATTHEW 28:18–20 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

ACTS 2:37–41 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" ³⁸And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized 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. ³⁹For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." ⁴⁰And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." ⁴¹So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

ACTS 22:16 And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.

1. _____ (Matt. 28)
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Baptism is not merely a responsibility but also a privilege. We have the opportunity to evidence our trust in and love for our King through obedience in this ordinance. If we think of baptism as a mere burden, we have not properly understood the joy of following Christ in the call to be baptized. We should have a similar response as the Ethiopian eunuch who, when he believed the gospel, proclaimed, "What prevents me from being baptized?"

It should be our joy, and we should eagerly anticipate our participation in the ordinance.

While there are certain costs associated with baptism,¹ the reward of obedience is always worth it.

The desire to be baptized should be motivated by a desire to glorify God in faithful obedience. Any other motivation (to join a particular local church, to please a friend or family member, etc.) should not be the ultimate reason for seeking to be baptized.

¹ In certain cultures, those who are baptized open themselves up to public persecution. Even in our context, participants often face the ridicule of family and friends.

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

MATTHEW 28:18–20 *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

Coastal's Statement of Faith states that baptism is
a step of obedience symbolizing the BELIEVER's faith...

We practice what is called "_____" or "_____" baptism, which means we only baptize those who believe and confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Reading through Acts, we find baptism explicitly related to repentance, receiving the Word, believing and receiving the Holy Spirit.¹ There is no explicit evidence to suggest that nonbelievers were baptized.

ACTS 2:41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

[ACTS 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.]

GALATIANS 3:27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

ROMANS 6:3–4 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

SHOULD A PERSON BE REBAPTIZED?

For those who were sprinkled or immersed at an earlier age, it is important to understand that we should only be baptized once. If you trusted in Christ at that time, your baptism is valid and need not, indeed should not, be repeated. If, however, you experienced sprinkling with or immersion in water before being born again and trusting Christ, your experience was not baptism, and thus you need to be baptized. The question is therefore, "_____"

There should always be seasons of growth and greater periods of maturity in the life of those who have trusted in the gospel. Believers must not be rebaptized each time they experience greater joy and sanctification. However, if you believe that your original experience was prior to truly trusting in _____, you should pursue obedience in this area by being baptized now.

¹ See Appendix C: Paedobaptism for an extended look at the distinctions between believer's baptism and infant baptism and for thoughts on the referenced passages in Acts.



WHEN SHOULD A PERSON BE BAPTIZED?

ACTS 22:16 *And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.*

Although the Scriptures do not speak of a delayed baptism in which a regenerate believer refrains from obedience to the ordinance, as soon as a person trusts Christ, he or she should be baptized. In all the accounts in the Scriptures, baptism is rather immediate. This pattern of somewhat immediate baptism should be emulated unless there are convincing reasons to delay baptism.

THE PRACTICE OF BAPTISM AT COASTAL

At Coastal, we ask believers who wish to be baptized to temporarily delay for a brief season while they go through a baptism class and wait for a celebration service.¹ First, this practice allows us to discuss _____ and _____ and _____. Second, it allows the church the opportunity _____ as a congregation sharing in the joy of a person's obedience and agreeing to walk with him or her in fellowship. Finally, it allows the person being baptized to invite _____ who will have an opportunity to celebrate and hear the proclamation of the gospel.

IMPROPER MOTIVATIONS FOR DELAYED BAPTISM:

1. _____
One of the most common reasons for delaying is fear, but such anxiety should not hinder our obedience. It is important to know that fear is sin and thus should not be passively accepted. Confronting sin is an essential aspect of discipleship, and a person's obedience in this area is an excellent way to begin the process of sanctification in the area of the fear of man.²
2. _____
There will never be a time where a person will be "good enough" for baptism. Our right to enter the baptismal waters is grounded upon Christ's righteousness, not our own. If we have been united to Him, we should confidently draw near in obedience to His command and example.

¹ Celebration services are regularly scheduled services in which we baptize and receive the Lord's Supper.

² An excellent resource on this topic is "When People are Big and God is Small" by Ed Welch.

HOW SHOULD A PERSON BE BAPTIZED?

Though other denominations and theological traditions baptize by pouring or sprinkling, Coastal practices baptism by _____.¹ We do so in light of the following considerations:

1. The Greek word βαπτίζω (baptizo) literally means to _____, _____ or _____.

Our English word baptism is a transliteration of the Greek baptizo. Baptizo was used in Greek literature to describe the act of immersing something in water or another liquid. It later became a technical term that referred specifically to the Christian ordinance of baptism.

2. The representation of union in Christ's _____ and _____ is best expressed through _____.

Whether buried below or above ground, the symbolism of burial is still that of being placed under something. Likewise, resurrection is accomplished by coming out of something (whether grave or tomb). Immersion best symbolizes this reality by actually placing the believer under the water and bringing them out.

In addition, it is interesting to note the use of water to symbolize judgment in the Scriptures (e.g. the flood of Genesis 6-7 and the destruction of Egypt in the Red Sea of Exodus 14). Thus, by passing through the waters of baptism, the believer expresses trust that God's judgment has been satisfied by Christ.

[*ROMANS 6:3-4 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.* **]**

COLOSSIANS 2:12 Having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.

3. The surrounding _____ of baptisms in the _____ suggests baptism by _____.

¹ Except in those rare cases in which immersion is impossible or impractical. By way of examples, baptism by sprinkling is certainly to be practiced in the case of a person who is physically unable to be immersed or in the case of a particularly severe drought in which water is sparse.



ACTS 8:38–39 *And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.*¹

MATTHEW 3:16 *And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him...*

MARK 1:5, 10 *And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins...¹⁰And when he [Jesus] came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.*²

JOHN 3:23 *John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized...*

¹ It is important to note that this verse speaks of both Philip and the eunuch going down into and coming up out of the water, but the significance is found in the fact that they actually entered into the water which would have been unnecessary if baptizing by sprinkling or pouring. Surely the caravan would have had sufficient water for those modes had they been a preferable practice.

² The prepositions here are crucial. Verse 5 has the Greek *en*, not another preposition meaning beside or near. Verse 10 has *ek* not *apo* which would have been used for merely going away from the water.

WHERE SHOULD A PERSON BE BAPTIZED?

Although there are no prescriptions in the Scriptures to location, we prefer to practice the ordinance within the context of the _____ in order to allow the congregation to celebrate together in a person's act of obedience and submission and also allows the local church to function in the _____ of the second party in baptism.

That said, we do not want to prescribe what the Scriptures do not, and thus we do allow for baptism to occur outside the _____. Our preference in such cases is that _____ be taken to record the event so that the church can share in the joy.

WHO CAN PERFORM BAPTISM?

The Bible gives no prescription for the requirements to perform baptism. Contrary to some traditions, there seems to be _____ to restrict the duty to _____ who have been _____.

Therefore, we allow _____, male or female, who has faithfully obeyed the _____ to perform the ordinance of baptism.



TESTIMONY GUIDELINES

MAKE JESUS THE HEADLINE

The goal is for people to know more about Jesus and have a clearer understanding of who He is after hearing your testimony.

It's important to be clear about your salvation. While your walk with Jesus is a process, you do need to be able to talk about when you made a decision to accept that Jesus died for you and follow him.

GUIDELINES AND TIPS

We have heard feedback on things that may offend or cause confusion for the listener, things that could cause them to tune out, such as:

1. Too much detail about drug use, pornography, abortion, sex or divorce
2. Talking about sins of someone else
3. Mentioning previous denominations
4. Feel free to mention if you were in a previous religion (Mormon, Buddhist, Jehovah's Witness, etc.)
5. Only mention your infant christening if it is relevant to why you are choosing to be baptized now.

It is important to differentiate between your christening and the baptism that is taking place now.

6. Please do not say that you have "always been a Christian." This gives the idea that it is something that you inherit
7. Becoming a Christian is about making the decision to accept Christ's death on a cross as a payment for your sin, not just growing up in a Christian home
8. Please be open to receiving input

LENGTH

Your testimony will be approximately 1 ½– 2 minutes long. This may seem like a short amount of time, but you will be amazed by how much you can share in that time frame!

DEVELOPING YOUR CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY

1. WHAT WAS YOUR LIFE LIKE PRIOR TO SURRENDERING YOUR LIFE TO JESUS?

1. Give us a brief description of what your life was like before Jesus became your Lord and Savior (you were saved, you received Christ).

Here are some key phrases to help you highlight what the Gospel has done in your life (PLEASE CHOOSE ONE to start your first paragraph).

- a) Before I received Christ I was lost and without hope.
- b) Before I confessed Christ as my Lord I used to _____ (name some particular sinful attitude or habit).
- c) My life prior to being saved was _____ (name some particular sinful attitude or habit).
- d) Before Christ came into my life I was _____ (name some particular sinful attitude or habit).
- e) Before I received Christ I used to _____ (mention some of the sins you use to commit).
- f) Before Christ saved me, my life was _____ (give a brief description of your life without Jesus).
- g) Before I confessed Christ as the Lord and Savior I used to _____ (share some of the things you did that did not please God).



2. HOW DID THE GOSPEL INTERSECT WITH YOUR LIFE?

Tell us in a few words when you received Christ, or when you confessed as Lord and Savior, or when did you pray and ask God to save you. If it was over a period of time and you don't have an exact time or day, start your sentence with "I received Christ...", or "Christ saved me..." or "I confessed Jesus as Lord when I was around this age."

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3. HOW HAS GOD CHANGED MY LIFE SINCE SURRENDERING TO JESUS?

Please choose one of the following statements to begin this section of your testimony.

- After Jesus came into my life, I now have _____ (mention some Christian virtue or means of grace).
- Now that I am saved, I feel more _____ (mention some Christian virtue or means of grace).
- Now that I have surrendered my life to Christ, He has filled my life with _____ (mention some Christian virtue or means of grace).
- I am now born again because Jesus saved me and now my life is filled with _____ (mention some Christian virtue or means of grace).

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

4. WHY AM I GETTING BAPTIZED TODAY?

Please choose the one of following statements that best describes why you're getting baptized.

- a) I am getting baptized today to give an outward expression of my inward faith.
- b) I am getting baptized today as an act of obedience to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- c) I am getting baptized today because I want the world to know that I am a follower of Christ.
- d) I am I'm getting baptized today because I believe that Jesus died on the cross for the forgiveness of my sins and rose again from the dead to give me the hope of eternal life.

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BAPTISM AT COASTAL

[illegible]



APPENDIX

more about Baptism & Coastal

APPENDIX A

CONNECTING TO GOD THROUGH JESUS

FOLLOW ME - As an Overflow of Worship

Matthew 11:28 - "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Isaiah 55:6-7 - "Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

JUSTIFICATION

The righteousness of Christ **COVERS** us.

Galatians 2:16 - "Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified."

SANCTIFICATION

Christ is our righteousness as we live out our life in Christ.

1 Corinthians 6:11 - "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

Galatians 2:20 - "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

GLORIFICATION

Colossians 3:4 - "When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory."

1 Peter 1:3-5 - "...to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead..."

WORSHIP as a Lifestyle

Romans 5:1 - "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 8:1 - "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."



READY FOR THE JOURNEY?

Confess and **TURN** from your sinfulness.

(1 John 1:9)

Confess your **NEED** to be saved.

(1 John 1:9)

Confess **JESUS** as the Lord and Savior.

(1 John 1:9)

LIVING according to your profession.

AN EXAMPLE OF A PRAYER OF REPENTANCE

Dear Lord Jesus,
I know I am a sinner, and I ask for your forgiveness.
I believe you died for my sins and rose from the dead.
I trust and follow you as my Lord and Savior.
Guide my life and help me to do your will.
In Your name, Amen.

APPENDIX B

HOW WE BAPTIZE AT COASTAL CHURCH

PRIOR TO THE BAPTISM:

1. We ask those wishing to be baptized to participate in a baptism class (bi-annually in the Winter and Summer Spiritual Formation season. We do make exceptions for extenuating circumstances) in which we explain the gospel, core Christian beliefs (articulated in our "Statement of Faith") and our theology of baptism as expressed in this booklet.
2. During the class, we ask for participants to submit a testimony of conversion in which we look particularly for evidences of grace and a proper understanding of the gospel. For instance, we want to make sure a person does not articulate that he or she was born a Christian or thinks that Christianity consists merely in moral improvement. Therefore, we will ask you to write out what the gospel is and your testimony of conversion.

BAPTISM PARTICIPANT & BAPTIZER RESPONSIBILITIES:

BAPTISM PARTICIPANT

1. We have two Sunday Morning celebration services (and two evening Baptism/Lord's Supper Services) in which the church celebrates baptisms together. We encourage those wishing to be baptized to do so within the context of these gatherings.¹ Please make sure to indicate which service and time by the end of the class.
2. Participants are asked to personally share their testimonies on camera prior to this service.
3. Arrive 30 minutes prior to the service where you are being baptized. You will receive an email the week before with further details on when and where to arrive.

¹We should remember from the "Where Should a Person be Baptized?" section that this is a preference, not a prescription.



BAPTIZER

1. After the testimony, the person performing the baptism will ask, "Do you confess and believe Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?" to which the baptism participant will respond, "Yes" or "I do."
2. Just prior to the baptizer immersing the baptism participant, say, "I baptize you, my (brother or sister) in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."² [Some will choose to also say, "Buried with Christ in baptism, raised to walk in newness of life" which is taken from Romans 6:4 We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.]
3. The baptizer will then immerse and subsequently raise the baptizee out of the water
4. Arrive 30 minutes prior to the service where you are being baptized. You will receive an email the week before with further details on when and where to arrive.

HELPFUL HINTS:

1. Wear dark shorts and a dark shirt to maintain modesty.
2. Bring a change of clothes, towel and bag to hold your wet clothes after you change.
3. A row of seats will be reserved for everyone who is being baptized, but if you prefer to sit with visiting family and friends, ask them to save you a seat near the baptistery.

BAPTISM AND MEMBERSHIP:

Baptism is a requirement for membership at Coastal Community Church. We require anyone wishing to join the church to have displayed obedience to Christ's command following conversion. While we practice a baptism by immersion at Coastal, we do not require the mode of immersion for membership. If a person was sprinkled or immersed (or a possible other mode) after conversion, he or she has met our requirement for membership.

² Following the formula of Matthew 28:19, we baptize using the Trinitarian confession. In Acts, the apostles typically baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ," but this should not be viewed as differing in meaning from Matthew's prescription. The context of Acts is concerned with testifying to the resurrection of Christ, and thus He is distinguished among the persons of the Trinity, but all that is true of the character ("name" often represents character in the Scriptures) of Christ is true of the Father and Spirit, as well.

APPENDIX C

CREDOBAPTISM VS. PAEDOBAPTISM

As discussed in the section on “Who Should be Baptized?” Coastal only baptizes those who profess to be believers in the person and work of Jesus Christ (Credobaptism). However, not all denominations and traditions follow this practice. Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Lutheranism, Anglicanism and a number of mainline Protestant denominations practice infant baptism (called paedobaptism from the Greek *paidon* meaning infant or child). While all practice the same form, the underlying theologies of each are quite distinct. Without going into detail regarding each, we will look briefly at the two most common in the particular context of Coastal; Roman Catholicism and Protestant Paedobaptism. For further study on this topic, see the recommended resources in Appendix E.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM:

Roman Catholicism teaches that all infants should be baptized at which time the child is regenerated or born again. In the case of infants, who are unable to exercise saving faith, the faith of the church is effective to remove original sin and bestow saving grace.

OUR RESPONSE:

The faith of another person will not substitute for a person's own response to the gospel, and the baptismal waters hold no magical powers of regeneration. While God's grace is certainly present in the waters, it is the grace of sanctification, not regeneration or justification.

The Roman Catholic understanding of baptism is precipitated upon the same system of works—righteousness which stands in utter contrast to the gospel of Jesus Christ. As Paul wrote in Galatians, a gospel of works is ultimately “another gospel” to be corrected or condemned. For a more in-depth analysis of Roman Catholic theology, see the book, *Are We Together* by Dr. R.C. Sproul.

PROTESTANT PAEDOBAPTISM:

Protestant paedobaptism is similar to Roman Catholic infant baptism in form only. According to Protestant theology, faith alone is the instrument in justification, and therefore saving grace is not bestowed in the waters. Therefore, those who practice infant baptism in the Protestant tradition are our brothers in the faith in regards to the essential elements of orthodox Christianity. Without diminishing our overwhelming agreement on the fundamentals of the faith with those who practice infant baptism, it is nevertheless important to highlight this area of disagreement.

Protestant paedobaptism prescribes baptism of adults who convert to Christianity but differs in practice from those who perform believer's baptism by additionally prescribing infant baptism for children of believing parents. This view is founded upon three main arguments:

1. Infants were circumcised in the Old Covenant.
2. Baptism is the sign of the New Covenant as circumcision was the sign of the Old.



3. There is essential continuity between the Old and New Covenants.

This discussion centers on the degree of continuity between the Old and New Covenants.¹ Within the Old Covenant, Israel was commanded to circumcise their sons on the eighth day as a sign and seal of their being included within God's covenant with the nation. Protestant paedobaptism interprets baptism as analogous to circumcision (using Colossians 2:11-12 as a reference) and thus teaches that the sign and seal should be performed for children of New Covenant believers, as well. As Acts 2:39 states, "the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off."

OUR RESPONSE:

1. The Old Covenant community was primarily entered into physically (by birth), whereas the New Covenant is entered into spiritually (by rebirth – being "born again").² Whereas Protestant paedobaptism prescribes baptism for those in physical infancy, credobaptism (believer's baptism) insists upon the baptism of those in spiritual infancy, having been born again through the Holy Spirit.
2. The Old Covenant community was a mixed community composed of both believers and unbelievers (Romans 2:29, 9:6). The New Covenant community is technically a congregation of believers (Jeremiah 31:34).³
3. Though there is a great degree of continuity between the covenants, there is also substantial discontinuity. The Old Covenant consisted of shadows which pointed to the substance fulfilled in Christ (Colossians 2:17; Hebrews 10:1). We need to be careful about directly applying elements of the Old Covenant without recognizing the essential distinctions.
4. Passages such as Acts 2:39 do not affirm the paedobaptist position. The "promise" affirmed is the promise of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 1:4 and 2:33), and it is specifically applied to "everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." The fact that the promise is for "your children" should no more lead us to thinking that all children are covenant community members as the fact that it is for "all who are far off" should lead us to conclude that all people everywhere are. The passage teaches that the Holy Spirit will be given to all whom Christ calls to Himself, not that we should baptize children.

Our theological conviction regarding believer's baptism is confirmed as we look in the book of Acts. Here are the baptisms in Acts and the descriptions given of those who were baptized.

ACTS 2:

In chapter 2, we find Peter preaching the word in the midst of the crowd gathered in Jerusalem at Pentecost. The crowd cries out in conviction, "Brothers, what shall we do?" to which Peter responds, "repent and be baptized." In verse 41, we read that those who were baptized were "those who received his word."

¹ In contrasting the Old and New Testament we assert that the covenant of grace was promised in the Old Testament through various covenants that revealed more of the covenant of grace, but that it was concluded in the New Testament. Therefore there is something new about the New Testament. For more on this, see the book "Distinctiveness of Baptist Covenant Theology" by Pascal Denault.

² Note the relationship between Jesus' mention of "water" and "spirit" in John 3 in the context of being "born again" with the promise of "water" and "spirit" in the New Covenant prophecy of Ezekiel 36. See John Piper's "Finally Alive" for a helpful theology of regeneration in general and for a discussion of its role in the fulfillment of the New Covenant in particular.

³ This is not to deny that there are those who are unregenerate within the visible church but simply that the true community of the Church consists of those who have been born again to the living hope (1 Peter 1:3).

ACTS 8:

There are two accounts of baptism in chapter 8. The first occurs in response to the preaching of Philip (one of the seven selected in Acts 6 to assist the apostles) in Samaria. In verse 12, we read that many were baptized: "When they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ."

The second account again involves the ministry of Philip as he encounters the Ethiopian eunuch. After preaching Christ from Isaiah 53 to the eunuch, he requests baptism, and Philip obliges. The text itself does not specify the conditions for such baptism; although, some manuscripts record the eunuch stating, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

ACTS 9:

Chapter 9 contains the baptism of Paul immediately after his experience on the Damascus road. Within the context, we read that Ananias was specifically sent to minister to Paul that he might receive sight (having been blinded by the vision of Christ in 9:3-9) and "be filled with the Holy Spirit."

ACTS 10:

The 10th chapter includes the baptism of Cornelius and, presumably, his household. After Peter preached the gospel to those who were gathered, "the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word." Peter describes this as having "received the Holy Spirit." When Peter recounts the experience to the church in Jerusalem, their interpretation of the event is that it evidenced that "God has granted repentance that leads to life."

ACTS 16:

Like chapter 8, this chapter also includes two distinct accounts of baptisms. The first involves Lydia and her household. Though nothing is specifically stated about the condition of her household (see below "What About Household Baptisms?"), Lydia's baptism is related to the reality that "the Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul," and her subsequent appeal is based upon her perceived faithfulness (16:15).

The second account in chapter 16 involves the jailer and his household, who heard the "word of the Lord" that was preached to them by Paul and Silas (vs. 32). As in the case of Lydia, no explicit mention is made as to the spiritual condition of the jailer's household, but his own is specifically included as vs. 34 indicates that they rejoiced "that he had believed in God."

ACTS 19:

The final account of baptism in the book of Acts is found in chapter 19. In this context, Paul discovers some "disciples" who had been baptized into John's baptism of repentance but had not yet received the Holy Spirit. In response, Paul baptizes them, lays his hands on them, and they receive the Holy Spirit.



WHAT ABOUT HOUSEHOLD BAPTISMS?

Though the explicit mention of the baptism of an entire household is only made in the two accounts in chapter 16, the narrative of Cornelius' conversion probably implies the same. Proponents of infant baptism (paedobaptism) believe that such baptisms can be used as implicit justification for infant baptism.¹ If households were baptized and if those households included infants, we have biblical evidence of paedobaptism. What are we to make of these claims? Here are a few thoughts:

First, it must be noted that the entire argument is founded upon the presumed presence of infants within the household. The text itself does not necessitate such a reading. There is no convincing evidence of infants in the households (though to be fair, there is no explicit statement otherwise either).

Second, the texts in question have clues which at least suggest that all who were baptized had been converted.

1. Acts 10 explicitly states that Cornelius "feared God with all his household." In other words, all in his household were described as fearing God. Those who were baptized were those who "feared."
2. Acts 16 describes the baptism of the jailer's household. In verse 31, Paul or Silas says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." Surely this does not mean that if the jailer believed, his household would be saved as Protestant paedobaptists would agree. The best interpretation of this text is that those who believed would be saved and that those who were baptized were those who believed. In addition, the word is spoken to his entire household, (32) and his entire household rejoiced together (34).
3. Additionally, consider the relationship between 1 Corinthians 1:16, which states that Paul baptized "the household of Stephanas" and 1 Corinthians 16:15, which states that his "household" consisted of devoted converts.

SUMMARY:

While the timing and mode of baptism are not absolutely essential to the Christian faith, they are nonetheless important theological convictions that we hold firmly. We love and respect our Protestant brothers and sisters who disagree with believer's baptism, but we believe and subsequently teach it as the biblical form of baptism.

¹ It must be noted that household baptisms are not a major line of defense of the paedobaptist position. See the relevant section on paedobaptism for the typical theological defenses of infant baptism.

APPENDIX D

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CREDOBAPTISM – the view that only those who have been regenerated and trust Christ as Lord and Savior should be baptized, also known as believer's or confessor's baptism

PAEDOBAPTISM – the view that infants of believing parents should be baptized

IMMERSION – a mode or form of baptism in which the baptizee is submerged under the water

SPRINKLING – a mode or form of baptism in which the baptizee is sprinkled with water, also known as effusion or pouring

REGENERATED – to be "born again," regeneration refers to the event in which God grants new life to His children, and they subsequently exercise faith and love toward Him

JUSTIFICATION – the term for the declaration of righteousness that God credits to our account.

SANCTIFICATION – a progressive work of God in which believers are continually conformed to the image of Jesus Christ



APPENDIX E

FOR FURTHER STUDY

RELEVANT PASSAGES IN THE SCRIPTURES:

- Matthew 3, 21, 28
- Mark 1, 6, 7, 10, 11, 16
- Luke 3, 7, 11, 12, 20
- John 1, 3, 4, 10
- Acts 1, 2, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, 18, 19, 22
- Romans 6
- 1 Corinthians 1, 10, 12, 15
- Galatians 3
- Ephesians 4
- Colossians 2
- Hebrews 6, 9
- 1 Peter 3

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:

- Believer's Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ – edited by Thomas R. Schreiner & Shawn D. Wright and/or Understanding Baptism- edited by Johnathan Leeman authored by Bobby Jamieson
- <http://www.desiringgod.org/resource-library/topic-index/baptism>



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