

## **Baptism of an Infant or Young Child**

Baptism is a public way of a person saying that they have decided to live their life for Jesus Christ, and that they recognise that he died on the cross to forgive them. There are a number of ways the Bible describes baptism:

As a washing:

The first baptisms were carried out by John the Baptist who seems to have been following the Jewish idea of washing making things not just physically but spiritually clean. In his baptism people came to have their sins forgiven, they were washed away. What John said is that he baptised in water but one was coming who baptised with the Holy Spirit (the presence of God here with us on earth). That person was Jesus. Though he never baptised in water himself his disciples continued the practise. But in the New Testament baptism is more than just the washing away of sin. Read Matthew chapter 3 verses 1 to 16 for a passage that deals with this.

As a death and resurrection:

Where baptism is carried out in a deep pool this is easier to see but wherever the baptism takes place this idea is still relevant. When people become Christians there is such a change in that person's present and future that it is as if the person was re-born (John ch3 v3). Just like Jesus died and three days later came back to life, so the baptised person goes down in the water, like a grave, and comes back up, as if resurrected. The old life is gone and a new one has started. That is why in the Bible people are baptised as soon as they declare their new-found faith in Jesus Christ. (Romans ch6 v3-4)

As the way in to God's family, the church:

Baptism is the point where someone becomes part of Christ as He remains on earth, that is as a member of his body, the church. (1 Corinthians ch12 v12-13)

Baptism of a child is necessarily an act of faith. Only by our commitment as parents and the grace of God will a child grow up knowing Jesus as their saviour, friend and Lord. The best way to assess if you are ready to bring a child for baptism is to look at the vows that parents and guardians make on their behalf.

### **The baptismal vows for a young child whose parents have brought them for baptism**

*In bringing your child for baptism, desiring that they become part of Christ's body, a member of His church, are you prepared to affirm your faith in Jesus Christ and affirm it in confessing the Apostles' Creed?*

We believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

We believe in Jesus Christ,  
God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried;  
he descended into hell.  
On the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated  
at the right hand of the Father,  
from there he will come to judge  
the living and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen

*Do you promise, depending on God's grace, to share your faith in Jesus Christ with your child in what you do and what you say, in prayer and worship, by your life lived with them. To let them know that in God they have a Father, in Jesus they have a saviour, and in the Holy Spirit they have God as a constant companion, guide and Lord. And do you promise to bring them up worshipping in their local church?*

The Congregation then promise to help you towards this aim. If you want to know more about the Christian faith we would be happy to give the opportunity of doing an enquirer's course such as the Alpha Course so that you are better able to make a decision.

### **Blessing of an Infant or Young Child**

Many people want to give thanks to God for their child. It may be that they do not feel that they can in good conscience make the vows that are integral to baptism, it may be that you want to leave the child to decide for themselves whether or not they will follow Jesus. In a blessing we do three things that are part of a baptism but are not central to it;

1. Give thanks to God for your precious and unique child.
2. Thank God for their safe arrival in this world.
3. Ask for God's protection over them as they grow.

The blessing of a child is open to all parents regardless of conviction or faith background and has been appreciated by a good number of people.

### **Adult Baptism Vows**

As you are baptised:

Do you believe that God loves you as a Father and has adopted you into his family?

Do you believe that in Jesus he died on the cross to forgive you and set you free from the power of sin and death?

Do you reject sin and recognise your need of Jesus' forgiving grace?

Do you put your faith in Jesus as the Lord of your life and through the power of the Holy Spirit, do you commit yourself to be his disciple?

Do you now commit to take your place as part of God's family the Church for the rest of your life?

If you have any other questions or concerns on these or any other issues please feel free to contact me on 01463 831247 or email me on [jandkhumphrey@btinternet.com](mailto:jandkhumphrey@btinternet.com)

Yours in Jesus' love, Rev Jonathan Humphrey, Kirkhill & Kiltarlity Parish Churches.

# **Baptism or Blessing at Kirkhill & Kiltarlity Parish Churches**

