



BELIEVE
and be
BAPTISED

A graphic of concentric circles representing ripples in water, centered under the word 'BAPTISED'.

Victor Jack

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THE AIMS OF THIS BOOKLET

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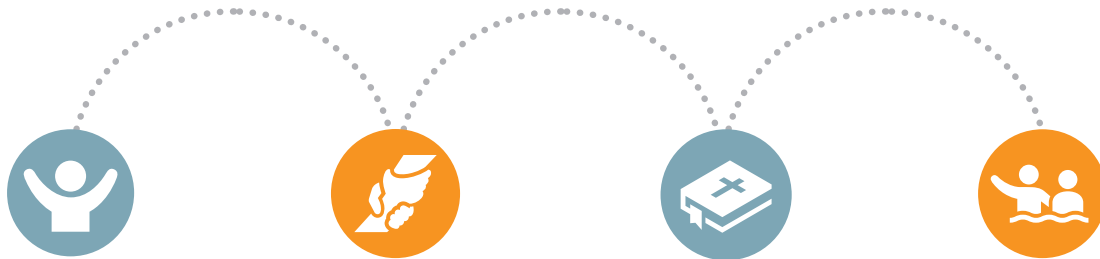
To provide a basic explanation of believers' baptism for those who are thinking of taking this step.

2

To provide parents with a straightforward explanation of baptism when they fail to understand the desires of their sons or daughters.



BELIEVE AND BE BAPTISED



The message Peter preached on the day of Pentecost shows us clearly the steps we need to take on our journey to faith in Jesus. It is an exciting journey which gets more and more rewarding the further we travel. These verses from Acts 2:22–47 will form the basis for most of the teaching that follows.

Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its

hold on him...

Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’

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. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call.’

With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, ‘Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.’ Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about three

'They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people.'

thousand were added to their number that day.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.
(Acts 2:22–47)

Many different pictures have been used in the Bible to illustrate what it means both to become a Christian and then to live

the Christian life, such as a walk, a race and a fight. In this booklet, we shall use the picture of crossing a river by means of stepping-stones, in order to emphasise how easy it is, after setting out as a Christian, to get marooned mid-stream and then to make no further progress. God's blessing and our spiritual progress are forfeited. Just as it takes effort and courage at times to leap from one stone to another, so there are many challenging steps to take if we are to keep moving forward as Christians. One of these is baptism, which requires that we publicly declare our allegiance to Jesus. Baptism is the main subject of this booklet because too many get stranded here.

Before considering the importance of baptism, we will first trace the steps that lead up to it. This will help to make sure that we are ready to be baptised.





Step 1

CONFRONTED WITH THE TRUTH

In his message Peter confronted the people with the truth about Jesus and themselves.

THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS

His life – Jesus was more than a man; He was the Son of God, the promised Messiah. Peter declared, *‘Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know’* (v. 22).

His Death – This was no accident but part of God’s plan for our salvation. *‘This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with*

the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross’ (v. 23).

His Resurrection – Men crucified Him *‘but God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him’* (v.24). The Prince of Life conquered the Prince of Death. Unlike other great leaders of the past, Jesus is alive today.

His Exaltation – Jesus was *‘exalted to the right hand of God’* (v. 33) and waits for the time when God’s promise will be fulfilled; *‘Sit at my right hand until I*