

A banner with a background of a typewriter keyboard and a wooden surface. The text "Catechism: Foundations of the Faith" is written in a dark green, serif font on a light yellow rectangular background.

Catechism: Foundations of the Faith

What Is Water Baptism?

Key idea:

Question 75: What is water baptism?

Water baptism is the sign and seal of our union with Christ and the cleansing He provides for sin, a means of grace to provide strength in our struggle against sin, and the medium through which we testify of our faith in Christ and membership in the church.

Key text:

Colossians 2:9–15

For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, ¹⁰ and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. ¹¹ In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³ When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Romans 6:3–7

Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ 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. ⁵ If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin — ⁷ because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

Key points:

1. Water baptism is the new covenant sign and seal to symbolize our union with Jesus Christ and all the benefits He gives, especially the cleansing from sin.

2. Water baptism is a means of grace to empower us in our struggle against sin.
3. Water baptism is the way Jesus calls His followers to testify of their faith in Him and their membership in the local church.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. Note: This is BRCC Catechism Question 75. It is the first of three questions in our catechism dealing with water baptism.
2. What part of Sunday's text and teaching stood out most to me? Why?
3. When I have seen someone baptized in water, what did I think was happening? How much have I understood about water baptism?
4. Why does God give us signs and seals (symbols) for His covenants? Why are they important?
5. When I think about water baptism why is it an effective symbol for:
 - a. our union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection?
 - b. the cleansing of sin?
 - c. the burial of our old sinful nature?
6. When I consider what baptism is meant to symbolize (see question 5), which mode of baptism (sprinkling or immersion) seems to better symbolize these realities? Why?
7. Why is it important to understand that the sacraments of water baptism and the Lord's Supper are not just ritual symbols but are actually means of grace, imparting power to the believer?
8. Have I been baptized in water? If not, call one of the elders to talk about it and set up a time to be baptized!
9. Who will I call to encourage this week? What specific members of BRCC will I commit before God to pray for and call?

For further study:

The BRCC **Catechism**

- Question 44 on the means of grace
- Questions 75-77 for water baptism

Water Baptism - a 7 week teaching series on water baptism