

## Baptism Service

**Illustration:** What is the most important or defining moment of your life?

I love cricket. In my last years I had gravitated to being the keeper. This one week I arrived five minutes late and got told I was now the captain. Now this was not good news because we had not won a game as a team in eighteen months. Last season we once scored 11 runs all out and on another occasion a team scored 518 with one batsman scoring a 318 Not Out!

As well a player joined us from the higher grade called Barry. He had been dropped for his cricketing capacities – I think – but we were not sure because:

- ... he was 25 stone - he could not bend down
- ... his tummy was enormous - a big soft bean bag
- ... as he fielded, he had to take small steps as people his size often do
- ... he took a catch but not with his hands - his stomach swallowed it
- ... as well you could say he had an unpleasant disposition
- ... he was unemployed and clearly cricket was a big part of his life
- ... to top it all off you could say his vibe was as general all-round loser

One thing he could do was bowl spin. Well to everyone's surprise he took seven wickets including a hat trick (three wickets in three balls). We won the game.

When he took the third wicket this guy who had not managed more than a jog all day came charging down the wicket. I went to greet him to celebrate and exchange high fives. In his excitement he missed my hands and hit me in the face sending me sprawling. Instead of celebrating everyone stopped and pondered whether this guy had just killed the captain.

I eventually got up feeling concussed and congratulated him.

**you see this was one of the best days of Barry's life  
he would always remember this day  
that would be a moment he would treasure for the rest of his life  
from one point of view this was a great moment for him  
it also revealed the shallow emptiness of his existence  
what are the most important and defining moments of your life  
what is it that shapes your life: Your job? Your lifestyle aspiration?  
what is it that shapes your life?  
is what shapes your life is worthy of such status?  
for what shapes your life is your god - that is what you worship  
baptism is a celebration of what shapes a Christian's life**

**Baptism: Celebrating the birth of a new child?**

**Illustration:** Helen Barry looking at our first new born son.

We brought our first born to church. Beaming with pride we paraded him as if were the cleverest people in the room. A wise parishioner casually looked and commented as an aside.

**When you look at a newborn you think about how in looking after this child only good things will occur**

**... they will seek and appreciate having a good education**

**... work at a satisfying profession**

**... see the world**

**... marry an intelligent and beautiful person**

**... make the most of their opportunities**

**for much of the last fifty years there has been much fuel for such optimism**

**my grandparents experienced a wars, a depression, civil war, being refugees**

**my parents were able to better themselves in another land, buy homes, establish successful business**

**and I and others have now built on that foundation, been educated and making our own contribution – many of us here have similar testimonies the reality is that this new generation will have a lower expectation of life than we now experience or even our parents**

**What will life hold for this baptised child?**

**You cannot imagine anything bad happening to such a child during her life**

**... will she experience divorce?**

**... will she die in a road accident?**

**... will she become addicted to pills or alcohol**

**... will she catch some sinister new disease**

**... will she have long periods of unemployment**

**... will she be homeless?**

**... will she feel unease in her body**

**... just as likely to be mow lawns as being a doctor and maybe earn more!**

**baptism is more than the celebration of a new life and all the good things that go with it – for life brings its pain and hassles**

**baptism raises the question not only of the good things in life but how we cope with the not so good things in life**

**why is this world so good and how do you make sense of life's bummers?**

**Illustration:** A person fell into a pit and was unable to climb out... (Evangelism Anecdotes)

**We celebrate that in the journey of life there is a sustaining and loving God who gives meaning to all that one meets along the road.**

**As we gather as Christians we all face the challenge to not let our baptism lose its meaning and significance for our life now and ongoing.**

**Baptism: Celebration of being Christian**

**Quote:** Religious Quotes #45

**“The Christian life is like an aeroplane: when you stop flying – you drop”**

**Baptism is not like an anonymous twitter handle**

**Quote:** The Catholic G.K.Chesterton Religious Quotes #176

“Often the Christian faith has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult and left untried”

**Cartoon:** All that goes under belongs to God



One thing that we celebrate in baptism is that it is all or nothing - it cannot be moderately important - it is something one needs to live out .

Baptism celebrates the beginning of Christian life not the point you put it on the shelf – we celebrate Jesus as the hatrnick of our life in good times and bad.

**Quote:** Religious Quotes #175

“I believe in Jesus as I believe in the Sun – not only because I see it but because by it I see everything else.”

**A person fell into a pit and was unable to climb out:**

**A SUBJECTIVE person came along and said:**

I feel for you down there.

**An OBJECTIVE person came along and said:**

It's logical that someone would fall down there.

**An EVASIVE person:** Came along and avoided the subject of the pit altogether.

**A SELF-PITYING person said:** You haven't seen anything until you've seen MY PIT!

**An OPTIMIST said:** Things COULD be worse.

**A PESSIMIST said:** Things WILL get worse!

**A REALIST said:** That's a PIT.

**A GAMBLER said:** Chances are that anyone could fall into a pit.

**A MATHEMATICIAN Calculated HOW he fell into the pit.**

**A ROCK-HOUND asked them of any rare specimen in the pit.**

**A NEWS REPORTER wanted the exclusive story on their pit.**

**A SCIENTIST calculated the pressure necessary to get them out of the pit.**

**A GEOLOGIST told him to appreciate the rock strain in the pit.**

**An EVOLUTIONIST said: You are a rejected mutant destined to be removed from the evolutionary cycle. In other words, they are going to DIE in the pit, so that they cannot produce any pit-falling offspring.**

**A YUPPIE suggested losers fall into pits and that they should aspire beyond his pit.**

**A GREENIE told them: They should look after the pit.**

**The SPOUSE chided: How could you be so selfish!**

**A TAX AGENT asked if they were paying taxes on the pit.**

**A COUNCIL INSPECTOR asked if they had a permit to dig a pit?**

**A PROFESSOR gave them a lecture on: The elementary principles of the pit.**

**A DOCTOR came and gave them a mental health plan.**

**A PSYCHOLOGIST asked: Do you want to talk about your pit?**

**A POLITICIAN promised to get them out of the pit.**

**A POET eulogised their plight.**

**A NEW-AGE adherent declared: You were a great pharaoh in a previous life.**

**A PHARISEE said: Only BAD people fall into a pit.**

**A CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST came along: You only THINK you are in pit.**

**CONFUCIOUS said: If you had listened to me, you would not be in this pit.**

**BUDDHA said: Your pit is only a state of mind.**

**A HINDU retorted: As you find the god within you, then you and the pit will be one.**

**A MUSLIM said it is the will of Allah that you are in the pit.**

**A FUNDAMENTALIST said: You DESERVE your pit.**

**A PRIEST asked to pray for the person in the pit.**

**A PENTECOSTAL CHRISTIAN said: Just CONFESS that you're not in a pit.**

**A PROTESTANT CHRISTIAN told them the gospel.**

**A CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN jumped into the pit with the person.**

**JESUS CHRIST saw the plight of the person and had compassion.**

**(He said, You deserve to be there.)**

**Lifted the person out and took his place.**