



Baptism

Small Group Study

Share

Tell each other what you have heard in God's Word or seen God do this week.

Or

Ask one or two in the group to share a story about their baptism, the baptism of one of their children, or standing as a sponsor for a baptism.

Hear

Use the following list to listen as God speaks through His Word. Begin with a time of silence, let members of the group take turns reading a verse, leave some time of silence between each verse. When you've completed the list, say a prayer of thanks for the gift of God's Word.

Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Matthew 28:19,20 NLT

Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away—all who have been called by the Lord our God." Acts 2:38,39 NLT

Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other. But—When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. Titus 3:3-5 NLT

Baptism, which is like that water (Noah's Flood), now saves you. Baptism doesn't save by removing dirt from the body. Rather, baptism is a request to God for a clear conscience. It saves you through Jesus Christ, who came back from death to life. 1 Peter 3:21GW

Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? When we were baptized into his death, we were placed into the tomb with him. As Christ was brought back from death to life by the glorious power of the Father, so we, too, should live a new kind of life. Romans 6:3,4 GW

When he died, he died once and for all to sin's power. But now he lives, and he lives for God. So consider yourselves dead to sin's power but living for God in the power Christ Jesus gives you. Romans 6:10,11 GW

But—When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying. Titus 3:5-8a NLT

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

Explore

Watch the video of Pastor Mark addressing Baptism (found at tlc4u.org/toolkit). Make notes in the above passages as you listen.

What words, phrases, concepts in these passages help you to understand the "arrow" of action involved with Baptism?

Take plenty of time browsing and digesting each passage.

Luther's Small Catechism - "What Benefits does Baptism give? It works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare." Validate that statement with the words and promises of the listed Bible passages.

The denominational divides regarding the issue of infant or adult baptism have roots in the Age of Reason that coincided with the events of the Reformation and the formation of some of the protestant churches. With the emphasis on reason, it became important for an individual to be able to know and declare their faith at their Baptism, an exclusive and upward arrow kind of requirement. Rejecting the need for a rational approach to Baptism emphasizes the action of God in forming the faith of the individual.

Discuss how various practices of Baptism that you've observed lean towards an inclusive or exclusive perspective of Baptism... or how these practices demonstrate an upward or downward arrow.

Analyze the inclusive/exclusive character of Matthew 28:19

(Leaders - If someone in your group has not been baptized be sure to give them as much of the floor as they want to bring up questions and discuss their views of baptism.)

Apply

Baptism is not just a onetime event. It has a constant impact on our living. Springing from the images washing, drowning, rebirth, name a current action or attitude you struggle with that could use a daily washing, drowning, rebirth.

Another image of our new life in Christ is a garment to "put on" (Gal 3:27).

"Therefore Paul teaches that Baptism is not a sign but the garment of Christ, in fact, that Christ himself is our garment. Hence Baptism is a very powerful and effective thing. For when we have put on Christ, the garment of our righteousness and salvation, then we also put on Christ, the garment of imitation." Martin Luther

What would a daily garment of imitation look like to a particular person in your life? (a statement of principles may be a place to start but be sure to also describe an imitation of Christ in terms of your own personal life and current situation.)

Plan

Choose one of these and make a personal plan to remember your Baptism this week.

- Contact your site pastor to begin a conversation about your desire to be baptized or to bring one of your children to baptism.
- Place this passage at your sink for meditation as a first thing in the morning reminder of what has been drowned in your Baptism.
Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? When we were baptized into his death, we were placed into the tomb with him. As Christ was brought back from death to life by the glorious power of the Father, so we, too, should live a new kind of life. Romans 6:3,4 GW
- Review this verse several times a day during the week and listen to what the Holy Spirit is asking you to "put on" at this moment.
Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Colossians 3:12-15 ESV
- Spend some time with your child at the end of the day and remember their Baptism. Celebrate the things that God has washed from the day and talk about what their new beginning will be like tomorrow.
- Contact your site's Children's Ministry Leader about the Baptism Family Module to help you teach your child about Baptism.