

“The Mystery of Baptism”

INTRODUCTION

One of the privileges we have as a congregation is celebrating along with those being baptized in our weekend services. Depending on your personal history, you may associate baptism with sprinkling or dunking, a somber observance or a boisterous celebration. This study takes a look at the meaning behind the act of baptism, and the impact it can have in the life of a believer.

Ice Breaker (Optional): Briefly share with the group how you were baptized.

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

Q1. Read Genesis 6:5-8; 7:23

The word for baptism used in the bible, is only found in the New Testament. However, the idea that God takes his people through the water as they pass out of their old life and into the new can be found in several places of the Old Testament including Noah and the flood (Gen 7-9), Moses and Israel escaping through the Red Sea (Exodus 14), and Joshua crossing the Jordan river into the promised land (Joshua 3-5). In these passages in general, what is being put to death, or left behind and what is the new life being entered into?

From Death to Life

Q2. Read Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:11-13; Colossians 3:5-16

How do Romans 6:4 and Colossians 2:12 explain the meaning of our going down under the water and being raised out of the water of baptism? Colossians 3:5-9 gives us insight into what is being put to death when we are baptized. Which items on this list do feel are most difficult to remain dead to? Are there any areas you would like to partner with someone in your group to help you “put to death” through payer, encouragement and accountability? Now find in verses 12 – 14 one attitude and action that you have seen come notably alive in you since you committed your life to Christ.

From Isolation to Family

Q3. Read Galatians 3:26-29; Ephesians 2:11-22

One facet of our new life in Christ, symbolized through baptism, is that we become unified as members of God’s family. What are some

of the barriers to unity that are broken when we become God’s children? (see Galatians 3:28) How does Ephesians 2:19-21 describe our dependence and interconnectedness to fellow believers?

Participating in a Selfless Life

Q4. Read 1Peter 2:9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-21; Galatians 5:13-15

The transformation from our old life into our new life is evidenced by our actions. What is it we have become according to 1 Peter 2:9, and for what purpose? How does our relationship to Christ change our relationship to others (see 2Cor 5)? What one word would you use to describe the attitude expressed in Galatians 5:13-15? In what ways can we actively participate in Christ’s purpose to love our neighbor as ourselves?

WRAP-UP

God has used the imagery of passing through the water to demonstrate how He wants to take us from death to life. When we dip beneath the water we are publicly proclaiming that we have put to death the old selfish life in exchange for the new life He lives through Jesus. Just as Christ was raised out of the grave, so we are raised to live a new life in Christ. The evidence of that life is seen in changed attitudes toward fellow believers and a heart that loves and serves others.

Memory Verse

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.
Romans 6:4 NIV

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members’ needs:

Challenge: Find an opportunity this week to “declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.”

Q1 Genesis 6:5-8; 7:23 ESV - 5 The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. 7 So the LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD... 7:23 He[God] blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark.

Q2 Romans 6:3-4 ESV - 3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Colossians 2:11-13 ESV - In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. 13 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses.

Colossians 3:5-16 ESV - 5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 On account of these the wrath of God is coming. 7 In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. 8 But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. 11 Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all. 12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 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. 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Q3 Galatians 3:26-29 ESV - 26 for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

Ephesians 2:11-22 - Read in your Bible

Q4 1 Peter 2:9-10 ESV - 9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

2 Corinthians 5:14-21 - Read in your Bible

Galatians 5:13-15 ESV - 13 For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

Prayers con't
