

1 Peter 1:3-5 NIV - 3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

Peter tells us we have a living hope and are shielded by God's power. That doesn't mean we won't have to battle as we walk the path Jesus has mapped out for us. But thank God we are not alone. God has placed you in His family, and we are supported by our brothers and sisters in Christ through prayer.

Share with your group one area you would like them to support you through prayer this week.

WRAP-UP

Baptism is a sacred symbol of joining in Jesus' death and being raised to new life through the power of His resurrection. It is not what saves you, but represents a public declaration of your faith, that through God's grace you are saved. We are baptized because Jesus both lead us by his example and commanded his followers to do so. And once we have experienced baptism, our lives should reflect its truth: that we are no longer dead in our sins, but are now heirs of God's promises, living our lives for Christ and his kingdom.

Memory Verse

For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. - Romans 6:4 NLT

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: (see back for more space)

Challenge- Be on the watch for areas of your life where you tend to "blaze your own trail" rather than following the path Jesus has mapped out for you.

"Baptism"

April 28, 2019

INTRODUCTION

This weekend at New Life Church we celebrated baptism in our services. The experience of baptism has many expressions throughout the Christian faith. Although it may seem like a familiar event, we can easily lose sight of its meaning and become confused about why we are baptized. This study is a reminder of what the bible teaches us about baptism.

Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)

Have you been baptized?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

1. What is Baptism

Depending on your upbringing or tradition, you may have a very specific idea of what constitutes Christian Baptism. Maybe you've been told you can't get into heaven if you aren't baptized, or that there is only one way to properly baptize someone. Those distinctions have the potential to polarize believers, and perhaps you've seen that happen. But what we seek to understand is the meaning that underlies the act of baptism.

What does Paul tell us it means to be baptized in Romans chapter 6.

Romans 6:3-5 NLT - 3 Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? 4 For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. 5 Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was.

Paul tells us we are joined with Christ in death through baptism. But Jesus didn't die when he was baptized and neither did you, so what do you think Paul is actually saying?

What was your baptism experience like?

From the language in this passage we see baptism symbolizes something; joining in Jesus' death and receiving new life. But baptism itself is not what saves us. Rather, it is a sacred symbol of something that has already taken place.

How do we receive salvation and new life?

Romans 10:9 NLT - 9 If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Ephesians 2:8 NLT - 8 God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God.

2. Why Should I be Baptized?

One thing most everyone agrees on- baptism is part of discipleship or following Jesus. In the New Testament people were often immediately baptized when they believed. Baptism becomes the moment of our declaration of faith and an act that helps us experience being united with Christ. Jesus himself was baptized, demonstrating one of the three things he would later command his followers to observe. (Matt 28:19-20)

What three things did Jesus command in His "Great Commission?"

Matthew 28:18-20
18 Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. 19 Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 20 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."

There was no law in the Old Testament requiring baptism, but we see many instances where God's people passed through the water to enter a new identity.

What was the change of identity when the Israelites passed from Egypt through the Red Sea (Ex 14:21-22)? ... When they passed out of

the wilderness through the Jordan and into the Promised Land (Josh 3:15-17)? ...when Noah and family passed through the waters of the flood (1 Peter 3:20-21)? ... when Naaman dipped in the Jordan seven times (2 Kings 5: 1-14)?

3. How Then Should We Live?

The challenge that awaits us after our baptism is for us to live differently. The spiritual truth we are declaring through baptism is that you left the family of Adam and are adopted into the family of God. But sin beckons for us to return to our old lives. Paul addresses that struggle to escape sin in Romans 6:1-2.

Romans 6:1-2 NLT - 1 Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? 2 Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it?

The idea Paul addresses is that its ok to sin because we know we will be forgiven.

What would you say to someone who believes it doesn't really matter if they sin since they are forgiven?

In baptism we declared that we are moving from death to life, and like the Israelites we are moving from slavery to freedom. But we still have choices to make that will align our life with our new identity.

Galatians 3:27-29 NLT - 27 And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. 28 There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, and God's promise to Abraham belongs to you.

As a disciple of Christ, you are joint-heirs with Jesus, partakers in the promises to Abraham and children of the king. This means more than simply saying a prayer or attending Sunday service; it means your life is being transformed.

What are some of the daily choices we face that will either reflect living like we are still "dead in sin" or living in our new identity as disciples?