

# Baptism

## TEACHING NOTES

### KEY VERSES

Romans 6:1-11

### KEY THEMES

A response of faith

### The history of baptism



### The symbolic meaning of baptism (Romans 6:1-11)

“Do you believe...?”

### The personal meaning of baptism

Outward sign of an inward reality

A personal response

### Lesson Objective

*To identify through baptism with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.*

## PERSONAL STUDY

### Study 1

#### Prepare your heart and mind

There are so many distractions in this world and in our own homes. Our “to do” lists keep our minds moving at a rapid pace. Begin your study today by asking the Holy Spirit to calm your mind and guide your study. Ask Him to help you focus on His Word and what He wants to teach you through it.

#### Baptism

Baptism is an act of obedience to Christ that follows an individual’s acceptance of Salvation by God’s grace alone.



#### Read John 1:12-13, 3:16 and Ephesians 2:8-9

According to these verses, what is necessary for a person to become a child of God?



#### Read Acts 16:25-34 and Matthew 28:18-19

According to these verses, who should be baptized?

What is a natural next step for a person who has placed their faith in Christ? If you have not taken this next step, why?



#### Read Romans 3:21-28

Baptism does not provide salvation for an individual, but rather serves as a way for the individual to publicly announce they have placed their faith and trust in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Therefore, baptism is an act of obedience to Christ that follows an individual’s acceptance of salvation by God’s grace alone.

**Prayer time**

Spend some time in prayer thanking God for His Word and how it teaches and guides us. Thank Him for the gift of salvation. Thank Him for the beautiful, symbolic act of baptism.

**Key verse**

Put to memory Acts 18:8b. Place the provided card somewhere you will see it throughout the day.

**Study 2****Answers to frequently asked questions concerning baptism**

Take a moment to just be silent before God. Try to push away all of life's distractions. Ask God to focus your attention on Him and His Word during this time.

**What does the word "baptize" mean?**

The word *baptism* is a transliteration of the Greek word *baptizō*, which means to dip, immerse, or wash.

**Do I really need to be baptized?**

Jesus explicitly commanded baptism for His followers:

*"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."*  
(Matthew 28:19-20)

Throughout the book of Acts, we see a pattern: people put their faith in Christ and then they are baptized. Sometimes this happened quickly; the Ethiopian man in Acts 8 was baptized on the same day he placed his faith and trust in Jesus Christ. For most, it occurs at a later time after placing their faith in Christ.

**What does baptism symbolize for the believer?**

We believe baptism symbolizes the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. Romans 6:3-4 explains the meaning of baptism.

*Or have you forgotten that when we became Christians and were baptized to become one with Christ Jesus, we died with him? 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.*

Therefore, the immersion in water symbolizes our union with Christ in His death, and the rising up from the water is a picture of our resurrection with Christ to a new life.

**What does baptism accomplish?**

Baptism serves as a public declaration of this identification with Christ. While baptism does not impart salvation, it is nonetheless a grace-filled experience for many people. It gives the body of believers the opportunity to celebrate this life change.

**Why doesn't WCC practice infant baptism?**

If you were baptized as an infant, we feel confident it was with good intentions by your parents. However, according to scripture, baptism is not a decision made for us by another individual. Baptism is for those who have made a personal decision to trust Christ alone for their salvation.

**Do I need to be baptized again if I was baptized as an infant?**

This is a matter of conscience and conviction. Historically, here at WCC, we have had numerous adults be rebaptized out of a strong conviction that Scripture teaches baptism after placing one's faith in Christ.

**Am I spiritually ready for baptism?**

Once someone professes faith in Jesus Christ for salvation, the Bible says they should proclaim the new life they have in Christ. Baptism has always stood as a public testimony for people who have become believers in Christ. Believers are those who have realized that their sins have separated them from God. They have given up all efforts to reach God through their own good works or religious activity. They have concluded that Jesus Christ's death on the cross for their sins is the only thing that can bridge the gap between them and God. A believer is someone who has decided to trust Christ alone for his or her salvation. If you have come to this point in your spiritual journey, then you are ready to be baptized.

**Why do we call it a Baptism Celebration?**

Every baptism we witness is an opportunity to enjoy and celebrate the wonder of salvation and to worship the God from whom that salvation flows.

## PARENT GUIDE

This week in your home groups you looked at the topic of baptism. Baptism is a special event that serves as a marker for many people in their spiritual lives. We want to encourage you to talk to your kids about baptism. Talk about the symbolism and how through baptism we can identify with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Ask them about what they already know about baptism and share your own baptism story with them. Here are a few questions to help you get the conversation started.

### Table Talk

What is baptism?

*(Baptism is a ceremony with water that serves as an outward expression of an inward change. Much like a wedding ring serves as a symbol of marriage. It is a commitment we make and the ceremony is the way we tell others about it.)*

What does baptism mean/symbolize?

*(Baptism is a way for us to identify with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Going under the water symbolizes the death and burial of Jesus. Coming out of the water symbolizes the resurrection of Jesus.)*

Is baptism necessary for salvation?

*(No. We do not need to be baptized in order to be saved. Salvation is based on faith and belief in Jesus and what He did for us on the cross. The common misunderstanding is that baptism is the washing away of our sin, but that is already done by the work of Jesus on the cross. His death on the cross paid for our sins.)*

Why do we get baptized?

*(Because we want to tell others about our faith in Jesus and what He has done for us.)  
salvation by God's grace alone.*

