

Why Do We Baptize?

ANNOUNCEMENT:

These are great ways to connect and be together outside of your small group.

- Sunday, August 19th - **1 Night 2 Unite**, 7 pm
 - Friday, August 24th - **Beach Baptism**, Corona Del Mar, 7 pm
- Hang out at the fire pits for s'mores afterward.

ICEBREAKER: Take some time to allow those who didn't share their baptism story last week to do so now. Let those who feel led do the sharing.

1. We baptize to follow Jesus' example

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." Matthew 3:13-17 NIV

2. We baptize to obey Jesus' command

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20 ESV

DISCUSSION: If you have not been baptized, what is keeping you from being baptized? Do you see His example just a good suggestion? If you think that it's only a good suggestion, please explain.

{Maybe everyone in your group agrees with the example and command to be baptized. If so then ask a question like, "Why do you feel that others might think that it's only a good suggestion?" Attempt to lead the group in understanding another's position against baptism in order for them to feel capable to lead others towards baptism.}

Baptism is not magic!

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. Mark 16:16 NIV

3. Baptism gives us a proper view of death

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Romans 6:1-3 NIV

For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin —because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Romans 6:6-7 NIV

DISCUSSION: How does being baptized with Christ into His death practically apply to your life? What areas of your life had to die in order to be joined to Christ?

4. Baptism gives us hope for a resurrection

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. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. Romans 6:4-5 NIV

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. Romans 6:8-10 NIV

DISCUSSION: When you came up and out of the water, how did your resurrection connect you with Christ? What have you been raised to, practically, in your new life with Christ?

DISCUSSION: Have you ever looked back on your baptism as your reminder that you have died to a former manner of life and have been raised to a new life with Christ?

{**Note:** We don't want our baptism to simply become conjecture and/or a theological abstract that has little or no real bearing on our life. It's critical that we make this genuine connection between being joined to Christ in both His death and His resurrection so that our new life is lived in Him and to its fullest.}

5. Baptism unites us with Christ

If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. Romans 6:5 NIV

DISCUSSION: How is your life a reflection of you being united with Jesus? In what way would others know it?

6. Baptism reminds us that we are washed clean

And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name. Acts 22:16 ESV

Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. 1Corinthians 6:9-11 NIV

Baptism is a symbol of our unity in Jesus' death, hope for the resurrection, and a reminder that we are clean, which we perform in order to follow Jesus' example and obey His command.

PRAYER PROJECT:

IF YOU HAVEN'T BEEN BAPTIZED... Take 5-7 minutes and ask God to show you what is keeping you from being baptized and how that is in alignment with His will. If there is any reason you think God doesn't want you to get baptized please share that with your group.

IF YOU HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED... Take 5-7 minutes and ask God to show you how your life is out of alignment with you being united to Christ through your baptism.