

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

If you could choose your age forever, what age would you choose and why?

SHARE

This week, we have a short stand-alone message from each of the Campus Pastors on Baptism. Each of us matters deeply to God. Every person we cross paths with is made in the image of God. Everyone we see is known by God and is made to have a relationship with Him. There are many things to learn about following God, which takes a lifetime to understand. Some things however are very simple. Each one of us who have decided to follow Jesus is commanded in scripture to be baptized. It is not something we have to work up to. Baptism is an act of joyful obedience. We are asked to step out of the crowd and to publicly identify our lives with Christ.

If you have personally made a decision to be baptized, talk through that process and how you ultimately decided to do it?

Why do you think God would ask us to be public about our faith? Why is it so important to share our story in front of others?

GROW

As we step out of the crowd and publically stand with Christ, it signifies a powerful change that has taken place. A. Robertson, from Word Pictures in the New Testament, explains, “The first thing to do is make a radical and complete change of heart and life. Then let each one be baptized after this change has taken place, and the act of baptism be performed “in the name of Jesus Christ.” The word “baptized” comes from the Greek word “baptizo” which means to dunk or submerge. It starts with a changed heart, and we follow that with a first act of obedience:

Matthew 28:19

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...

Acts 2:38

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you...”

Acts 2:41

Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Acts 8:12

But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

If you had an opportunity to hear people’s testimonies during the recent Baptism service, were there any stories that stood out to you? If so, what made it so impactful?

M O V E

After we make the decision to follow Jesus and leave our old life behind, we are to be baptized. Scripture makes it clear that baptism is an act of obedience and a public declaration of your faith in Christ and it is unbelievably significant. It is significant because it

signifies to you and to all those around you that your life is now identified in and with Christ. We are considered “dead to sin” and alive with Christ. This is unbelievably good news for us. Our old self or our old way of life was crucified with Jesus. We are now set free and just as Jesus rose up from the dead, we also are raised with him to walk in a whole new life:

Romans 6:2-7

We are those who have 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? 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.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

According to scripture, why is it important to understand that we are united with Jesus?

Do you find it hard to believe that you are a new creation in Christ or is it easy for you to embrace that you have a new identity?

What have you learned about baptism that you didn't think about before?

If you haven't been baptized and are a follower of Christ, pray about what is holding you back and pray about it. If you are nervous about getting baptized, join the club. Most of us, if we were honest would say that we were nervous about getting baptized in front of people. Remember that those people are cheering you on.

If you have been baptized already, maybe you have a friend or relative that follows Christ but hasn't been baptized. This week take a moment to share with them your story.

PRAY

As a group, spend some time praying with and for each other. Life is a journey of ups, downs, victories, and successes. This Life Group is created to celebrate with those who are celebrating, and grieve with those who are grieving. Wherever we are on our journey, God unites us when we bear each other's burdens. Spend some time praying for each other's burdens, hopes, and journey toward spiritual growth.

If you are in a coed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to share more freely.

