

Understanding Water Baptism

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I. Launch Questions

- What is the significance of water baptism in your life?
- How does baptism help you identify with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

II. Questions for Discussion

Water baptism is a powerful picture of the most fundamental truths of the Gospel; the death, the burial and the resurrection of Christ and of the believer's union with Him. Baptism is a symbolic statement of faith and a sign of repentance as we publicly identify with a crucified and risen Christ. This public declaration of being buried with Christ and being raised to new life is a great testimony. Discuss the following 4 foundational truths about baptism.

1. *Baptism is a public declaration.* Why does baptism need to be done in public? What does Matt 28:18-20 say about this? Where does our authority come from?
2. *Baptism is being obedient.* Read Acts 2:37-38, in what sense is baptism a sign of obedience? How does our obedience affect our relationship with God? What does repentance and baptism lead to? What gift do we enjoy as a result of being baptized?
3. *Baptism is after salvation.* Why does baptism come after belief in Christ and repentance? What is the significance of this in Acts 2:41?
4. *Baptism is a powerful symbol.* Read Romans 6:4. Why was Jesus baptized? What was Jesus declaring by being baptized? What does

this mean for us as we seek to follow in Jesus' example? What is the significance of the symbol of being buried with Christ? What about in being raised with Christ?

III. Personal Application

Water baptism is an outward declaration of what has happened inwardly and is a powerful symbol of our identification with Christ. Furthermore, it is a sign that we are dead to ourselves and dead to sin and alive with Christ because of our faith in Him. Seek to understand the heart of God as you ponder the following;

1. In what ways did/does water baptism symbolize a fresh start in your life?
2. How have you surrendered your life to Christ? What does this look like practically?
3. What does it look like to walk in the freedom of a new, reborn life in Christ?
4. How does taking an act of faith by being baptized propel you into your full potential in the body of Christ?