

Into the Deep- Week 2 Small Group Questions

Ask:

1. Take a little time to share your personal experience with baptism with your group. What have you been taught? What does it mean to you? Do you see the purpose behind it?

Leaders Note: The point of the above question is to gauge where people are with baptism. While most denominations practice baptism, not everyone has the same belief as to its what, why, and how. If someone in your group has a radically different take on baptism than you, don't rush to challenge them. Allow space for people to share what they have been taught and believe, and then go to the Word together and see what God says.

Read:

Matthew 3:1-6, 11, In those days, John the Baptist came to the Judean wilderness and began preaching. His message was, "Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near." The prophet Isaiah was speaking about John when he said, "He is a voice shouting in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the LORD's coming! Clear the road for him!'" John's clothes were woven from coarse camel hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey. People from Jerusalem and from all of Judea and all over the Jordan Valley went out to see and hear John. And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River. ¹¹"I baptize with water those who repent of their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I'm not worthy even to be his slave and carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Ask:

2. What is the difference between John's baptism and baptism by faith in Jesus? (See Acts 19:4-5)
3. Pastor Jeff said baptism is for no one other than the Christian after they repent of their sins and believe. Do you agree?

Leaders Note: Jeff gives many examples to back this up, such as...

Acts 2 --- 3,000 people were saved and baptized in one day

Acts 8 --- Simon (A sorcerer) Repents, believes, and is baptized
Acts 8 --- Many men and women in Samaria, following Simon's conversion, were baptized after their faith
Acts 8 --- Phillip baptizes an Ethiopian Eunuch after he put his faith in Jesus
Acts 9 --- Saul (Paul) baptized after his radical conversion to Christ
Acts 10 --- Cornelius and his entire household baptized after faith

4. Based on what we see in the NT, Pastor Jeff taught that baptism doesn't save you; it's a public act. Each person being baptized should be of an age where they understand what they are doing and why, and it's done as soon as possible after they believe. Do you agree with this? If not, share with Scripture why you hold to a different view.

Read:

Matthew 3:13-17, Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. But John tried to talk him out of it. "I am the one who needs to be baptized by you," he said, "so why are you coming to me?" But Jesus said, "It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires.^[f]" So John agreed to baptize him. After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened^[g] and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy."

Ask:

1. If Jesus is God, why do you think he felt the need to be baptized?

"I believe (Jesus was baptized) because He was modeling this practice for us. And what is His command to all of us? Follow me! Even when it comes to baptism, Jesus wants us to follow him." Pastor Jeff

"If you were to ask me, "Is baptism necessary for the Christian?" I would say, "Absolutely." It is not necessary for salvation, but it is necessary for obedience because Christ, with no ambiguity, commanded that all of those who belong to Him, who are part of the new covenant family, and who receive the benefits of His salvation are to be baptized." --- R.C. Sproul

2. Pastor Jeff said that baptism is the mark of Christ that we are surrendered to Jesus. Our allegiance belongs to no one else. Do you think people treat baptism in this way? Did you?
3. How have you seen your allegiance change from the world to Jesus since you first believed?

Apply:

1. What is one thing from this message that stood out to you the most?
2. Have you been baptized? If not, what do you feel is keeping you from taking that step?