



# ements

The Components of the Weekly Gathering

## Community Group Leader's Guide

September 10-17, 2017

## Weekly Summary

*This week, we will be looking at why we baptize as a church. There are few things the church does that are more confusing and potentially divisive than that of baptism. Much of this stems from the very convoluted history of the subject through the history of the church. This also is connected to the deep sentimentalism attached to our own conversion experience and heritage of faith. Few of us are willing to listen on this subject, and most want to dig their heels in the mud. We ask that this group time would be met with grace, love and humility. Simply, put we will look at what Scripture says on the subject in this study time. The word baptism comes from the Greek word "baptizo," which means to immerse or dunk. This word actually predates Scripture. The clearest example that shows the meaning of baptizo is a text from the Greek poet and physician, Nicander, who lived about 200 B.C. It is a recipe for making pickles. Nicander says that in order to make a pickle, the vegetable should first be 'dipped' (bapto) into boiling water and then 'baptized' (baptizo) in the vinegar solution. Both verbs concern the immersing of vegetables in a solution. But the first is temporary. The second, the act of baptizing the vegetable, produces a permanent change. When used in the New Testament, this word refers to that permanent change that is part of our salvation. We come up out of being immersed in the water (connected to heard, believing and repenting) a new creation in Christ. This is the power of the baptism moment. Let's take a look and study together.*

## Getting Started

**Icebreaker:** *Tell us a little about your church background. What did you grow up being taught about baptism?*

## Going Deeper

*Read Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16.*

- 1.) What should we make of the fact that Jesus ordered his disciples (the church founders) to baptize?**
- 2.) What should we make of the fact that in Matthew 28 Jesus separates his usage of "baptism" and teaching new disciples to "obey his commands"? What do you think —does this mean that Jesus saw baptism as more than a "sign" or a "work" optionally done?**

Read Acts 2:37-41; 8:4-13; 8:26-40; 9:18; 10:47-48; 16:15; 16:29-34; 18:8; 19:1-5; 22:16. (Refer to the graph below if needed).

CONVERTED	HEARD	BELIEVED	REPENTED	BAPTIZED
The 3000	2:37	2:36-37	2:38	2:38
Samaritans	8:6	8:12		8:12
Ethiopian	8:35	8:37		8:38
Saul	22:14			22:16
Cornelius	10:33	10:43	11:18	10:48
Lydia & family	16:14			16:15
Jailor & family		16:31		16:33
Corinthians	18:8			18:8
Ephesians	19:5	19:4		19:5

**3.) Based on this long list of texts in Acts that we read, what are we to take away about the importance of baptism? What are we to make of**

**its inclusion in every conversion account we read about?**

**4.) Does the water save us? Explain. What other parts do we read about that are important in our conversion of coming to Christ.**

**4.) Based on what we've read: who should be baptized?**

*All who have trusted Jesus Christ as their savior should be baptized. Once we hear the Gospel proclaimed, believe the Gospel truth of Jesus coming to die for our sins, repent of our sins and profess our need for God, we should be baptized.*

**5.) Based on what we've read: when should someone be baptized?**

*One should be baptized as soon as possible after hearing, believing and repenting. Acts 2 is a great example of this. Those who heard the message were pierced to the heart, believed the message, were ordered to repent of their sins by Peter, and were baptized immediately.*

**6.) Based on what we've read: how should someone be baptized?**

*Men of scholarship and integrity, from all backgrounds, admit that immersion is the Biblical method for baptizing:*

- *F. Brenner (Roman Catholic): "Thirteen hundred years was baptism generally and ordinarily performed by the immersion of a man under water; and only in extraordinary cases was sprinkling or affusion permitted. These latter methods of baptism were called in question, and even prohibited." Work on Baptism, Augusti, Denkwurd, VII., p. 68.*
- *Martin Luther: "On this account I could wish that such as are baptized should be completely immersed into water according to the meaning of the word and the signification of the ordinance. . . As also without doubt, it was instituted by Christ." Works. Vol. XI., p.76, ed. 1551.*
- *John Calvin (Presbyterian): "The very word baptize signifies to immerse, and it is certain that immersion was the practice of the primitive church." Institutes, Vol. XI., ch. IS, sec. 49.*
- *Philip Schaff (Presbyterian): "Immersion, and not sprinkling, was unquestionably the original form of baptism. Baptism is to immerse in water." History of Apostolic Church, pp. 568, 569.*
- *John Wesley (Methodist): "We are buried with Him, alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion." Notes on N. T., Rom. 6:3.*

*Read Romans 6:3-10; Colossians 2:11-12; Galatians 3:27; 1 Peter 3:19-21; Titus 3:5.*

## **7.) Based on what we've read: what happens upon our baptism?**

*We receive forgiveness of sins, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we put on Christ, participate in the death/burial/resurrection of Christ, and get a clear conscience.*

### **Application**

#### **8.) So why should our church perform baptisms?**

#### **9.) What should our group do with what we've studied?**

#### **10.) How should we handle this issue with those who disagree with us on it?**