

Baptism

Mark 1:4-8: And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And this was his message: "After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

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

Ephesians 2:8-9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

1 Peter 3:18-21 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

Read Mark 1:4-8. Ceremonial cleansing had been a part of Jewish life for hundreds of years. John connected this cleansing to the confession of sins.

John said he baptized with water but Jesus would baptize with _____.

In Mark 16:16 what are the two things Jesus says you must do to be saved?

When you read Ephesians 2:8-9 it is clear that you are saved by _____ (not by anything you do) through _____, and that this is a _____ of God.

1 Peter 3:18-21 Peter explains that it is by Christ's _____ that we are saved and that baptism is just a _____ of repentance and a pledge of _____ toward God.

What do you think Peter means by "good conscience"?

Baptism then is an outward sign of inner repentance (an acknowledgement of, and turning away from, sin).

In Acts 2:38 Peter says we are to be baptized in the name of : _____
Why?

Paul, in 1 Corinthians 12:13 mentions we are all joined in _____.

What (or whose) body? _____

As a member of "the body of Christ" we have both privileges and responsibilities. What do you think these would be?

How old do you think you have to be to be baptized? (see Acts 16:33)

The person being baptized should be old enough to make a conscious decision about their commitment. Are you ready to make that commitment?

Lesson Plan: Baptism

The Goal: The goal of this lesson is to give the kids a theological understanding of Baptism. In addition we want them to begin to think about making a commitment to “the body of Christ”

Pre-Lesson Activity:

If it's a hot day play this outside: I brought several buckets of water balloons to class. Each kid had three chances to try and hit me. The hitch was, they had to line up behind me, perpendicular to me, to wait their turn. To be fair I told them I would not move my feet but they had to throw from behind a set distance. I did get a little wet but the kids behind me got really wet. What fun.

Leading the lesson:

Spend some time in prayer the day before, going over the verses and questions in your mind. Write possible answers on your copy of the worksheet along with additional notes of things you'd like to bring up.

If your group is younger junior-high age encourage them to fill in the blanks with the correct answers and hand in their papers at the end of class. For older kids, especially high-school age, just use the questions as discussion starters.

Have a kid read the first set of verses and then go thru the questions of the matching color. Give them time to answer. Listen to what they say and lead the discussion with additional questions of your own to lead them to the correct answers.

Note: When reading, kids will frequently stumble on words they do not know. Explain the meaning of the words so they can fully grasp the concept of the Bible verse. Sometimes you must restate the passage in your own words for them to get it.

The first part of the lesson is a little background on baptism as the Jews viewed it. The second sections (printed in blue) is to clarify the Protestant theology that the act of being baptized is not required to be saved but that one is saved by *grace through faith*. Peter explains (printed in green) that baptism is a symbol of *the pledge of a good conscience toward God*. The third point is to show that baptism identifies a person a part of the “body of Christ” with it's privileges and responsibilities.

Summary:

I encourage kids to consider being baptized. I suggest that they contact the pastor to begin the process. Sadly, some churches make this very hard and have lots of restrictions and requirements. If your students are determined, go to bat for them and plan a special baptism service. I do not suggest “rocking the boat” of your church's particular style or traditions surrounding baptism. However, I can tell you that kids can make a sincere decision to become an active member of the church family. Use my lesson on Spiritual Gifts to awaken them to the ways that they can contribute in the life of your church. The acceptance of young people by the church as fully functioning members is a foundational event in their remaining attached to a church later on.

Take Prayer Requests

Always ask the kids for prayer requests for the next week. Ask them about their concerns from the previous week.