



## BAPTISM SUNDAY

**Brian Coles**

**MARCH 15, 2026**

### WORSHIP

Begin your group with a time of worship. If someone in your group can lead worship, invite them to lead two or three songs. Alternatively, consider using one or more of these songs from our Sunday morning worship time:

- **I Believe** (*Phil Wickham*)
- **Because of Christ** (*The Belonging Co.*)
- **Worthy** (*Elevation Music*)

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

1. Ephesians 2:8-9
2. Matthew 28:18-20
3. Acts 2:38
4. Romans 6:3-4
5. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13

### OPENING PRAYER

Begin your group time by thanking God for the people who publicly declared their faith through baptism and ask the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion.

### Ice Breaker (5-10 min)

Have you been baptized? If so, share briefly about your baptism experience. What do you remember most about that day?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (35-40 min)

### Section 1: Why We Baptize

Read Matthew 28:18-20

1. Why is obedience to Christ's commands important in the Christian life? What other commands has Jesus given us beyond baptism?
2. Pastor Brian mentioned that baptism is a "public declaration." What makes a public declaration of faith significant compared to a private belief?
3. How does baptism illustrate the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ? Why is this visual representation important?

### Section 2: Baptism and Salvation

Read Ephesians 2:8-9

4. Why is it crucial to understand that baptism doesn't save us? What dangers exist in adding anything to "salvation by grace through faith"?
5. Pastor Brian listed things Christians do AFTER being saved: baptism, godliness, prayer, Bible reading, worship, giving, serving, and committing to community. How does understanding the phrase "Because I'm saved, I serve" change our motivation for these activities?
6. Discuss the statement: "Be very careful about any religion that says salvation plus..." Why is this warning important?

### Section 3: Who Should Be Baptized?

Read Acts 2:38, Mark 16:16, Acts 2:41

7. What do these verses tell us about who should be baptized? Why does Petra Church ask children to wait until age 10?
8. For parents: How can you help your children understand the gospel and prepare them for baptism when they're ready?

## Section 4: New Life in Christ

Read Romans 6:3-4, Galatians 2:20, 2 Corinthians 5:17

9. What does it mean to be "buried with Christ through baptism into death"? How should this reality affect our daily lives?
10. Pastor Brian mentioned that in some countries, baptism means losing everything. How does this perspective challenge our understanding of what it means to publicly identify with Christ?
11. Reflect on 2 Corinthians 5:17: "The old has gone, the new is here!" What are some "old" things God has removed from your life? What "new" things has He brought?

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Baptism is an act of obedience to Jesus' command in Matthew 28:18-20
2. Baptism is a public declaration of our faith in Christ and identification with His death, burial, and resurrection
3. Baptism does not save us—we are saved by grace through faith alone (Ephesians 2:8-9)
4. Baptism symbolizes our new life in Christ—death to our old self and resurrection to new life
5. Baptism connects us to the universal Church, not just a local congregation

### PRACTICAL APPLICATION (10 Mins)

This Week's Challenge:

Choose one or more of the following to put into practice:

1. **If you haven't been baptized:** Schedule a conversation with a pastor or mature Christian to discuss taking this step of obedience.
2. **Reflect on your baptism:** Write down what your baptism meant to you and share your story with someone who hasn't been baptized or is considering it.
3. **Live out your baptism:** Identify one area of your "old life" that still has a hold on you. Confess it to a trusted friend and ask them to pray for you to walk in newness of life.
4. **Encourage others:** Reach out to someone who was baptized recently (or one of the 21 from this Sunday) and encourage them in their faith journey.
5. **Study deeper:** Read Romans 6:1-14 this week and journal about what it means to be "dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus."

## **CLOSING REFLECTION AND PRAYER**

### Reflection Questions for Personal Time

- Am I living as someone who has died to sin and been raised to new life?
- What does my life publicly declare about my faith in Christ?
- Are there areas where I'm trying to earn God's favor rather than living from a place of already being saved by grace?

### **Closing Prayer**

#### Closing Prayer Points

- Thank God for His gift of salvation through grace alone
- Pray for the 21 people who were baptized, that they would continue to grow in faith
- Ask God to help each group member live out their baptism daily—dying to self and living for Christ
- Pray for opportunities to share the gospel with others who need to hear about salvation