



Your group matters.

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Icebreaker -

*If you had to describe your personality in terms of a farm animal, which animal would you choose and why?*

1. In this *People-ing* series, we have looked at how Jesus followers are meant to be connected to one another. Pastor Tom said that taking the next step of baptism is a key way for that connection to deepen. If you've been baptized, how has that experience impacted your relationships at Riverside?
2. These passages (**Acts 2:29-41, 8:4-13, 26-39, 9:1-19, 16:11-15; 18:1-8, & 19:1-5**), describe how Saul/Paul, and thousands of other new Jesus followers, were baptized soon after saying 'YES!' to Jesus. What excuses have you heard (or used) that keep Christians from obeying the Biblical call to believer's baptism?
3. Pastor Tom said that baptism is a symbol of what Jesus has done in you for all to see. What "sermon without words" would/has your baptism declare/d to all those who know you, and how does it invite them to say 'YES!' to Jesus too?
4. Pastor Tom taught that baptism, whether done to you as an infant or chosen as an adult, is no substitute for saying your own 'YES!' to Jesus. *No form of baptism saves you; only Jesus can do that.* This is a perfect time to say your 'YES!' and then be baptized next Sunday. Will you say your 'YES!' right now?
5. On Sunday 7/27, we will celebrate together those taking their next step of baptism at our baptism service at the Becker Community Center. Who are you inviting to share in this next step of faith in your life or in the lives of others you love, and who might you encourage to take their next step with you?

## PERSONAL GUIDE

*Day One:* Mark 14; Psalm 131

*Day Two:* Numbers 14; Proverbs 7

*Day Three:* Ephesians 2; 2 Kings 5

*Day Four:* 1 Thessalonians 1; Ezekiel 8

*Day Five:* Job 7; Acts 19

*This Personal Guide has been adapted from Professor Grant Horner's Bible Reading System.*



Your  
story  
matters.

JULY 20, 2025



**People-ing 101: Building Community One Story at a Time**  
**"TAKING NEXT STEPS WITH ONE ANOTHER"**  
**Pastor Tom Lundeen | July 20, 2025**

Multiple studies show that despite living in the most connected time in human history, people of all generations are \_\_\_\_\_ than ever. As we've been exploring the past 8 weeks God's way for us to navigate the problem of loneliness through the one \_\_\_\_\_, let's look at how important it is for us to take next steps with one another, especially the vital next step of baptism:

**1. What the New Testament Teaches About \_\_\_\_\_ Baptism**

- A. Meaning of baptism = "Baptizo" = "to \_\_\_\_\_...to immerse"
  - *I would have those who are to be baptized to be \_\_\_\_\_ immersed, as the work imports and the mystery signifies.* (Martin Luther)
  - *The word 'baptize' signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the \_\_\_\_\_ church.* (John Calvin)
  - *Buried with Him, alludes to baptizing by immersion according to the \_\_\_\_\_ of the first church.* (John Wesley)
- B. John the Baptist - his ministry shows us that baptism was not a new idea \_\_\_\_\_ by Christians, or even by John the Baptist.
  - Baptism = always a \_\_\_\_\_ act.
  - John the "\_\_\_\_\_ " practiced a baptism that symbolized repentance (note **Matthew 3:7-11a**).
- C. Baptism of Jesus - His baptism symbolized:
  - It was to "fulfill \_\_\_\_\_ righteousness" (note **Matthew 3:15**).
  - Fulfilled the mission of John the Baptist and marked the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus' public ministry.
  - Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ Himself with the sinful condition of humanity which He had come to save.
  - It is an \_\_\_\_\_ to all His followers.
- D. Other New Testament Examples - baptism practiced very soon after commitment to Jesus Christ, so much so that often baptism and salvation are closely \_\_\_\_\_ together:
  - Acts 2, Pentecost
  - Acts 8, Samaritan converts and Ethiopian government official
  - Acts 9, Saul of Tarsus
  - Acts 16, Lydia of Thyatira and Philippian jailer and his household
  - Acts 18, believers in Corinth
  - Acts 19, Ephesian disciples

Every example of baptism in the New Testament is believer's baptism (no examples of \_\_\_\_\_ baptism). Note **Matthew 28:18-20**  
 Baptism is an outward \_\_\_\_\_ and symbol of what has happened inwardly/personally/and spiritually to a person when they say 'YES!' to Jesus as Lord. The \_\_\_\_\_ of baptism does not make anyone a Jesus follower... Paul - we can see that God used baptism to:

**2. Make His Faith \_\_\_\_\_**

For Saul/Paul to be baptized challenged his \_\_\_\_\_ heritage and education, as well as his pride. Note **Acts 9:18**

**3. Connect with God's \_\_\_\_\_ (note Acts 9:19b)**

Baptism was his invitation to also \_\_\_\_\_ with Jesus' followers in Jerusalem (note **Acts 9:26-28**).  
 Spiritual growth happens in relationships, not \_\_\_\_\_.



- 1 Come every Sunday
- 2 Be part of a group
- 3 Serve on a team

**4. \_\_\_\_\_ Your Story (note Acts 9:20)**

Baptism is both a \_\_\_\_\_ declaration of our faith and a sermon without words (note **Romans 6:4-5**).  
 Baptism sets us on a course to be both inviters (*come and sit with me*) and \_\_\_\_\_ (*here's what Jesus did for me*).

**5. Keep Taking Next \_\_\_\_\_**

Note **Acts 9:21, 22** Baptism sets us on a course to taking next steps and growing \_\_\_\_\_ in our walk with Jesus. Note **Matthew 28:19**

**SO MY NEXT STEP IN PEOPLE-ING 101:**

- Baptism isn't an \_\_\_\_\_ extra for Jesus followers.

**Here are the 3 qualifications to engage in baptism:**

- You need to be a follower of Jesus.
- You need to have not been baptized as an adult believer in Christ already.
- You need to be at least 12 years old.

*(We do baptize children younger than 12 if they have parental support and have talked it through with our Riverside Kids (RK) leaders. RK also has a discipleship class called No Limits for children in 5<sup>th</sup> grade; they are given a chance to engage in baptism after completing this course.) Registration is open through Sept 1: **MYRC.CHURCH/NOLIMITS**.*

**Don't get baptized:**

- If you're not sure about following Jesus.
- If you're trying to impress others.

Take this important next step and be baptized at our summer baptism next Sunday, July 27<sup>th</sup>! Baptism coaches are available at the end of the service to help you begin to take this important next step of water baptism.



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**"TAKING NEXT STEPS WITH ONE ANOTHER"**  
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**1. What the New Testament Teaches About Water Baptism**

- A. Meaning of baptism = "Baptizo" = "to dip...to immerse"
  - *I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the work imports and the mystery signifies.* (Martin Luther)
  - *The word 'baptize' signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church.* (John Calvin)
  - *Buried with Him, alludes to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church.* (John Wesley)
- B. John the Baptist - his ministry shows us that baptism was not a new idea invented by Christians, or even by John the Baptist.
  - Baptism = always a symbolic act.
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  - It is an example to all His followers.
- D. Other New Testament Examples - baptism practiced very soon after commitment to Jesus Christ, so much so that often baptism and salvation are closely tied together:
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  - Acts 19, Ephesian disciples

Every example of baptism in the New Testament is believer's baptism (no examples of infant baptism). Note **Matthew 28:18-20**

Baptism is an outward sign and symbol of what has happened inwardly/ personally/and spiritually to a person when they say 'YES!' to Jesus as Lord. The act of baptism does not make anyone a Jesus follower... Paul - we can see that God used baptism to:

**2. Make His Faith Known**

For Saul/Paul to be baptized challenged his religious heritage and education, as well as his pride. Note **Acts 9:18**

**3. Connect with God's Family** (note **Acts 9:19b**)

Baptism was his invitation to also connect with Jesus' followers in Jerusalem (note **Acts 9:26-28**).

Spiritual growth happens in relationships, not isolation.



**4. Share Your Story** (note **Acts 9:20**)

Baptism is both a public declaration of our faith and a sermon without words (note **Romans 6:4-5**).

Baptism sets us on a course to be both inviters (*come and sit with me*) and witnesses (*here's what Jesus did for me*).

**5. Keep Taking Next Steps**

Note **Acts 9:21, 22** Baptism sets us on a course to taking next steps and growing stronger in our walk with Jesus. Note **Matthew 28:19**

**SO MY NEXT STEP IN PEOPLE-ING 101:**

- Baptism isn't an optional extra for Jesus followers.

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