



Diving into a New Life

RELATE

What encouragement or new insight did you receive from Sunday's message?

A wedding ceremony is the beginning of a marriage, a public first step in a lifetime commitment. There is an exchange of words and rings. What is the point of the spoken words? What do the tangible rings represent? What inner mind and heart decision is symbolized in these two actions? Why is this event shared with family and friends?

READ & REFLECT

Matthew 3: 13-15 Acts 2: 36-38, 41 Romans 6: 2b-5

Why did Jesus, who was without sin, go to John to be baptized? What was John's response? Why would John need to be baptized by Jesus? What did Jesus' baptism represent? What first step was this in the life of Jesus?

After hearing Peter speak, how did the people feel? Why? What question did they ask? What did they really want to know? What was Peter's answer? What two actions did he specify? What do these actions indicate? Why baptize in the name of Jesus? Who was baptized? What was Peter's message?

What does Paul mean when he says "we died to sin"? What does "baptized into Christ" mean? What does "baptized into His death" mean? How does baptism symbolize both burial and resurrection? How does physical baptism symbolize a spiritual dying and a new life? What is the new life? Looking back to Jesus' example of baptism, how does our following His example unite us to Him and to each other? Why should we walk in newness of life?

In the early church, when a person confessed faith in Christ, baptism was a public declaration of identification with Christ. An action affirming belief and acceptance of whom Christ is and a visible outward sign of repentance, rebirth, and a first step in becoming a follower of Christ and a dedication to living the new life that He offers. For what reasons is baptism just as relevant today?

How is baptism a beautiful gift from God and a powerful illustration? How would you explain baptism to someone who is unfamiliar with the concept?

RESPOND

Assess Is baptism your next step? Or, do you need to step back, return to your baptism, repent and recommit to your decision to dedicate your life to following Christ? Or do you need to remember the depth and meaning of your decision and what that means for you today?

Memorize So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. Galatians 3: 26-27