

## Message Notes

### Starting Point Part 7: Identity

Titus 3:3-7

→ identity lost

#### #1 **Who** you are affects **how** you are.

→ the past isn't pretty - **vs. 3**

→ unlovable

→ it doesn't make sense - **vs. 4-5a**

#### #2 **We are saved because of mercy.**

→ washing of rebirth - **vs. 5b-6**

→ a new identity - **vs. 7**

#### #3 **Baptism connects** us to Jesus' saving work.

→ initials

#### #4 **Baptism declares who** you and **whose** you are.

→ in times of doubt

→ in times of distraction



**Growth Groups.** Growth Groups are a core ministry at Bethlehem. The message notes and questions on the back are used as the basis for our Group discussions.

## Group Questions

### Starting Point Part 7: Identity

Titus 3:3-7

1. As you think about your life, where have you found your identity? (The answer may change depending on the season of life you were in.)

What was the positive and negative of that identity?

2. **Read Titus 3:3-5a.** God saved us not because we were loveable. He saved us because of mercy. (Love that doesn't make sense.) Have you ever been the recipient of mercy from someone other than God? Share your example. How did that make you feel? How did you respond?

How is that response the same or different from how you respond to Jesus' mercy and love? If different, why is that?

3. Some churches teach that baptism is only an external sign for a person who has already been a Christian. Have you ever had a conversation with someone about that? Explain.

Use the following passages and note what each says about the power of baptism. **Titus 3:5b-7, 1 Peter 3:20-21, Romans 6:3-4, Acts 22:14-16.**

4. If you know it, share your baptismal story with the group.
5. Martin Luther said, "There is on earth no greater comfort than baptism" and admitted that when he was anxious or stressed, he would say to himself, "I am baptized! I am baptized!" Why do you think Luther would say these things?
6. Does this mean that once you're baptized you can never fall out of faith?
7. Do you do anything special to celebrate the baptismal anniversary of your children or grandchildren? If so, share with the group. If not, what could you do to celebrate this day of rebirth?