GROUP GUIDE

Highlands Fellowship

BELIEVER’s Baptism

Matthew 3:13 - 17; matthew 28:19 – 20; Romans 6:1 - 11

8/30/2020

**Main Point**

Once we have chosen to become Followers of Jesus, we are to let the world know there has been a change in our life, that we’ve changed our direction. The way to share this with our friends, family and neighbors is through biblical baptism.

**Introduction**

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What is the biggest change you’ve experienced in life?

Was it a good change or a bad change?

When you became a Jesus-follower, how did your life change?

Our lives change significantly when we begin to follow Jesus, even though it may feel like it takes time before we see a change in ourselves. Baptism is a picture of Jesus’ death on the cross, burial and resurrection that mimics what happens to us in baptism, we are buried in our sin and raise to new life.

**Understanding**

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

ask someone to read Matthew 3:13 - 17.

Verse 14 records John’s reaction to being asked to baptize Jesus. Does his reaction surprise you? How do you think you would have reacted if you were in John’s shoes?

Why was Jesus baptized, even though He did not need to repent of His sins?

What do we learn about Jesus in verse 17? What do we learn about God the Father?

In your own words, how would you describe the importance of Jesus being both fully God and fully man? In what ways is Jesus a bridge between God and us?

‘This is my beloved Son’ underscores the source of unity among the three Persons of the Trinity. That Jesus is, in fact, the Son underscores His identity as the Messiah. “I take delight in Him” is a tender expression of the Father who is deeply pleased in the obedience of the Son who has taken fully the form of a man.

ask someone to read Matthew 28:19 - 20

Why do you think Jesus commanded baptism when He sent out His disciples?

How does baptism signify that we have placed our faith in Jesus? How does participation in baptism show obedience to Jesus?

Jesus commanded baptism as a sign of our new life, our decision to turn and go another way. In Romans 6, Paul further explains the relationship between baptism and our faith in Christ.

ask someone to read Romans 6:1 - 11.

How would you define God’s grace?

What kinds of changes would you expect to see in someone’s life once he experiences God’s grace through salvation?

Paul stated that once we choose to follow Jesus, sin no longer has the primary influence in our lives. Baptism is a symbol of that great change that has happened in someone’s life.

Why do you think baptism is a good picture of being dead to sin and being made alive in Christ?

For the Believer, a mysterious but undeniable new relationship begins at the moment of confession. Baptism serves as an illustration of death to an old way of life and resurrection to a new life. Baptism is not salvation – it is the way to let others know you’ve changed directions in your life. Baptism shows that we now identify with Jesus.

**Application**

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture apply directly to their lives.

What are some of the excuses you have used, or have heard others use, for not following Jesus in believer’s baptism? How can you provide guidance in answering their concerns?

What encouragement or support would you like to receive from the church when you declare your faith through baptism? How can your Circle support you this week?

**Prayer**

Lord, we thank you for Jesus’ example of biblical baptism at the beginning of His public ministry. We ask that you provide understanding of the picture of baptism and give courage to those in our midst that needs to take their next step, whether that begins with salvation, going public through baptism or begin to serve others through a Host Team or Circle Leader. Amen.