

Baptism: Going Public with Your Faith – Acts 2:41

Message Discussion Guide

Connect

- What have been some of the most significant ceremonies you have ever been a part of?

Discover

- Which statement or experience stood out to you from the worship service?
- Read Acts 8:36-38, Acts 9:18, Acts 16:33.
 - What are some things each of these baptisms had in common?
 - These baptisms (and all New Testament baptisms) seemed to have a great deal of urgency. Why do you think many people who profess Christ delay baptism or fail to be baptized altogether?
 - What would you say to someone who hesitates to be baptized? How would you persuade him or her?
- Read Matthew 3:11-17.
 - Why do you think John was reluctant to baptize Jesus?
 - Why was Jesus baptized? What does his example say to people today?
 - After reading this passage, especially what happened right after Jesus' baptism, how important do you think baptism is to the Father?
- Read Matthew 3:16, Acts 8:38-39, Romans 6:3, Psalm 51:7.
 - Describe what actually happened, physically, during these two baptisms. Were those being baptized immersed into the water?
 - What could the going back into the water symbolize (Romans 6:3)?
 - What could the water in baptism symbolize (Psalm 51:7)?
- Read Romans 1:16, Matthew 10:32-33, Acts 19:8.
 - What are some ways Christians are ashamed of being identified with Christ?
 - How can Christians daily acknowledge or confess Christ before others (Matthew 10:32)?
 - Paul went to the most difficult possible place to speak about Christ and he spoke boldly (Acts 19:8). How can you speak more boldly for Christ this week?

Respond

- How would you explain the importance of baptism to an eight-year-old child? How would you communicate the value of baptism and at the same time that it is not a prerequisite for salvation?
- Why do you think baptism is so important to the Father? Why should baptism be a part of membership in a local church?

Bonus for Thinkers

- Much of the controversy about baptism amongst Christians has theological roots in its connection with the Jewish practice of circumcision. How do you think baptism is similar and different from circumcision in its meaning and application?

First Baptist Nacogdoches Bible Reading Plan

Day	Scripture
Monday (10/7)	Nehemiah 13:1-31
Tuesday (10/8)	John 4:46-5:18
Wednesday (10/9)	John 5:19-47
Thursday (10/10)	John 6:1-21
Friday (10/11)	John 6:22-34

Daily Devotion Questions

Monday (10/7) — Nehemiah 13:1-31

- Review the “Respond” questions on the reverse side of this devotion guide.

Tuesday (10/8) — John 4:46 — 5:18

- In 4:49-50 we see that the father immediately believed Jesus even before he knew whether or not his son was healed. Are there some promises of God you have difficulty believing before you see them? Write them down and ask the Lord to increase your faith and your confidence in him.
- John 4:53 is an example of something seen often in Scripture, one person’s belief affecting a whole family: Cornelius (Acts 10:44-48); Lydia (Acts 16:15); Philippian jailer (Acts 16:31-34); Crispus (Acts 18:8); and Stephanus (1 Cor 1:16). What are one or two specific ways you can show your faith in God to your family so that it might have an impact?
- Jesus gives a stern warning to the healed man in 5:14, “Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you.” While the Bible makes clear that all illness and hardship do not come as a result of personal sin, it also teaches that some sicknesses are directly related to deliberate disobedience. If Jesus spoke this warning to you right now, what sin or weakness in your life would immediately come to mind? Talk to the Lord about that.

Wednesday (10/9) — John 5:19-47

- In 5:30, Jesus says that he seeks not his own will but the will of the Father. How about you? Write down what you believe are the Lord’s top priorities in your life and workplace right now. Are these priorities the same as yours?
- Jesus accuses his listeners in 5:44 of seeking the favor and approval of others more than the favor and approval of God. What bothers you more? Are you bothered more when other people are disappointed in you, or are you bothered more when God is disappointed you? Write down one way your behavior would change if God’s approval was most important.

Thursday (10/10) — John 6:1-21

- In 6:6, the Bible tells us that Jesus’ question about where they were going to get enough bread was a test for the disciples. He was testing them to see if their minds would start looking for desperate measures to find enough bread or if they would simply ask the Lord for the bread. Often, the Lord gives us this same kind of test. Are there some things you are desperately trying to obtain that the Lord wants you to just to ask him and wait? Write one or two, and turn these over to the Lord.
- In 6:9 we see that a boy gives everything he has, five loaves and two fish. It wasn’t much, but it was enough for Jesus to easily feed the thousands. The principle is that there is no limit to what God can do if we will give him our all. The problem though is that often we are holding back. What more does God want you to give to him? More time? Energy? Control of a certain situation?
- Jesus gave the crowd an incredible blessing as he multiplied the bread and fish to feed them. Think back to a time when the Lord has multiplied blessings to you. Write down a word or two about one of those times. Spend a couple minutes thanking him for that.

Friday (10/11) — John 6:22-34

- In 6:26, Jesus accuses the crowd of following him not because of who is he, the Son of God, but because of the benefits he had given them. Certainly, there are benefits to following Christ, but our primary motivation for following should be who he is not what he does for us. Write one additional sentence praising God for who he is. Be careful that this sentence is not about what he has done (that is thanksgiving). Then read your sentence to the Lord as an expression of your praise.
- A summary of the first half of 6:27 might read like this: “Don’t wear yourself out for the things that won’t matter once we die, but rather work for things that make an eternal difference.” Write down one or two things you could do today that have the potential to make an eternal difference.
- In 6:32, Jesus corrects the thinking of the crowd. They claimed that Moses had given their fathers manna. Jesus said, “No. It was God who have them manna.” It is easy to be thankful toward the wrong person. Think about someone who has been really good to you or for you. Write that person’s name down. Spend a minute thanking God for working through that person.