



SALVATON

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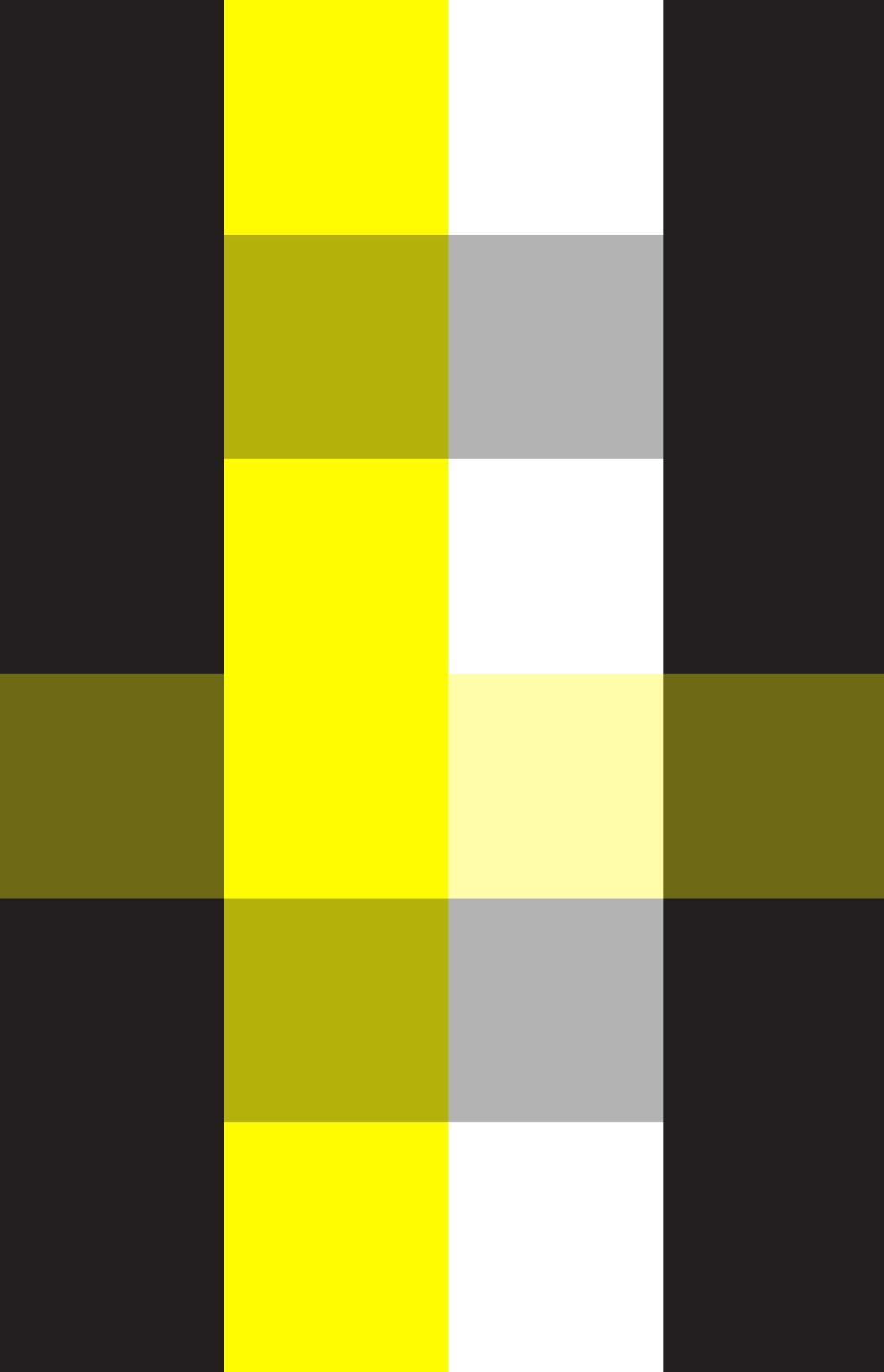
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L.I.F.E. JOURNALING METHOD

The Bible journaling method called LIFE Starter was developed to create an easy, yet effective way for people to study the Bible, remember what they read and allow their hearts to get ignited for Jesus Christ.

L.I.F.E. stands for Listen, Investigate, Focus and Engage.

L=Listen

In your journal, write the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, listen to the Holy Spirit and focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal. Writing helps you remember the verses.

I=Investigate

Next, you investigate the context around the Scripture reading. To whom was this written? Why? How does this passage fit with what comes before and after it? What is the Holy Spirit communicating through this text? Feel free to use Bible study tools for commentary: Bible Study Tools, or Easy English Bible.

F=Focus

The next step is focusing on the text to make it applicable for your own life. What does the text mean today? What is God saying to you personally through this passage? How can you apply what you've read? Write out a couple sentences detailing what God is saying to you through the text.

E=Engage

The final step in the journaling process is engaging God. This can either be a short prayer or an action that you can take that day after reading the text. Is there a command to follow in the text? How are you different because of what you've learned?

The beautiful thing about this journaling method is that it is short and only takes a few minutes, and it can be done every time you read or study a passage.

SESSION 1

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

Session #1 Teaching: What is a Christian?

A Christian is someone who believes in Jesus Christ and follows his teachings. The Bible says 'If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation. The old has gone, the new has come.' This means that when we become a Christian we may look the same on the outside, but something has forever changed on the inside. There are various metaphors to describe it – we have 'switched citizenship', 'come under new ownership', or 'been born again'. Christians believe that God sends his Holy Spirit to live within everyone at that moment.

The word 'Christian' was not used during Jesus' lifetime. The first people to follow Jesus were Jewish. Jesus, who was also a Jew, lived in a Jewish territory close to the Sea of Galilee. He recruited 12 local men to be his closest followers (or disciples) when he began teaching in around 27AD. Many others followed Him too. As he traveled and taught, people from other religious backgrounds and ethnicities also heard and believed Him, including Samaritans and Romans. After Jesus' death and resurrection Christians were known as 'believers' or followers of 'The Way.' The first time believers were called Christians was at Antioch in what is now northern Syria within around 20 years of Jesus' death. They were a mixture of Jews and non-Jews and spoke different languages. What they had in common was their **faith in Jesus Christ**. We as Christians believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that he lived as a man on Earth about 2,000 years ago. But Jesus is himself divine: He is one person of a three-person God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Christians believe the accounts in the Bible which say Jesus was miraculously conceived and lived for about 30 years before beginning three years of traveling around the Middle East, teaching about God and healing sick people. Christianity teaches that Jesus was betrayed, tried and convicted on false charges and executed by crucifixion. He rose from the dead and reappeared to hundreds of people. He then ascended to heaven to be with God. In the future, there will be a time of judgement. After that those who have put their trust and faith in Jesus, will be with him in eternity.

The Bible teaches that the sign and marker of a new life in Christ is baptism (see session 4). In becoming a Christian, a person has changed the direction of their life. Instead of following their own desires and ambitions, they have said 'sorry' to God for all the wrong they have said and done and have committed themselves to go in a new direction, following Jesus

and putting their trust in him. The Bible book, Romans, refers to that new lifestyle, 'you... are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit if the Spirit of God lives in you'. Christianity teaches that this repentance and new faith restores a person's relationship with God because God is willing to forgive and give each person a fresh start. It is his gift. It is like they have had a supernatural shower and been washed completely clean. As a result, they have a relationship with God which will continue forever.

More than two billion people across the world describe themselves as Christians. The Christian faith crosses all boundaries of culture, ethnicity, class and nationality. There are Christians in every corner of the world, even in countries where it is dangerous to admit that you are a Christian because of the threat of religious persecution. Most can meet other Christians openly but some must do so in secret. People express their Christian faith in different ways which is why there are so many different denominations or styles of church. But the core beliefs are the same. The Bible book 1 Peter speaks of the Church now not as a building or a tradition but being made from 'living stones' – the Christian Church is its people. The same book also describes Christians as, 'a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation belonging to God...Once you were not a people but now you are the people of God'. Being part of a church is an important part of life for a Christian. It is an opportunity to meet other believers and pray together and to praise and thank God. It is also a place where Christians grow in their knowledge and understanding of God and his love for humanity. But just going to church does not make anyone a Christian – anymore than being in France means you are French.

Discuss or Ponder and Review Scripture:

What is the Gospel?

- The Gospel is the good news that God loves the world and offers salvation from sin through his Son, Jesus Christ. (Psalm 103:1–13; Isaiah 53:4–5; John 3:16–17; 1 Corinthians 15:1–5)

How does sin affect you?

- Sin alienates me from God, my neighbor, God's good creation, and myself. Apart from Christ, I am hopeless, guilty, lost, helpless, and walking in the way of death. (Genesis 3:14–19; Psalm 38; Isaiah 53:6; 59:1–2; Romans 6:20–23)

Can you save yourself from the way of sin and death?

- No. I have no power to save myself, for sin has corrupted my conscience, confused my mind, and captured my will. Only God can save me. (Psalm 33:13–19; Isaiah 43:8–13; John 3:1–8)

DEVO DAY 1

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:1–5

Journal about what Jesus did for YOU

L=Listen in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal.

I = Investigate the context around today's Scripture reading. To whom was this written? Why? How does this passage fit with what comes before and after it? What is the Holy Spirit communicating through this text? Feel free to use Bible study tools for commentary: Bible Study Tools, or Easy English Bible.

F=Focus to the text to make it applicable for your own life. What is God saying to you personally through this passage? How can you apply what you've read?

E = Engage God. This can either be a short prayer or an action that you can take that day after reading the text. Is there a command to follow in the text? How are you different because of what you've learned?

DEVO DAY 2

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

Read Psalm 38

Journal about how sin affects YOU.

L=Listen in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal.

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DEVO DAY 3

What is a Christian?

Read Ephesians 2:1–9

Journal about why we need Jesus to save us!

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DEVO DAY 4

What is a Christian?

Read Philippians 2:5–11

Journal about what you've learned about Jesus.

L=Listen in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal.

I = Investigate the context around today's Scripture reading. To whom was this written? Why? How does this passage fit with what comes before and after it? What is the Holy Spirit communicating through this text? Feel free to use Bible study tools for commentary: [Bible Study Tools](#), or [Easy English Bible](#).

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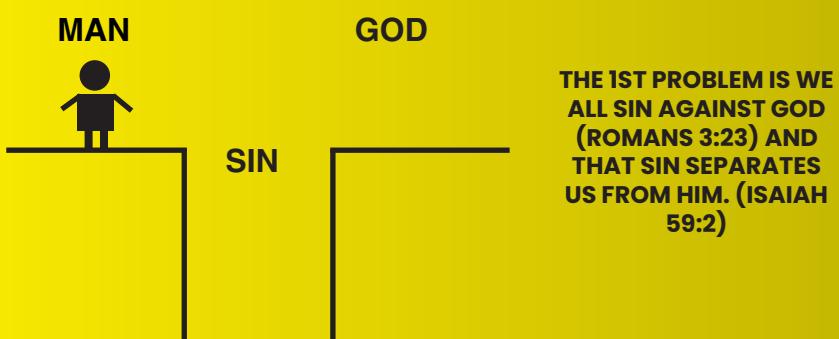
E = Engage God. This can either be a short prayer or an action that you can take that day after reading the text. Is there a command to follow in the text? How are you different because of what you've learned?

SESSION 2

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

Session #2 Teaching: God's Plan for Salvation

1 John 5:11-12 And this is the testimony: "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. The one who has the Son has this eternal life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have this eternal life." This passage tells us that God has given us eternal life and this life is in His Son, Jesus Christ. In other words, the way to possess eternal life is to possess God's Son. Our problem is that we are separated from God as explained in Isaiah 59:2, "But your sinful acts have alienated you from your God; your sins have caused him to reject you and not listen to your prayers." But, according to Romans 5:8, God demonstrated His love for us through the death of His Son. Why did Christ have to die for us? Because Scripture declares all men to be sinful. To "sin" means to miss the mark. The Bible declares "all have sinned and fall short of the glory (the perfect holiness) of God" (Rom. 3:23). In other words, our sin separates us from God who is perfect holiness (righteousness and justice) and God must therefore judge sinful man. (See diagram below:)



Scripture also teaches that no amount of human goodness, human works, human morality, or religious activity can gain acceptance with God or get anyone into heaven. The moral man, the religious man, and the immoral and non-religious are all in the same boat. They all fall short of God's perfect righteousness. After discussing the immoral man, the moral man, and the religious man in Romans 1:18-3:8, the Apostle Paul declares that both Jews and Greeks are under sin, that "there is no one righteous, not even one" (Rom. 3:9-10). No amount of human goodness is as good as God.

God is perfect righteousness. Because of this, Habakkuk 1:13 tells us God cannot have fellowship with anyone who does not have perfect righteousness. In order to be accepted by God, we must be as good as God is. Before God, we all stand naked, helpless, and hopeless in ourselves. No amount of good living will get us to heaven or give us eternal life. What then is the solution?

God is not only perfect holiness (whose holy character we can never attain to on our own or by our works of righteousness) but He is also perfect love and full of grace and mercy. Because of His love and grace, He has not left us without hope and a solution. This is the good news of the Bible, the message of the gospel. It's the message of the gift of God's own Son who became man (the God-man), lived a sinless life, died on the cross for our sin, and was raised from the grave proving both the fact He is God's Son and the value of His death for us as our substitute.

Discuss or Ponder and Review Scripture:

- **Have you thought if you were good enough you would go to heaven?**
After hearing today's teaching, what are your thoughts?

- **Do you see the gap between you and God?**

- **How does God save you?**

God forgives my sins and reconciles me to himself through his Son, Jesus Christ, whom he has given to the world as an undeserved gift of love. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16; see also Psalm 34; Zechariah 12:10–13:2; Romans 3:23–26)

- **Why does God save you?**

Because he loves me, God saves me from sin and judgment, so that I may love and serve him for his glory. (Psalm 98; Isaiah 42:5–9; John 3:17; Romans 5:8–10; 2 Corinthians 5:18–21; Ephesians 1:3–14)

- **What does it mean for you to repent?**

To repent means that I have a change of heart, turning from sinfully serving myself to serving God as I follow Jesus Christ. I need God's help to make this change. (Psalm 51:16–17; Isaiah 57:15–19; Acts 3:19–21; 1 John 2:1–2)

- **How can you repent and put your faith in Jesus Christ?**

With God's help, I can acknowledge I need God to save me from my sins, receive the gift....He freely gives me, and then ask His help in turning from my sins. (Psalm 86:1–7; Joel 2:32; Acts 16:30–34; Romans 10:11–13; Hebrews 12:1–2)

- **Why did Jesus Christ have to die for YOU?**

- **Do you believe that God sent His own Son for us**

DEVO DAY 1

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

Read Romans 3:21–31

Journal about how our sin separates us from God who is perfect holiness.

L=Listen in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal.

I = Investigate the context around today's Scripture reading. To whom was this written? Why? How does this passage fit with what comes before and after it? What is the Holy Spirit communicating through this text? Feel free to use Bible study tools for commentary: [Bible Study Tools](#), or [Easy English Bible](#).

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E = Engage God. This can either be a short prayer or an action that you can take that day after reading the text. Is there a command to follow in the text? How are you different because of what you've learned?

DEVO DAY 2

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

Read Romans 1:18–32

Journal about how Scripture teaches that **no amount** of human goodness, human works, human morality, or religious activity can gain acceptance with God or get anyone into heaven.

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Read Romans 3:9-20

Journal about how the moral man, the religious man, and the immoral and non-religious are all in the same boat. They all fall short of God's perfect righteousness!

L=Listen in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal.

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DEVO DAY 4

God's Plan of Salvation

Read Habakkuk 1

God is perfect righteousness. Because of this, Habakkuk tells us God cannot have fellowship with anyone who does not have perfect righteousness.

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SESSION 3

SALVATION THRU CHRIST

Session #3 Teaching: Salvation ONLY Thru Jesus Christ

As discussed in Session #2, Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Yet God loves you and wants to save you from sin, to offer you a new life of hope. John 10:10 says, "I have come that they may have life and have it in abundance." To give you this gift of salvation, God made a way through His Son, Jesus Christ. Romans 5:8 says, "But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." You receive this gift by faith alone. Ephesians 2:8 says, "For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—not from works, so that no one can boast."

How Do We Receive God's Son?

Because of what Jesus Christ accomplished for us on the cross, the Bible states "He that has the Son has life." We can receive the Son, Jesus Christ, as our Savior by personal faith, by trusting in the person of Christ and His death for our sins. John 1:12 says "But to all who have received him--those who believe in his name--he has given the right to become God's children" and John 3:16-18 is a famous passage that states, "For this is the way God loved the world: he gave his one and only Son that everyone who believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world should be saved through him. 18 The one who believes in Him is not condemned. The one who does not believe has been condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the one and only Son of God." This means we must each come to God the same way: (1) as a sinner who recognizes his sinfulness, (2) realizes no human works can result in salvation, and (3) relies totally on Christ alone by faith alone for our salvation.



Faith is a decision of your heart demonstrated by the actions of your life. Romans 10:9 says, "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." If you trust that Jesus died for your sins and to receive new life through Him, pray a prayer similar to this to express your repentance and faith in Him:

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died to forgive me of my sins. I now accept Your offer of eternal life. Thank You for forgiving me of all my sin. Thank You for my new life. From this day forward, I will choose to follow You."

If you have trusted Jesus for salvation, share your decision with us here at Purcellville Baptist Church at churchoffice@purbap.org. We hope you will join us to start your journey and take your next steps, so you can worship and grow in your faith. Following Christ's example, ask to be baptized by immersion as a public expression of your faith.

To learn more about baptism review Session #4.

Discuss or Ponder and Review Scripture:

•What must we do to be saved?

It's important to keep in mind that salvation encompasses what God has done for us, not what we can do for Him. God has taken the initiative in His plan of redemption, reaching out to us through Christ. Hence, the answer regarding the question of salvation as given by Paul and Silas is, "Believe in the Lord Jesus ..." (Acts 16:31 NIV). The Greek word translated "believe" in the passage is pisteuo, meaning "to believe, put one's faith in, trust, with an implication that actions based on that trust may follow." Belief, then, encompasses more than just knowing about Jesus. One must also act on this knowledge, combining faith and trust and acting on it.

•Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus is the eternal Son of God, the Savior of the world. Fully divine, he took on our human nature, died on the Cross for our sins, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and now rules as Lord and King over all creation. (Numbers 21:4–9; Psalm 110; John 3:13–15; Philippians 2:5–11; Colossians 1:15–20)

•Is there any other way of salvation?

No. The apostle Peter said of Jesus, "There is salvation in no one else" (Acts 4:12). Since Jesus is God, He is the only one who can save me and reconcile me to God. (Psalm 2; Isaiah 42:1–4; John 14:5–6; 1 Timothy 2:5–6)

•By what means will God transform you into the image of Jesus Christ?

The first Christians “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42).

Following this pattern, I will be transformed within the life of the Church through reading Scripture and receiving the sacraments, through worship and prayer, and through fellowship with God’s people and loving witness to the world. (Deuteronomy 6:1–9; 2 Chronicles 7:1–3; Psalm 1; Acts 2:42–47; Hebrews 10:23–25)

Read John 10:1-21

God loves you and wants to save you from sin, to offer you a new life of hope. Focus on John 10:10.

L=Listen in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal.

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Read Romans 5:1-11

To give you this gift of salvation, God made a way through His Son, Jesus Christ.

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Re-Read John 3:1-21

We must each come to God the same way: (1) as a sinner who recognizes his sinfulness, (2) realizes no human works can result in salvation, and (3) relies totally on Christ alone by faith alone for our salvation.

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Read Romans 10

Faith is a decision of your heart demonstrated by the actions of your life.

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SESSION 4

NEXT STEP: BAPTISM

Session #4 Teaching: Next Step...Baptism

When we enter the waters of baptism, we're proclaiming that Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and lives again. By joining in baptism, we're identifying ourselves with Him. **Romans 6:4** says we have been buried with Him through baptism into death. We're now dead to the power of sin. Being raised up out of the water expresses our new life in Jesus Christ and our union with Him. If the meaning of baptism could be boiled down to one word, that word would be **identification**. Baptism speaks primarily of a personal, public identification with Jesus Christ.

How important is your baptism? It is your personal identification with the greatest act of human history—the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Baptism doesn't save you—salvation comes by faith alone (**Ephesians 2:8-9**). Your guilt before God is removed the moment you trust in Christ. But baptism is your personal testimony to, and the inward assurance of, your passage from the old life to the new life...

How Baptism Relates to Salvation in Christ:

- 1. It means we have turned from the old life of sin to a new life in Jesus Christ.**
- 2. It means we are publicly identifying with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.**
- 3. It means we are openly joining the ranks of those who believe in Christ.**

When you are baptized, you are in fact visually preaching the gospel. As you stand in the water waiting to be baptized, A, you symbolize Jesus dying on the cross. As you are lowered into the water, B, you symbolize Jesus buried in the tomb. As you are raised from the water, C, you symbolize Jesus rising from the dead. The water of baptism is a symbol of the spiritual cleaning that Jesus offers us (1 Peter 3:21)!

And since you personally are being baptized, you are also saying, "I died with Jesus Christ, I was buried with him and now I am raised with Christ to brand-new life."

In short, in your baptism you are preaching a sermon without using any words at all. And your sermon in your baptism will be more effective with your friends than any sermon the pastor preaches on Sunday morning—more effective because it comes directly from you. Baptism is like a wedding ring. We put on a wedding ring as a symbol of our commitment and devotion. In the same way, baptism is a picture of devotion and commitment to Christ. A wedding ring reminds us and tells others that we belong to someone special. In the same way, baptism reminds us and others that we are devoted to Christ and belong to Him.

Many think, since they were “sprinkled” in Baptism as a child, that there is NO need to be baptized as an adult. There IS a difference. Infant baptism arose from the teachings of some early second and third-century church fathers that baptism washed away sin. In their teaching, this meant that if you died without being baptized then you died with your sins unforgiven and thus went to Hell (or purgatory as that concept developed over time). With the high infant mortality rate in the early centuries, the concept of baptizing babies as soon as possible came into vogue. Since it is not necessarily good to push baby heads underwater, the idea of sprinkling took hold. Again, the word baptism does not mean “sprinkle or “pour.” The Greek word “baptidzo” literally means to “dip” or to “immerse!”

We baptize after salvation because that follows every example we have and since baptism pictures how we've been saved, it needs to be after that has happened in our lives. So, in order to take YOUR next steps in your relationship with Jesus Christ, it's important to take the symbolic step of baptism.

Discuss or Ponder and Review Scripture:

•Why is baptism important?

Baptism is important because Christ commanded it as a part of the Great Commission: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit” ([Matt. 28:19](#)). If we neglect baptism, we're disobeying our Lord. Since true faith always expresses itself in obedience, those who have believed in Christ and have been properly instructed about baptism will obey Christ by being baptized.

•Baptism is the place where a believer publicly confesses Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and identifies with Christ and His church. In talking of our need to follow Him, Jesus said, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.... For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels” ([Mark 8:34, 38](#)). Baptism is the initial way of confessing Christ publicly.

•What is the meaning of baptism?

The word “baptism” is simply a transliteration of the Greek word, baptisma, and some related words which have the meaning of dipping or immersing. Since the object dipped or immersed became totally identified with the substance in which it was placed, the idea of identification is central to the meaning of baptism. Jesus’ baptism by John publicly identified Him who was sinless with sinners in anticipation of His death and resurrection as their sin-bearer. In that sense, He referred to His own impending death as a “baptism” which He had to undergo ([Mark 10:38–39; Luke 12:50](#)). For us baptism symbolizes our identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection; our identification with Christ’s church; and, our cleansing from sin.

• Is baptism necessary for salvation?

The overwhelming testimony of Scripture is that salvation is by grace through faith alone (Eph. 2:8–9). Both Romans and Galatians deal extensively with the theme that we are justified (declared righteous by God) through faith in Jesus Christ, not by any works of righteousness. Many Scriptures affirm what Jesus stated, “... he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life” (John 5:24). He told the dying thief on the cross, who called out to Him in faith, that he would be with Him that very day in Paradise (Luke 23:39–43). Obviously, the man was not baptized.

•At the same time, Scripture is clear that genuine saving faith results in obedience (Eph. 2:10; 2 Thess. 1:8, “obey the gospel”). Thus every true believer who is properly taught and who has opportunity will be baptized in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. But baptism is the result of salvation, not the means to it.

Scriptures on Baptism

1 Peter 3:21 – “and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ..”

Colossians 2:12 – “having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.”

Ephesians 4:4–6 – “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”

Acts 22:16 – “And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.”

Read & Journal About 1 Peter 3:8-23

L=Listen in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal.

I = Investigate the context around today's Scripture reading. To whom was this written? Why? How does this passage fit with what comes before and after it? What is the Holy Spirit communicating through this text? Feel free to use Bible study tools for commentary: [Bible Study Tools](#), or [Easy English Bible](#).

F=Focus to the text to make it applicable for your own life. What is God saying to you personally through this passage? How can you apply what you've read?

E = Engage God. This can either be a short prayer or an action that you can take that day after reading the text. Is there a command to follow in the text? How are you different because of what you've learned?

S.4

DEVO DAY 2

NEXT STEP: BAPTISM

Read & Journal About Colossians 2:6-15

L=Listen in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal.

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Read & Journal About Ephesians 4:1-16

L=Listen in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal.

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Read & Journal About Acts 22:1-21

L=Listen in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal.

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