

## **Getting to Know Jesus-** Adult Bible Discovery Guide- April 5, 2020

Welcome to Adult Bible Study this morning. Today we will continue looking at the wonderful gift of Baptism. This study has been crafted for you to do individually or in a small group with your family. You may need an Internet connection to do this study.

If you did not participate in the last few weeks, you can find the lessons on the Bethany website under Sunday Worship Resources: ([www.bethanylutheran.org](http://www.bethanylutheran.org))

Before you begin this study make sure you have watched the video from two weeks ago:  
<https://vimeo.com/83721195>

Over the last two weeks we took a look at the sacrament of Baptism. Questions and ideas we pondered so far have included:

- How can baptism save me? I thought Jesus does the saving?**
- Who is doing the work or action in baptism—the individual or God?**
- Why is baptism not just water only?**
- Why is baptism not just Word only, do I really have to get wet?**
- Is there only one special way to get baptized?**
- If Baptism is so important, why is it not mentioned in the Old Testament?**
- Why do most Christians baptize infants?**
- Don't children have to be old enough to believe?**

If you have questions regarding these topics, please go back to the last two studies or send pastor Seth an email ([smoorman@bethanylutheran.org](mailto:smoorman@bethanylutheran.org))

Today we continue with our look at Baptism.

**Opening Prayer:** *Gracious Father, thank You for the gift of Baptism, which Your Son has established by His Word and promise. Teach us to treasure all that Jesus has done for us in His cross and resurrection. Give us confidence that through our Baptism we bear Your holy name and so are Your holy children for time and eternity. We pray this through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

### **If I was baptized as a baby, do I need to be re-baptized as an adult?**

No! You have been given your name at birth, and it remains with you the rest of your life, right? Well, so does the promise of God upon you at your Baptism; it is with you forever!

- *Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you. (Deuteronomy 31:6)*
- *There is one body and one Spirit. In the same way you were called to share one hope. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over everything, through everything, and in everything. (Ephesians 4:4-6)*

### **Can I be saved without Baptism?**

A famous Church Father of the early Christian church, St. Augustine, once said, "It is not the absence of Baptism that condemns us, but the absence of faith." God makes it clear to us that He wants us to be baptized and to baptize. To argue otherwise would be rejecting God's loving and gracious will for us.

- *So faith comes from hearing the message, and the message that is heard is what Christ spoke. (Romans 10:17)*

- *Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.* (Mark 16:16)

Notice what these passages say and don't say. Remember we need to take God's Word for what it is and not make them say something when they don't. The means of grace come to us in many ways, primarily this is through the Word (written and proclaimed), and through the sacraments (Baptism and Communion). Each time the means of grace are provided, all of Christ comes along, nothing is held back. We do not need to collect all the means to add up to salvation.

Jesus reminded the disciples that it a lack of faith that is the reason for condemnation, not a lack of baptism. (Remember that when you see the word "believe" in the New Testament it is the same word we translate as "faith". This is not an act we do, but faith is given to us, but that is another whole Bible study.)

In the case of babies or young children we usually baptize first, then teach the faith when they are old enough to understand. In the case of older children and adults, we teach the faith first, then baptize. This is because the Holy Spirit creates saving faith through the Word of God **AND** through Baptism. This is not a scriptural teaching but is how the church has, in good order operated for many centuries.

**Digging Deeper:** If you want to get more information about this, listen to the this discussion titled, "Will an unbaptized Believer go To Heaven?"

<https://media.lhm.org/lutheranhour/mp3s/QA7412PD.mp3>

It discusses the role of role of faith in salvation and the blessing of Baptism.

### **Is Baptism a "get-into-heaven-free card"?**

Baptism truly brings us Jesus' salvation because of the faith the Holy Spirit creates in us through water and the Word. It is this faith in Jesus Christ that makes us right in God's eyes. If a baptized person rejects the faith and never returns to Jesus Christ, his baptism will not save him.

But while this life continues, God still holds out His offer of salvation through our Baptism—no matter how long ago we were baptized. When God brings us to repentance through His Law and restores our faith in Jesus through the Gospel, our Baptism again joins us to Christ's death and resurrection. Our sins are removed, and we are God's children anew.

### **What is the significance of Baptism in our daily life?**

Thinking about Baptism reminds us that every day our old, sinful nature, with its evil actions and desires, should be drowned by our repentance. Through God's forgiveness and Baptism, we are daily washed clean and can live new lives of goodness and holiness.

- *Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by Baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.* (Romans 6:3-4)

The name of the game in Baptism is *assurance*! We can be assured we are saved by God because He says so by the power of His Word!

### **Things to think about:**

1. Theologians have said, "Baptism is necessary, but not absolutely necessary." After going through this lesson, how do you respond to this statement?
2. If Jesus gives us everything we need in his Word, why might someone NOT want to be baptized? What would you say to them in response to this?
3. What are some objections you have heard about how the Lutheran church expresses the sacrament of Baptism? What would you say in response to these objections?