

CHAPTER 6

BAPTISM: IDENTIFYING WITH JESUS

Refer to **pg 69** in the workbook

Summary

Baptism is seen as a sacrament whereby the Christian is identified with Jesus Christ in his death and his resurrection. There is thus a putting away and a putting on. The questions - how is baptism done, who gets baptized, and what is the condition for baptism - are answered.

The practical portion is an exercise of renunciation for past involvement in activities and behavior that is against the teachings of Jesus.

To get ready

1. Extra Bibles, pens and pencils
2. Photocopies of situation slips on page 11
3. Photocopies of spiritual check up inventory on pages 12 and 13
4. Photocopies of prayer of renunciation, prayer of victory and commitment on page 14
5. Memory verse Romans 6:4

Teacher's Guide

Let the learners think about what they will like to leave behind and what they would want to have if they can have a new life and identity. Encourage them to give 'fun' items and not take this too seriously. Suggest answers like 'my crooked teeth' or 'astigmatism'. For the inbox we could have such items like 'brains' or 'a different sister'.

Share what they have written with each other and have a good laugh together.

Refer to **pg 70** in the workbook

1. Now we come to the more serious part.

Let the learners look up Romans 6:3, 4 and fill in the blanks on their own.

The answers are in order

death
buried
baptism
raised
life

Ask questions like

Who died together with Jesus?

What happens to us when Christ was raised from the dead?

2. Give some time for the learners to unscramble the words and list them down.

In Christ we left behind

Sinful nature
Bondage to rules

Continued on next page....

Refer to **pg 71** in the workbook

Separated from God
Death

And in Christ we have

New nature
Freedom
Fellowship with God
Life

Using the number clues fill up the squares at the bottom of the page and it will read 2 Corinthians 5:17.

2 Corinthians 5:17
Therefore, **if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation;**
the old has gone, the new has come!

You may want to discuss the contrast by referring to the following verses.

Romans 6:2

We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?

Romans 7:4

So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God.

Colossians 2:20

Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules:

Ephesians 2:4,5

⁴But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,
⁵made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved.

Refer to **pg 74** in the workbook

3. Pass around the situation slips. Make sure there is enough for everyone. Let the learners stick them into either the OUT or the IN box. Hear from the learners the reason for their decisions.

The template for these situation slips can be found at the end of the chapter (page 11).

Here are the **OUT's**.

My teacher gave me a poor mark. I keep trying to think how I can get my revenge on him.

I am not going out today because the horoscope says it will be unlucky for me to do so today.

I am afraid to tell my friends I am a Christian because they will make fun of me.

I lie automatically whenever my parents ask me whether I have gone out with my friends.

I have a bad habit that keeps coming back. I just cannot overcome it.

Refer to **pg 73** in the workbook

And the **IN's** are as follows.

Whenever I am tempted to be angry, God helps me to calm down and show gentleness.

I find a new love for those who are not noticed by my classmates.

My brother said something which hurt me badly, but I prayed to God and I found myself able to forgive him.

I find it exciting to read the Bible and see how God is teaching me so much about life through what I read.

I just feel great when we worship God together in church.

Refer to **pg 74** in the workbook

4. The learners will require some help with this quiz. Use each question as a basis for further discussion.

1. **sacrament** - these are special ceremonies practiced by the Church. More will be explained below.

2. **Jesus** - Sacraments are commanded by Jesus.

Matthew 28:19

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

3. **visible** - During baptism, people can see (and you can feel) what has happened in your life internally.

4. **public** - Baptism is done publicly for others to see. It is good to invite your relatives and family who are not Christians to witness this together with other church people.

5. **Body, church** - When we are baptized we are put into the Body of Christ which is the church.

1 Corinthians 12:13

For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body

6. **beginning, Holy Spirit** - Baptism is a beginning. Right there and then we tell everyone that we are now in Christ. This new life we depend on the power of the Holy Spirit. Recall chapter 4 when we talked about the fruit of the Spirit transforming our characters.

Allow time for questions, if any. Some of their questions may be answered in the material to come.

Refer to **pg 77** in the workbook

Encourage the learners to take down notes.

5. Sprinkling, pouring and immersion are modes of baptism recognized by the Methodist Church.

On the right are Scripture references to the process of sprinkling as cleansing us from impurities. They are Hebrews 10:22 and Ezekiel 36:25.

Hebrews 10:22

Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

Ezekiel 36:25

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols.

Immersion gives the picture of being buried with Jesus and being raised with him as the person goes under the water and rises again.

There is another method recognized by the Methodist Church and it is the mode of pouring. Here the minister pours water over the head of the baptismal candidate.

Refer to **pg 76** in the workbook

6. Ask the learners if they have any questions as to who gets baptized. Depending on their backgrounds, you may receive questions on infant baptism. You can find a more complete explanation in Foundation (A Manual for Christian Growth) pages 57 to 59.

7. Often the misunderstanding is that people are baptized when they reach a certain level of Christian maturity. This is not so. Baptism is an initial step and not a 'certificate of attainment or achievement'. When a person repents of his or her sins and accepts the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ, he or she can be baptized. However, to make sure that the person is clear as to what is happening he or she usually is obliged to go through some classes of instruction.

Refer to **pg 77** in the workbook

1. As we seriously consider leaving our past lifestyle to embrace the new life Jesus offers, it is important that we renounce whatever sins or sinful attachments we may have been involved in before we knew Jesus. Remind the learners that this is a personal exercise.

Pass out the spiritual check up inventory sheet. You will find it at the end of the chapter (pages 12 and 13). Photocopy enough copies for everyone. Pass out pencils if needed.

There will be items you will need to explain. God through the inventory first and make sure you can elaborate on the items. Some may not be relevant to your learners. Assure them that they need not force themselves to tick items they are not sure of. In time, God will reveal to them. Just do what they can recall.

You will need to have ready a metal or clay receptacle which can be used for burning the renunciation lists that the learners have ticked. Bring along a lighter. Do not burn the lists in an air-conditioned room. Take the receptacle outside to the open space or to the corridor and do it with a prayer as the learners stand around. This is a very graphic object lesson of God removing our sins and some tears of relief may be expected. If you are not the minister, you might like to have him or her around to pray for the learners individually. Please inform the minister early and let him or her know what you will be doing.

Have ready a receptacle for burning the lists as a sign of putting them away for good.

There is a prayer of renunciation at the end of the chapter (page 15) for your use, if required. It will be good for all to recite it as they watch the lists burn.

End with a declaration of victory and a prayer of commitment to Jesus Christ. See also page 15 at the end of the chapter.

The memory verse is Romans 6:4. This is a long verse and you might want to help the memorization process by giving some actions to the whole verse. Use your arms to indicate burial and raising from the dead.

Romans 6:4

We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Refer to **pg 78** in the workbook

TODAY I LEARNED ...

- 1 that in baptism, we are identified with the death and resurrection of Jesus
- 2 that baptism is a sacrament of the church because it was commanded by Jesus
- 3 that baptism is an outward sign of an inward grace
- 4 that baptism is done by sprinkling or immersion
- 5 that the Methodist Church baptizes adults as well as infants
- 6 that the condition for baptism is that we repent of our sins and believe in Jesus

AND I LEARNED HOW

to renounce my past involvement in any sinful activities and commit myself to a new life in Jesus

See pages 4 and 5 above

My brother said something which hurt me badly, but I prayed to God and I found myself able to forgive him.

Whenever I am tempted to be angry, God helps me to calm down and show gentleness.

I lie automatically whenever my parents ask me whether I have gone out with friends.

I find it exciting to read the Bible and see how God is teaching me so much about life through what I read.

I find a new love for those who are not noticed by my classmates.

I have a bad habit that keeps coming back. I just cannot overcome it.

I am afraid to tell my friends I am a Christian because they may make fun of me.

My teacher gave me a poor mark. I keep trying to think how I can get my revenge on him.

I am not going out today because the horoscope says it will be unlucky for me to do so today.

I just feel great when we worship God together in church.

Spiritual Check Up inventory (See page 9 above)

A SPIRITUAL CHECK UP

1. False Spiritual Experiences

- Occult -----
- Cult -----
- Religious Practices -----

“Lord, I confess that I have participated in _____, and I renounce _____.
Thank You that in Christ I am forgiven.”

2. Deceiving Ourselves

- Hearing God’s Word but not doing it (James 1:22;4:17)
- Saying we have no sin (I Jn 1:8)
- Thinking we are something when we aren’t (Gal 6:3)
- Thinking we are so clever (I Cor 3:18-19)
- Thinking we will not be punished for the bad things we do (Gal 6:7)
- Thinking the bad guys will be accepted by God anyway (I Cor 6:9)
- Thinking we can associate with bad company and not be corrupted (I Cor 15:33)
- Self-Defence - instead of trusting in Christ
- Denial (conscious or subconscious refusal to face the truth)
- Fantasy (escaping from the real world)
- Emotional insulation (withdrawing to avoid rejection)
- Regression (reverting back to a less threatening time)
- Displacement (taking out frustrations on others)
- Projection (blaming others)
- Rationalization (making excuses for poor behavior)

“Lord, I agree that I have been deceived in the area of _____.
Thank You for forgiving me. I commit myself to know and follow Your truth.
Amen.”

3. Past Hurts

- Abuse (physical, sexual, emotional) -----
- Betrayal -----
- Cheated -----
- Bullied -----
- Offended -----
- Unmet needs -----
- Others? -----

“Lord, I forgive (*name of person*) for (*verbally share every hurt and pain the Lord brings to your mind and how it made you feel*). Lord, I release all these people to You, and my right to seek revenge. I choose not to hold on to my bitterness and anger, and I ask You to heal my damaged emotions. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.”

(The opposite could be the case if you have been the one causing hurts to others in which case you ask God to forgive you for what you have done. You will then need to make amends in your behavior and ask for forgiveness from that person/s.)

4. Rebellious Attitudes

(We are told to submit to one another as equals in Christ. See Eph. 5:21. However, there are specific lines of authority in Scripture.)

- Government (Rom 13:1-7; I Tim 2:14; I Pet 2:13-17)
- Parents (Eph 6:1-3)
- Church Leaders / School teachers (Heb 13:17)
- God (Dan 9:5,9)

“Lord, I agree I have been rebellious toward _____. I choose to be submissive and obedient to Your Word. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

5. Pride

- Having a stronger desire to do my will than God’s will.
- Being more dependent upon my strengths and resources than God’s.
- Too often believe that my ideas and opinions are better than others.
- Being more concerned about controlling others than developing self-control.
- Sometimes consider myself more important than others.
- Having a tendency to think I have no needs.
- Finding it difficult to admit that I was wrong.
- Having a tendency to please people rather than to please God.
- Being overly concerned about getting the credit or recognition I deserve.
- Being driven to obtain the recognition that comes from positions.
- Often thinking I am more humble than others.
- These other

ways:_____.

“Lord, I agree I have been prideful by _____. I choose to humble myself and place all my confidence in You. Amen.”

6. Habitual Sins

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> stealing | <input type="checkbox"/> lying | <input type="checkbox"/> controlling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fighting | <input type="checkbox"/> jealousy | <input type="checkbox"/> swearing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> envying | <input type="checkbox"/> outbursts of anger | <input type="checkbox"/> divisiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> complaining | <input type="checkbox"/> criticizing | <input type="checkbox"/> greediness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lusting | <input type="checkbox"/> cheating | <input type="checkbox"/> laziness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> gossiping | <input type="checkbox"/> procrastinating | <input type="checkbox"/> others: _____ |

“Lord, I thank You that my sins are forgiven in Christ, but I have walked by the flesh and therefore sinned by _____. Thank You for cleansing me of all unrighteousness. I ask that You would enable me to walk by the Spirit and not carry out the desires of the flesh. In Jesus’ name, I pray.”

Prayer of renunciation (See page 9 above)

Satan, I hereby renounce you and all your works in my life. I, by an act of will and in the strength that Jesus Christ of Nazareth gives me, close the doors of my life to all the entry points you have previously gained through my sins. I speak out, in the name of Jesus, who defeated you at Calvary, that you no longer have any right to trouble me on these issues which have now been confessed, repented of, and forgiven, and from which I am now being cleansed by the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Declaration of victory and prayer of commitment to Jesus Christ (See page 9 above)

All power is yours, Sovereign God. I confess Jesus Christ as Lord of our lives.

Through His death and resurrection, I am covered by the spotless blood of the Lamb and we overcome Satan by the victory of that blood. The devil has no rights here, no power, dominion, rule or authority.

In the name of Jesus, in His authority, by His blood, according to His word, and in the power of His Holy Spirit, I bind any works of the enemy.

In Jesus' name, I silence the voice of the accuser. I resist anything which exalts itself against knowing God, knowing His will, and doing it in obedience to Jesus Christ.

Jesus is victorious over all the power of the enemy and I have perfect liberty and victory in Him.

I commit myself, totally, to my Lord Jesus Christ. I give You all honor and glory and praise.

Amen.