

youthESource Bible Study

A Death to Life Event

By Gene Schmidt

Objectives

That with the help of the Holy Spirit, participants will:

1. deepen their understanding of Baptism for daily living;
2. reenact various stories of Baptism from Scripture and their life stories.

Introduction

There are mysteries of the baptismal faith that can only be "comprehended when we connect with God's Word." In this time together we will remember the facts about our own Baptism, study God's Word about Baptism, and renew for ourselves the joys Baptism brings to us in our daily life.

Gelling Started

(at least 10minutes)

Begin by forming groups of four. Then ask each person to share everything he or she remembers or what they have been told about the day of his or her Baptism. Mention such things as the date, the place, the witnesses/sponsors and who these people were. If you have seen a picture about the event, describe it also. Don't feel uncomfortable if you know little or nothing about the act of your baptizing; however, plan to talk to those who know about your day of Baptism soon. Tell your group who you will approach and ask about your Baptism and why.

Read a Story

Have one member of your group read the following story.

One day we got tired of playing hop-scotch and skin the cat, so Edna Briggs said, "Let's play Baptizing." I said to Mrs. Williams, "Can we, I mean may we play Baptizing in your rain barrel?" And she said to me, she said, "Yes, indeed," and she just went on tating. So I put on my father's hunting breeches and got Judge Williams' hat off the moose horn rack, and I dressed up like the Baptist preacher. That was when Edna ran to get all the kids. And I said to them I said, "The Lord is in his Holy Temple, keep silent and shut up." And then I said, "All you sinners come forward and hence." And nobody came but Melvin Dawson. He is just two years old. Poor little Melvin. He is so unlucky. I got him by the back of his diaper and dipped him in the rain barrel once for the Father, and once for the Son, and when it came time for the Holy Ghost, poor little Melvin's safety pin broke and he dropped in the bottom of the rain barrel, and everybody ran, and nobody would help me, and I had to turn the rain barrel over to get him out, and then I galloped him on his stomach on my pony to get the water out of him, and then I sat him inside his house, and then I went to Mrs. Harris' house and got under her bed, and when she looked under there and saw me, all soaking wet, Mrs. Harris said, she said, "Rain and hail in Beulah land, what has happened now?" And when I told her what happened she just patted her foot and sat, and sat, and then she said, "You know what?" and I said, "What," and Mrs. Harris said, "The Bishop sure needs just such a barrel in the church yard to give some members I know just what little Melvin got."

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Discuss what you think Mrs. Harris meant when she said "The Bishop needs just such a barrel in the church yard to give some members I know just what little Melvin got."

Say, "I hope you agree that the meaning of the story is that Baptism should bring about a radical change and redirection of life. Baptism is a death-to-life event."

Bible Review

List for everyone to see the following Bible texts. In each group, have one person serve as recorder and another as leader. Ask the group to summarize what each of these texts says about the power of Baptism. Romans 6:3-4

Galatians 3:26-27

John 3:3-6

Titus 3:4-7

As time and interest permit, share summaries with the whole group. Conclude:

"It is God, of course, who makes things happen in us through Baptism. In Baptism God connects us to the death and resurrection of Jesus and by faith gives us the rewards of Jesus' sacrifice for sin and victory over sin.

"Luther identifies the big three that come to all who believe in God's promise in Baptism; it

- gives forgiveness of sins;
- delivers from death and the devil; and
- gives eternal salvation.

"Think about and discuss in your group how each of the 'big three' can be a daily joy in each of our life settings, at home, at school, at work and play."

Conclusion

Say, "How does this statement help you: 'In your Baptism the only death you need fear is behind you.' Baptism is a death-to-life event. When we are baptized we participate in Christ's death and are raised to a new life. This event can be a daily gift which comforts us when in trouble, confronts our sins, and stabilizes us in every threatening situation because God is now in control of our life—we have 'put on Christ'—we live with and for Him."

Close with a prayer.

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