



## **Sermon Discussion Guide for Groups**

# **Baptism Sunday**

**Preached by Daniel Grothe**

**April 12, 2026**

### **Summary**

*Have someone in your group read the following summary aloud.*

This sermon focuses on the significance of baptism as a transformative spiritual experience. Pastor Daniel preaches from Acts 2:38, where Peter calls people to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. Using the metaphor that 'water does stuff,' he explains how water throughout Scripture serves as an element that separates, cleanses, and creates new possibilities. The sermon emphasizes three key aspects of baptism: it marks the beginning of a life totally immersed in Jesus, the start of a new story through forgiveness and new creation, and the establishment of a new identity as beloved children of God. The pastor draws parallels between Jesus's baptism and the experience of new believers, highlighting how the heavens open and God declares His love over each person being baptized.

## Key Passages

- Acts 2:38
- Acts 2:41
- Matthew 3:16-17
- 2 Corinthians 5:17
- Colossians 3:3

## Opening Prayer

*Open your session in prayer, using the words below or your own*

**Heavenly Father**, we come before You with grateful hearts as we gather to study Your Word together. We thank You for the gift of baptism and the new life it represents. Lord, open our hearts and minds to receive what You want to teach us today. Help us to be receptive to Your Spirit's leading and to encourage one another in our faith journey. May this time together draw us closer to You and to each other as we explore the beautiful truths of Your kingdom. In Jesus' name we pray, **Amen**.

## Getting Going

*Allow time for each member to answer the following questions before moving on.*

What's your favorite memory involving water - whether it's swimming, playing in the rain, or just a refreshing drink on a hot day?

## Discussion Questions

*Answer as many of these questions as time and interest allow.*

1. The pastor says 'water does stuff' throughout Scripture. What are some examples of how God has used water as a tool for separation, cleansing, and creating new possibilities in biblical stories?
2. How does understanding baptism as being 'immersed in the name of Jesus' change your perspective on what happens during this sacrament?
3. The sermon emphasizes that baptism gives us a 'new life' rather than just a 'new try.' What's the difference, and why is this distinction important for our faith?
4. When Jesus was baptized, the Father declared 'This is my beloved Son.' How does knowing that God speaks similar words over us during baptism affect your sense of identity and worth?
5. Pastor Daniel mentions that baptism is the beginning of a new story. If you've been baptized, how has your story changed since that moment? If you haven't, what new story do you hope God would write in your life?
6. How can we 'keep the white garment unstained' as mentioned in the sermon, even years after our baptism?

7. What role does the Holy Spirit play in baptism according to this message, and how should that impact our daily walk with God?
8. The sermon connects baptism with joining God's family and receiving a new identity. How can we help newly baptized believers understand and live out this new identity?

## **Making It Personal**

*Take the opportunity noted below to apply this week's sermon to your everyday life.*

This week, spend time reflecting on your own baptism (or consider taking that step if you haven't been baptized). Each morning, remind yourself of your identity as God's beloved child by declaring: 'I am chosen, not forsaken. I am who God says I am.' Look for opportunities to encourage someone else in their faith journey, remembering that we are all part of God's family through the waters of baptism.

## **Key Takeaways**

*Commit to memory one point from the message before dismissing.*

- Baptism marks the beginning of a life totally immersed in Jesus and His name, not just church membership

- Through baptism, we receive a new life with new power from the Holy Spirit, not just another chance to try harder
- Baptism establishes our new identity as beloved children of God, with heaven declaring over us 'This is my child whom I love'
- Water throughout Scripture serves as God's tool for separation, cleansing, and creating new possibilities
- The experience of baptism should be remembered and celebrated throughout our entire Christian journey

## **Closing Prayer**

*Have someone from your group close your time in prayer, using the words below or your own.*

**Father God**, thank You for the beautiful picture of baptism and what it represents in our lives. We are amazed by Your love that calls us out of darkness and into Your marvelous light. Help us to live each day remembering our identity as Your beloved children, marked by Your love and filled with Your Spirit. For those in our group who have been baptized, renew their sense of wonder at what You accomplished in that moment. For any who have not yet taken this step, give them courage to follow You in obedience. May we all walk as people who have been transformed by Your grace, carrying the light of Christ wherever we go. In Jesus' precious name, **Amen.**