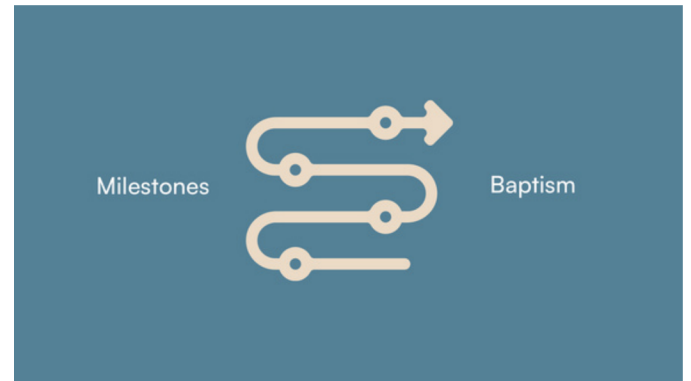




05.05.24

Group Guide

Baptism



Introduction

As we grow in our relationship with God, we have several faith milestones — unique life events that are so significant we mark them with a ceremony including the faith line, baptism, and membership. Together we learned from Pastor Jesse about the faith milestone of baptism — a celebration and public declaration of someone’s decision to trust and follow Jesus.

Discussion

Pastor Jesse helped us trace how baptism came to be with the picture of a baptism “family tree,” including:

- **Jewish Roots:** Spiritual purity; commitment to God’s way of life (Numbers 8:5-7.)
- **New Testament Base:** Repentance symbolizing a commitment to God’s way of life (Luke 3:2—3, Matthew 3:13—15.)
- **Early Church Trunk:** The next step after crossing the faith line (Acts 2:36-38.)
 - To identify with Jesus’ death (Romans 6:3.)
 - To identify with Jesus’ resurrected life (Romans 6:4.)
 - To affirm the presence of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13.)
 - To identify with the community of believers (Galatians 3:26-29.)
- **Branches in Types of Baptism:** Varying practices based on theological interpretation (infant, believer, sprinkle, immersion, salvific, symbolic, etc.)

PLC’s practice most closely resembles the early church because we believe it lines up with what the Bible says and how the earliest followers of Jesus practiced it. And we understand everyone comes to this topic with different familiarity, experiences, and expectations. Spend time in your group talking about this milestone and experience with it. Revisit and read the Scripture passages above with your group if you’d like to be reminded along the way.

1. What existing understanding or belief did you have about baptism, if any? Is it similar or different than PLC’s interpretation and application? Why or why not?

2. Have you been baptized by immersion, as a child, or both? Share your story of baptism and its impact on you. What was exciting or challenging about it?

3. If you haven't been baptized, have you ever considered it? Why or why not?

Application

- **Consider and pray about getting baptized.** If you've stepped over the Faith Line, baptism is an opportunity to celebrate your relationship with God and declare your faith publicly with your church family. Pray about this as your next step and process why you are (or may not be) excited about it. If you have questions, want to sign up, or want to learn more, your church staff would love to connect with you about it. Don't be afraid to reach out!