

Practice This

The Celebration (Week 2)

LifeNotes

TALK IT OVER

Main Idea

Baptism in the early church was normal, immediate, and celebrated by all.

Key Scriptures

Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all. Acts 2:41 NLT

As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look! There’s some water! Why can’t I be baptized?” Acts 8:36 NLT

Even at that hour of the night, the jailer cared for them and washed their wounds. Then he and everyone in his household were immediately baptized. Acts 16:33 NLT

Baptism is the faithful reflection of the heavenly celebration.

Why is it important?

1. Jesus modeled it.

Then Jesus went down from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John ... Jesus said, “It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires.” So John agreed to baptize him. Matthew 3:13, 15 NLT

2. Jesus instructed it.

Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19 NLT

3. Jesus waits expectantly to celebrate it.

In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven’t strayed away! Luke 15:7 NLT

Start talking.

- How do spiritual practices invite us to return, remember and celebrate?
- How have you seen baptism complicated beyond what we see in scripture?

Start thinking.

- Read Acts 2:41. What two things did the 3,000 have in common based on this verse?
- Read Acts 8:36. What change had taken place in the eunuch prior to asking to be baptized? How is that similar to the 3,000?

- Read Acts 16:33. How soon after they believed were they baptized? Why is the timing significant?
- What are the commonalities of each passage?

Start sharing.

- If you have been baptized, share your story and explain why.
- What would be the impact in our church if we followed more faithfully the pattern of baptism from the early church? If we made it normal, immediate, and celebrated by all?

Start doing.

- Who do you know that needs to be invited to celebrate baptism this week?
- If you haven’t been baptized, follow this link and sign up: <https://harborchurch.life/baptisms>

Closing prayer.

Jesus, thank you for establishing the practice of baptism. Help us to honor your example and instruction both personally in our own lives and as we help lead others to experience your love and salvation.