

Small Group Discussion Questions

Not in a small group? Contact us at smallgroups@myriversidechurch.com

Ice Breaker: What was the most memorable water baptism you have witnessed or participated in? Why was it significant for you?

Talk It Over Together: (Note: If your group is only meeting bi-weekly, *cover the first 2 discussion questions of each week*. If time allows, go back to the remaining questions.)

1. Pastor Tom explained that Peter recorded the birth of the Church in Acts 2 with the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Read Acts 2:41. What remarkable thing took place in this verse? Baptism became the norm. Believe and be baptized. As Pastor Tom indicated, baptism broke through all kinds of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Read Acts 8:12, 38, 10:47-48, 16:15, 33; 18:8 and 19:5. Why do you think Peter shows us so many different kinds of people being baptized? Why is it important for us to continue to overcome cultural and ethnic barriers to help people say YES to Christ and be baptized?
2. Read and discuss Romans 6:3-4. Pastor Tom described how the symbolic act of water baptism helps us visually see the spiritual reality of our union with Him—through his death, burial and resurrection. Why do you think Jesus wants us to identify with Him in this way? Pastor Tom reminded us that water baptism doesn't "save" us, but it is a reflection of the heart decision we've made by saying YES to Christ. He quoted Merritt when he said, *"While faith is very personal, it was never meant to be private, and baptism is the most public and powerful way to declare our faith."* In what ways do you think water baptism is powerful when we witness it here in America? How might it be different in Muslim-dominated areas such as the Comoe area in Burkina Faso where we are digging wells and planting churches?
3. Read and discuss Matthew 3:1-6, 13-17. Pastor Tom indicated that "a sinless Jesus was baptized to identify with sinful humanity He had come to rescue." In what ways did Jesus' baptism prepare Him for public ministry? In what ways do the presence of God the Father, God the Son and the Holy Spirit after Jesus' baptism validate Jesus' baptism? How does water baptism validate our commitment to be a Christ follower?
4. Jesus disciples baptized people and it was one of the final commands Jesus gave us after His death and resurrection. Read John 4:1-2 and Matthew 28:18-20. Why do you think this public display of faith was so central for new followers of Christ before His death and resurrection? How might this have changed after He died and rose again? Why do you think this was Jesus' last commandment before He went to heaven?

Personal Reading

As you read through each passage, consider answering 3 simple questions: What did I learn about God from what I read? What did I learn about myself? What is God asking me to do as a result?

Day 1: Matthew 3

Day 3: Acts 10

Day 2: Acts 8:26-40

Day 4: Ephesians 6:10-18



KEEP CALM

"KEEP CALM AND TAKE THE PLUNGE"

SENIOR PASTOR TOM LUNDEEN

MESSAGE NOTES & SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

AUGUST 3RD, 2014





"Keep Calm and Take the Plunge"

August 3, 2014

By *Senior Pastor, Tom Lundeen*

(You can sign up for Pastor Tom's e-newsletter for his thoughts on various subjects at pastortom@myriversidechurch.com)

MESSAGE NOTES

Note Ephesians 6:12

"Do you reject Satan...and all his _____...and all his empty promises?"
What makes baptism something so powerful in the spiritual _____?

1. Baptism was the C_____ of Preparing for the Coming of Jesus (*note Matthew 3:3, 6, 13-14*)

A sinless Jesus was baptized to identify with sinful humanity. He had come to _____...
...3 years later sinless Jesus went to the cross to pay the penalty of human sin and destroy the _____ of the devil.

2. _____ Disciples Baptized People (*note John 4:1-2*)

Jesus confronted falsehood with truth, sickness with healing, sin with forgiveness, death with life, and the demonic with _____ power and authority.

3. Jesus' Own Baptism

Only in a very few places in the Bible do we see God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit manifested _____ at the same time (*note Matthew 3:16-17*).

4. The Great _____ (*note Matthew 28:18-20*)

Jesus' last command reflects His first _____ and what He is most passionate about...

5. The Birth of the Church

Acts 2 (the Day of Pentecost and coming of the Holy Spirit) records the birth of the church. Jesus promised to build that hell itself cannot _____ and what's at the forefront (*note Acts 2:41*)?

6. The Advance of the Gospel Across Ethnic/Cultural _____

Note Acts 8:12; 38; 10:47-48; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5

...at the leading _____ of how Jesus is building His church are people from different backgrounds, cultures, and races who first of all say "yes" to Jesus Christ as their leader and Lord and Forgiver and Savior, and who next publically _____ themselves as Christ-followers through water baptism.

7. Our Spiritual _____ With Jesus Christ

The s_____ act of baptism points us to the spiritual reality for every person who receives Jesus as their Savior and says "yes" to Him as their Lord that they have been _____ with Jesus in His death, burial, and resurrection (*note Romans 6:3-4*).

We can "Keep Calm and take the plunge" because:

- Baptism doesn't save us...it is a reflection of the _____ decision to receive Jesus as Lord.
- So baptism is a public declaration where we affirm that we reject the influence of the world...
- ...we repent of our sins...
- ...and we renounce the evil one...
- "While faith is very personal, it was never meant to be _____, and baptism is the most public and powerful way to declare our faith." (Merritt)
- Baptism is really a loyalty _____..."I am on the Lord's side".

Here are the 3 qualifications to engage in baptism:

- 1) You need to be a follower of Jesus.
- 2) You need to have not been baptized as an adult believer in Christ already.
- 3) You need to be at least 12 years old (We may baptize children younger than 12 if they have parental support and have talked it through with the Children's Pastor. Family Ministries also has a discipleship class ("No Limits") for children; they are given a chance to engage in baptism after completing this course; you can find details on our web site).

Don't get baptized:

- If you're not sure about following Jesus.
- If you're trying to impress others.
- If you think it would be a "cool" experience with your friends/family.

Everyone today fill out the special connect card, talk to a baptism coach at the end of the service and make a choice to take this next step of water baptism **TODAY** at our Summer Picnic and Baptism Celebration this afternoon!



RIVERSIDE NOTES

Sermon: **“Keep Calm and Take the Plunge”**

Series: ***Keep Calm***

Note Ephesians 6:12

**“Do you reject Satan...and all his works...and all his empty promises?”
What makes baptism something so powerful in the spiritual realm?**

1. Baptism was the Centerpiece of Preparing for the Coming of Jesus (note Matthew 3:3, 6, 13-14)

A sinless Jesus was baptized to identify with sinful humanity He had come to rescue...

...3 years later sinless Jesus went to the cross to pay the penalty of human sin and destroy the works of the devil.

2. Jesus' Disciples Baptized People (note John 4:1-2)

Jesus confronted falsehood with truth, sickness with healing, sin with forgiveness, death with life, and the demonic with holy power and authority.

3. Jesus' Own Baptism

Only in a very few places in the Bible do we see God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit manifested together at the same time (note Matthew 3:16-17).

4. The Great Commission (note Matthew 28:18-20)

Jesus' last command reflects His first concern and what He is most passionate about...

5. The Birth of the Church

Acts 2 (the Day of Pentecost and coming of the Holy Spirit) records the birth of the church Jesus promised to build that hell itself cannot halt and what's at the forefront (note Acts 2:41)?

6. The Advance of the Gospel Across Ethnic/Cultural Barriers

Note Acts 8:12, 38; 10:47-48; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5

...at the leading edge of how Jesus is building His church are people from different backgrounds, cultures, and races who first of all say “yes” to Jesus Christ as their Leader and Lord and Forgiver and Savior, and who next publically identify themselves as Christ-followers through water baptism.

7. Our Spiritual Union With Jesus Christ

The symbolic act of baptism points us to the spiritual reality for every person who receives Jesus as their Savior and says “yes” to Him as their Lord that they have been united with Jesus in His death, burial, and resurrection (note Romans 6:3-4).

We can “Keep Calm and take the plunge” because:

- **Baptism doesn’t save us...it is a reflection of the heart decision to receive Jesus as Lord.**
- **So baptism is a public declaration where we affirm that we reject the influence of the world...**
- **...we repent of our sins...**
- **...and we renounce the evil one...**
- **“While faith is very personal, it was never meant to be private, and baptism is the most public and powerful way to declare our faith.” (Merritt)**
- **Baptism is really a loyalty oath...”I am on the Lord’s side”.**

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