

Teaching Guide

16 January 2011

Teaching: *Baptism 101*

Matthew 3.13-17

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

Questions for Everyone: If you could go to only one concert this year who would you go to hear? What’s the best concert you have ever attended in the past?

Introduction: This is Not the Music We Expected

How do you handle it when your expectations are not met?

Wading in the Waters of Baptism

If you were baptized, was it as an adult (believer) or as an infant? What do you remember about your baptism? Where were you? How old were you? Who baptized you? Do you ever intentionally remember and reflect upon your baptism? You might want to do this occasionally as a spiritual discipline.

The Waters of Solidarity

“Christians are baptized because Jesus was baptized. . . . Jesus is baptized so as to be in solidarity with the brokenness of the human condition. . . . Jesus goes into the water to rescue a drowning world.” If you have yet to be baptized what keeps you from the waters?

Baptism is a Sacrament

“A sacrament is a visible sign of invisible grace.” Why have sacraments been so very important to Christians through the centuries? Why hasn’t church relied solely on biblical teaching and preaching to sustain the faith of her members?

Sacraments as Means of Grace

“The sacrament of baptism is the dramatic portrayal of a very particular narrative. . . . Christian baptism isn’t just some warm and fuzzy rite of inclusion into God’s family. Baptism is a rather demanding invitation to die with Christ so as to be raised up to new life.”

“Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life” (Romans 6.3,4).

Babies, Baptism and Grace

“While the orthodox Christian tradition makes a compelling argument for infant baptism, it is not the primary reason I chose to have my daughter’s baptized. I chose to have my daughters baptized because I believe deeply and profoundly in prevenient grace.” So, where do you stand on this issue of Christian families having their children baptized? What are the pros and the cons associated with this matter?

Grace-Formed Identity

“Baptism is primarily about God’s grace and therefore baptism is also about our grace-formed identity.”

Beginning Next Week: John’s Epiphany

The central questions during the season after Epiphany (January 6) is who is this one that has been born among us? Who is this Jesus? John’s beautiful gospel will be the well we draw from to answer this question.

23 January: John 2.1-11—*Jesus, the Best Wine*

6 February: John 3.1-21—*Jesus, God’s only Son*

13 February: John 4.1-42—*Jesus, the Living Water*

20 February: John 5.1-18—*Jesus, the Healer*

27 February: John 6—*Jesus, the Bread of Life*

6 March: John 10—*Jesus, the Good Shepherd*

