

and considering other places that mention the forgiveness of sin without even mentioning baptism helps us here. Peter is urging people to be baptized not “to get” forgiveness... but “because of” forgiveness. It is because we have been forgiven that we rejoice and follow Christ in baptism as a testimony to the world of what He has done. The waters serve as a visceral reminder that in Christ we have been washed clean.

Discussion Questions

- Why do you think God gives His children a physical reminder of their spiritual cleansing?
- Have you received the forgiveness of God for your sins? Has that forgiveness led you to be baptized? Why or why not?

Day 5 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

The act of baptism does not secure forgiveness or procure salvation, but it does offer a powerful sign of our union with Christ. Why? Romans 6:3-4 gives us a reason. *Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.* Although baptismal water does not, in and of itself, wash away our sins... we are reminded that the shed blood of Christ does! *But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin* (1 John 1:7). As a new believer emerges from the water, having renounced their old life and publicly declared their union with Christ, they rejoice because their sins are forgiven. Then they step out of the water, emboldened and empowered to live for Christ. To walk “in newness of life.” This is God’s gift to us in the ordinance of baptism.

Discussion Questions

- If you have been baptized, what do you remember from that day? Share your story with someone else.
- If you have forgotten some of the truths on display in baptism (fellowship with Christ, ingrafting into Christ, remission of sins, etc.), pray that God would remind you and help you walk in that newness of life.

Baptist Catechism

Family Worship Guide



West Oaks Baptist Church

(in preparation for Sunday, August 24th, 2025)

Baptist Catechism Question #97

Q: What is baptism?

A: *Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament instituted by Jesus Christ, to be unto the party baptized a sign of his fellowship with him, in his death, burial, and resurrection; of his being ingrafted into him; of remission of sins; and of his giving up himself unto God through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life.*

Suggested Memory Verse

Romans 6:3–4 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? [4] We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. (ESV)

Day 1 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

We take a closer look this week at baptism as an ordinance of God. According to the dictionary, an ordinance is an authoritative decree, command, or “order.” This particular order comes directly from Jesus and was given to the church to follow in obedience. We learned last week that baptism is a blessing and promised means of grace, but because it is also a command (an ordinance), it is important that it is administered according to God’s instructions. According to scripture, baptism is for new believers who have credible professions of faith in Jesus alone and is to be administered “only by those who are qualified and called to administer them, according to the commission of Christ” (LBCF 1689, chp. 28). This refers to elders, pastors, and leaders in the church who have been called by God. Baptism ought to be conducted by immersion or dipping into water fully and is to be done in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6). The ordinance of baptism has sometimes been misunderstood or distorted to fit a particular method, doctrine, or even heresy. Baptism *is* an ordinance given to the church to be obeyed, but it should never be mistaken as a work that is done to gain salvation. Rather, it is a picture of us relating and belonging wholly to Christ. It is a beautiful expression through which God’s favor and face shine upon us.

Discussion Questions

- Denominations differ on who should be baptized, when, and in what way. How important do you think these questions are?
- Do you tend to think of baptism more as a command to be obeyed or as a gift to be received? Explain.

Day 2 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

In the ordinance of baptism, Christ has given us a very tangible sign of several spiritual realities that accompany salvation. The first of these is our fellowship with Him in his death, burial, and resurrection. We get a clear understanding of this from Romans 6:3–5...*Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.* Here we see that the baptized believer is united with Christ in these three things. Baptism demonstrates that as we are united with Christ’s death, we too die to our old natural body that was enslaved to sin. Then, as we unite with Christ we are buried like him in a separation from that old sinful life. And finally, as we unite with Christ in baptism we are raised to a new life, not enslaved to sin, but able to serve Christ in His kingdom. We have been changed and now walk in glory because our lives are intricately associated with His! Baptism is a sign of our fellowship with Him.

Discussion Questions

- Have you ever heard of someone shaving their head as a show of solidarity when a friend has cancer? Why do you think they do that?
- Why do you think God has given us a way to publicly identify ourselves with the suffering of Jesus?
- Jesus died, was buried, and rose again. In a spiritual sense, can you say, “Me, too”?

Day 3 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

What does it mean to be grafted into Christ? The term *ingraft* is derived from the agricultural practice of grafting, where a shoot from one plant is inserted into another plant so that they grow together as one. If you made an incision in the branch of an apple tree and inserted a pear branch so that they grew together, the pear tree would be *ingrafted* into the apple tree. The 1828 Webster’s dictionary defines it as “to set or fix deep and firm.” Now, take that idea and apply it spiritually. Not only do we have fellowship with Christ, we are firmly joined with Him. We are planted in Christ. *Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving* (Colossians 2:6-7). We no longer belong to ourselves or to Satan, but to God, and this connection is both intimate and inseparable. *Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body* (1 Corinthians 6:19–20). Baptism is a demonstration of how intricately our lives are interwoven with Christ’s. That is why Paul could say, *I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me* (Galatians 2:20).

Discussion Questions

- The Bible often uses plants to illustrate spiritual truths. Why do you think God does this?
- If you have received Christ, what does being “rooted in Him” look like in your life?

Day 4 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

This week’s catechism says baptism is a sign to the believer of their “remission of sins.” Does that mean baptism is something you do to gain forgiveness? Scripture clearly teaches we are not saved by works. *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast* (Ephesians 2:8-9). So, how do we read verses like Acts 2:38, where at Pentecost Peter connects baptism and forgiveness? He says, *“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ **for** the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”* Is that consistent with salvation by grace alone? In Greek, the word “for” is *eis* and has three possible meanings: 1) to become or get, 2) because of, or 3) with regard to. Harmonizing what scripture teaches as a whole, using context clues in the passage,