

LESSON 5: IDENTIFICATION

When a woman gets married, she gives up her former independence and her old identity. She puts her trust in her husband, places herself under his authority, and takes his name to be identified with him the rest of her life. The Bible tells us that those who belong to Christ are His bride! We are known as Christians, taking His name in order to be identified with Him. We have a brand new life in Christ, and as a result, old ways and thoughts pass away. We think and live differently than we did before.

Review and reflection:

- When do we receive the Holy Spirit?
- What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit?
- How can we know we are filled with the Holy Spirit?
- How was your time reading the Bible this week?
- Do you have any questions about what you read?
- Have you been enjoying talking with God?
- What changes have you seen in your life since you received Christ?

GOD WANTS US TO IDENTIFY WITH JESUS THROUGH BAPTISM

Baptism is a ceremony of remembrance, a special event to help you remember the commitment you made to Jesus when you said you wanted Him to take the throne of your life. The word “baptize” comes from a Greek word that means “immerse”. When you as a believer in Jesus get baptized, you do the same thing Jesus Himself did in water, and also enter into a picture of what He did when He died, was buried, and then rose again in new resurrection life!

Read **Mark 1:4–11**

- Where was Jesus baptized? (verses 5 and 9)
- Was He near the water or in the water? (verses 9 and 10)
- Was God pleased with what Jesus was doing?

Read **Acts 2:38, 41**

- What did thousands of new believers do when they came to faith in Jesus?

Read **Acts 8:12, 35–38; 9:17–18; 16:14–15, 25–34**

- When is the right time for believers to be baptized?
- What statement are people making when they choose to be baptized?

Read **Romans 6:3–4; Colossians 2:12; 2 Corinthians 5:17**

- Why is it important to identify with Jesus’ death?

Read **Matthew 28:18–19**

Jesus commanded His disciples to make more disciples and to baptize them!

Conclusion: Whenever someone came to faith in Jesus, they got baptized. Jesus set the example Himself, commanded His followers to baptize new believers, and calls us to follow in obedience, just as all the other believers we read about in the Bible. This special memorable ceremony is like our wedding to Christ, identifying ourselves with His death and new life.

GOD WANTS US TO IDENTIFY WITH THE BODY OF BELIEVERS, THE CHURCH

Read **Ephesians 5:23**

- Do you see here not only the picture of our marriage relationship with Christ, but also one of a head and body?
- How does your head direct the parts of your body? What does this teach me about our relationship to Jesus?

Read **1 Corinthians 12:12–14, 26–27**

- How is our relationship with other Christians like the relationship between different parts of a body?
- How does your whole body feel when one part is hurting? What does this teach us about one another? (verse 26)
- Is there anything in this life that identifies us more than our bodies? What should this teach us about the church?

Read **Hebrews 10:24–25**

- What instruction is given to us as believers in this passage?
- What does it mean when it says, "Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing"?
- Why is it important for us to meet with other believers?

As a group of logs burn more brightly than one individual log set aside by itself, so it is easier to grow in your relationship with God and to stand for Him if you participate with a group of other believers. This is the purpose the Bible gives for our participation in the Church.



GOD WANTS US TO IDENTIFY WITH JESUS BY TELLING OTHERS ABOUT HIM

Suppose you were diagnosed with cancer, and you discovered a cure. Of course, you would immediately take the treatment so you could be free from this awful disease. After you were cured, would you hide this cure from others who are dying?

No, to do so would be very selfish and uncaring on your part. Instead, you would share the good news of your cure to everyone who would listen. In the same way, through Jesus' death on the cross we have been cured of our deadly sin which separated us from the Father. We have wonderful news that people who are dying all around us need to hear and receive!

Read **John 14:6; Romans 10:13-14**

- How will people receive Jesus and gain a relationship with God unless someone tells them?

Read **Acts 1:8**

- In a courtroom, what does a witness talk about?
- Do you think Jesus wants you to talk to others about what He has done in your life?
- Are you grateful for what Jesus did: dying on the cross for your sins so you could have a relationship with God?

Read **Romans 1:14-16** (some of Paul's motivations to tell others about Jesus)

- Why am I under obligation, a debt, to tell others the good news about Jesus Christ? (verse 14)
- Do I feel eager, as Paul did, to tell others the good news about Jesus Christ? (verse 15) Should I be eager?
- What is the power of the Gospel, the good news about Jesus Christ? (verse 16)

Read **Matthew 10:32-33**

- What is the result in your life when you do tell others the good news about Jesus Christ? (verse 32)
- How does Jesus feel about those who are unwilling to tell others? (verse 33)

Read **2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 20** (another of Paul's motivations to tell others about Jesus)

- What motivated Paul to share Christ with others?
- Paul considered himself to be Christ's ambassador. What did he mean by that?
- How can we follow Paul's example as we seek to grow in Christ?

Conclusion: When we fully understand God's incredible love for us, which He expressed by sending Christ to die for our sins, we will want to actively share this good news with others and be God's ambassadors here on earth. We become God's agents to bring life to those who are dying apart from Jesus, because Jesus is the life, the only way to the Father.

LEARNING AND GROWING IN THE WEEK AHEAD

- Keep enjoying a personal time with God, reading His Word and talking to Him in prayer. Write down any questions and whatever God is saying to you through His Word.
- Confess any sins as you become aware of them, and thank God for His forgiveness.
- If you have not already done so, find a local church in your area that teaches the Bible, and become an active participant. Look for a small group or class where you can continue to discuss and learn more about what it means to grow in your relationship with God.
- Practice identifying with Jesus by getting baptized and by talking with others about the new life you are now experiencing as a result of your relationship with God through the loving sacrifice of Jesus Christ.