



Baptism Course

NAME :



SOUTHLAND CHURCH

How To Use This Material

Getting Baptized is a necessary and joy-filled step of obedience for a disciple of Jesus, and we couldn't be happier to walk alongside of you in the process! We have put together some helpful resources for you to prepare your heart and fortify your decision to follow the Lord into Baptism and beyond.

Here is what we have prepared for you:

- Two video sessions (Part 1 & 2) with teaching to help you unpack the significance and implications of Baptism from a Biblical perspective.
- Accompanying notes for both video sessions to help you follow along with the teaching and take your own notes.
- Six devotional guides for you to take into your personal quiet times. These devotionals build off of the material covered in the video sessions.

I WANT TO GET BAPTIZED. WHERE DO I START?

We're glad you asked! Here is how the material was designed to be used:

1. If you have not done so already, please head to the church website (under 'Next Steps' tab) and register for the next upcoming Baptism Weekend.
2. Watch video session 1 and follow along with the notes provided in this booklet (Pages 2-5)
3. Work on Assignment #1 outlined at the end of Session 1 notes (Page 6)
4. Complete day 1-3 Devotionals found in this booklet (Pages 7-13)
5. Watch video session 2 and follow along with the notes provided in this booklet (Pages 14-16)
6. Complete Assignment #2 outlined at the end of session 2 notes. (Page 17)
7. Complete day 4-6 Devotionals found in this booklet (Pages 18-25)

IT'S BETTER TOGETHER!

We designed these resources so they can be used individually or together with others. If you would like to ask someone to go through the booklet with you (such as a parent, the person Baptizing you, a small group leader, or a friend), that's great! You will likely get the most out of these resources if you prayerfully walk through them in community with someone else, talking about what you are learning as you go through the process.

If you require any assistance in accessing the Baptism video sessions, or if you have any other questions regarding the Baptism process at Southland Church, please contact ***info@mysouthland.com***

Part 1: The Cost of Discipleship



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video session**

- Anything worth doing has a price tag attached.
- **Mark 13:13 (NLT)** *And everyone will hate you because you are my followers. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.*
- **Mark 13:9 (NLT)** *When these things begin to happen, watch out! You will be handed over to the local councils and beaten in the synagogues. You will stand trial before governors and kings because you are my followers. But this will be your opportunity to tell them about me.*
- **Mark 8:35 (NLT)** *For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it.*

[illegible]

1. ETERNAL REWARDS

- Worldly pursuits have rewards, but only human rewards.
- Rewards given by God however, last INTO ETERNITY.

o 1 Corinthians 9:24-26 (NIV) *Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air.*

2. JESUS WALKS WITH US NOW

- Jesus understood the cost of being obedient to His Father, and faithfully did so.

o Hebrews 4:15 (HCSB) *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tested in every way as we are, yet without sin.*

o Isaiah 53:3 (NLT) *He was despised and rejected— a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care.*

- We are merely imitating the great life of sacrifice that Jesus led.

o Philippians 2:5-8 (HCSB) *Make your own attitude that of Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God, did not consider equality with God as something to be used for His own advantage. Instead He emptied Himself by assuming the form of a slave, taking on the likeness of men. And when He had come as a man in His external form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death— even to death on a cross.*

B. WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH BAPTISM?

- Baptism is not merely another task to check off in your Christian life, like going to church, helping your neighbour, or doing devotions.

1. Baptism is a "Means of Grace"

- When we talk about "means of grace" we're talking about opening up a channel for God's grace to flow. It's not about earning God's grace, but rather, about receiving it!

While its true that we can't earn God's grace, there are certainly things that we can do that put us in a position to experience God's grace more fully and richly.

[illegible]

2. Baptism is a declaration of history

- The Israelites were continually instructed to review their history.
 - o *"Remember you were slaves..."* **Deuteronomy 5:15**
 - o *"Remember the LORD Your God..."* **Deuteronomy 8:1**
 - o *"Remember what God did to Pharaoh ..."* **Deuteronomy 7:18**
 - o *"Remember the wondrous works that he alone has done..."* **Psalms 105:5**
 - o *"Remember the law of my servant Moses..."* **Malachi 4:4**
 - o *"Remember, then, what you received and heard..."* **Revelation 3:3**
- Remembering what God has done in your life is critical to what God intends to do in your life, and your testimony is a declaration of your history with God.

3. Baptism is a declaration of intent

- **Acts 10:37-38 (HCSB)**, You know the events that took place throughout Judea, beginning from Galilee after the Baptism that John preached: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were under the tyranny of the Devil, because God was with Him.

- Baptism is a significant event in the life of a Christian.
- But like we said at the beginning, anything of significance comes at a cost! Are you ready to forsake your own rights and declare you are living for him, and will continue to do so for the rest of your life?

ASSIGNMENT #1: Preparing Your Testimony

Note: *this assignment is intended to help you prepare to share your testimony with family and friends, as well as with the church! When the time comes to film the video testimonies to air in church, these are some of the questions you will be asked!*

As you prepare to write your testimony, include the following details in point form:

- When did you come to faith in Jesus? Briefly describe how this took place.
- Since then, share a few things that God has done in your life (what's changed?).
- Share a few things that God is doing in your life currently (how are you growing?).
- Share something that you're trusting God to do in the next season of your life.
- Share at least one Scripture that is meaningful to you, and why.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Day One Devotional: Counting the Cost

1 Corinthians 9:24-26 (NIV) *Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore, I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air.*

Anything worth doing has a cost attached to it. If someone wants to be a professional athlete, they will spend countless hours in training and discipline. Winning the Super Bowl or the Stanley Cup doesn't happen unless a person devotes themselves to their sport. The apostle Paul describes this strict training in the verses above (**1 Corinthians 9:24-26**) when talking about the Christian life. When it comes to walking with Jesus, there is a cost and demand placed on our lives.

The cost of walking with Jesus comes in many forms. It could be leaving a worldly pleasure or getting space from an unhealthy friend that is dragging you down spiritually.

Living for Jesus should impact how we live our lives. Jesus warned his followers that at the very least we will be hated by the world (**Mark 13:9**) and that all must be willing to submit their life to Jesus (**Mark 8:35**).

Everything that is worth anything is costly.

And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.
Luke 14:27 (NIV)

Jesus made many sacrifices to provide the pathway for us to be in a relationship with God. It cost him his life as he died a painful death on the cross. Jesus (who is fully God), left the beauty and glory of heaven, emptying himself and taking on the weaknesses of having a human body (tiredness, hunger, physical pain, etc.) to come to earth to save us. He was rejected by his own disciples and friends, was hated by the religious leaders and experienced multiple death threats.

When we read in Scripture about counting the cost – Jesus knows. He had to count the cost, too.

Personal Reflection

What has it cost you to be a disciple of Jesus? Take a minute to quietly reflect, listing some of the ways in which you have "counted the cost" to follow Jesus.

Gratitude and Thanksgiving

Now reflect and write down what sacrifices that Jesus made for you. He came to earth, lived a human life (although he was fully God), dying on the cross for your sin. Write a prayer of thanks to him.

Scripture Meditation and Worship

Ask Jesus to speak to you from the verses listed in this devotional (**1 Corinthians 9:24-26 & Luke 14:27**). Is there an area of your life where he is asking you to count the cost? What would obedience to Jesus look like in that area?

Personal Prayer

Is there something in your life stressing you out or that you are currently worried about? Write it down in 1-2 sentences. Take that area to Jesus by writing a brief prayer to him.

Day Two Devotional: Walking with Jesus Daily

Psalm 16:8 (NIV) *I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.*

As a Christian, you have the incredible opportunity to walk with Jesus each day. The Christian life is about a personal relationship with Jesus. Many believers go to church and experience God there through worship, fellowship with other believers, and through preaching. These are amazing gifts from God which we should cherish. But we can have MORE! We can experience Jesus every day.

Walking with Jesus is about life in constant companionship and partnership with God. It is a life continually aware of God's incredible love for you, a profound purpose for you, and presence with you. As a believer, you have access to God's wisdom and assurance every day. God desires for you to have a life of loving companionship and partnership with him. This is a tremendous blessing of being a child of God.

There is an obstacle that keeps many believers from experiencing a wondrous God-filled life. That obstacle is you. If you don't seek it with your whole heart, you won't find it. It will take effort, but it will be worth it. Let's resolve to discipline our daily lives against the distractions that the world throws at us so that we can experience the presence and love of Jesus daily. Determine to continue growing in setting the Lord constantly before you, walking with Jesus, and talking to him regularly through prayer and reading the Word of God.

*You will seek me
and find me when
you seek me with
all your heart.*
Jeremiah 29:13
(NIV)

In the pursuit of Jesus, you receive him as the ultimate reward and this includes the fruits of his Spirit – love, joy, peace, and so on **(Galatians 5:22-23)**.

But it gets even better than that! You receive rewards for all eternity! The rewards that God has for his children are far greater than anything that you can even imagine. **1 Corinthians 2:9 (NIV)** *"... no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no human mind has conceived the things God has prepared for those who love him..."*. This is a tremendous promise! God has blessings and rewards for his children! Amazing love!

Personal Reflection

Take a moment to reflect on the past week and how you spent your time. Did you make space in your day to connect with God? Does your heart feel focused and connected to Jesus, or distracted and disconnected?

Gratitude and Thanksgiving

You have the potential to connect with Jesus daily. Jesus called this "abiding in Him" (**John 15:1-11**). Jesus made a way for you to have fellowship with God - to remain in his perfect love, joy, and peace each day. Write a prayer of thanks to him for these things.

Scripture Meditation and Worship

Read through the verses listed in this devotional (**Psalms 16:8 & Jeremiah 29:13**). Is there a step that you can take to experience God more fully in your daily life? Allow Jesus to speak to you and encourage you regarding these things.

Personal Prayer

Is there something in your life stressing you out or that you are currently worried about? Write it down in 1-2 sentences. Surrender that burden to Jesus by writing a brief prayer to him.

Day Three Devotional: Why Baptism?

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

The Bible is clear that Baptism is an essential step that every believer should take because Jesus commanded it. He also said that we should do it as an ongoing practice in the church. In Baptism, we portray what happened spiritually when we received Christ.

Baptism expresses union with Christ in his death and resurrection. The clearest teaching on this is in **Romans 6:3-4 (NIV)**, *Or don't you know that all of us who were Baptized into Christ Jesus were Baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through Baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*

When believers put their faith in Jesus, they are united to Christ, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and are justified by Him. This faith is shown and symbolized with an act of Baptism. Faith unites us to Christ; Baptism portrays the union with Christ. A good analogy is a wedding ring, which symbolizes that a person is married. Putting on a wedding ring does not mean a person is married, rather it shows the covenant that was made at the wedding ceremony.

Through Baptism, we dramatically portray what happened spiritually when we received Christ. Our old self died, and we received a new identity through faith in Jesus. That is what we symbolize when we go down into the water as though we are being buried and then come back up out of the water into new life.

Having been buried with him in Baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.

Colossians 2:12 (NIV)

Baptism is done in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (**Matthew 28:19**). There is a Holy appeal to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit to be present, to act, and to make the portrayal true and real in what it says about the work of redemption. There is no salvation without the Triune God (one God in three Persons). When we call upon their name in Baptism, we are depending on them (all three of them), we are honouring them, and we are saying that this act of Baptism is by them and for them.

Baptism is an expression of faith and therefore is only for believers (upon the confession of faith). It was uncompromisingly commanded and ordained by Jesus himself and was universally practiced by Christians in the early church and has been through the centuries. It is connected to being part of a local church and being united to the body of Christ. Finally, it is a sacred expression of faith, a faith that unites you with God Christ and his people.

Personal Reflection

What are your motivations for being Baptized? Have you accepted Jesus as your Saviour? Are you ready to take this next step of obedience?

Gratitude and Thanksgiving

When you put your faith in Jesus, you were united to Christ, you received the gift of the Holy Spirit, and you were justified by him (sins forgiven and declared righteous before God through Jesus). Write of prayer of thanksgiving to God for these remarkable gifts.

Scripture Meditation and Worship

Read the following verses listed in this devotional (***Matthew 28:19, Romans 6:3-4, & Colossians 2:12***), and ask the Lord to help you understand the message these verses as well as how to apply it to your life.

Personal Prayer

Is there something in your life stressing you out or that you are currently worried about? Take that area to Jesus by writing a brief prayer to him.

Participant Manual - Video Session 2

Part 2: The Core of Baptism



Scan QR for
video session

A. INTRODUCTION & REVIEW:

- In our first session, we learned that Baptism is a major discipleship event in the life of a Christian. It should not be taken lightly and that there is a cost to being a disciple.
- There are three significant things that happen at Baptism.
 1. We open ourselves up to God's grace.
 2. We make a declaration of our history with God.
 3. We make a declaration of our future intentions in the Kingdom of God.
- Today we are going to look at the meaning and significance of Baptism.

B. THE CORE OF BAPTISM

1. What is the Meaning of Baptism?

a) It illustrates Christ's burial and resurrection.

- **Colossians 2:12 (HCSB)** *Having been buried with Him in Baptism, you were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.*

- Two central parts of Christ's life that we identify with are His death and Resurrection.

- **1 Corinth. 10:2 (NIV)** *They were all Baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.*

- How do we see burial and resurrection in the story of Moses and the Israelites?

- Who went into the sea? A body of SLAVES... a people on the run from their oppressors.

- Who came out of the sea? A nation under God. A NEW CREATION! A freed, rescued, and redeemed people.

- **2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)** *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, and the new is here!*

b) It declares our new life as a Christian.

Romans 6:4 (HCSB) *Therefore we were buried with Him by Baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in a new way of life.*

We're supposed to be different, and we can be different! Baptism symbolizes this new life and is a public declaration that we've counted the cost and are heading in this direction!

Baptism questions that are asked in the tank (asked by the Baptizer):

- "_____, do you acknowledge that Jesus Christ is your Saviour, that He died on the cross for your sins and rose from the dead?"

- "Do you forsake your own rights and declare you are living for Him and will continue to do so for the rest of your life?"

Final declaration (said by Baptizer):

- "Then upon confession of your faith, I Baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Buried with Christ in the likeness of His death and raised to walk in newness of life!"

2. Why Should You be Baptized?

a) To follow the example set by Jesus Christ.

- **Mark 1:9 (HCSB)** *In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was Baptized in the Jordan by John. (see also **Luke 3:1-3, Matthew 3:1-17**)*

b) Because Christ commands it.

- **Matthew 28:19-20 (HCSB)** *Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

- c) It demonstrates that you are a believer.
- **Acts 18:8 (HCSB)** *Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed the Lord, along with his whole household. Many of the Corinthians when they heard, believed, and were Baptized.*
 - **Mark 8:38 (HCSB)** *For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."*
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3. What is the Church’s Role in Baptism?

- To **ENCOURAGE**, **EMPATHIZE** with, and **ENDURE** alongside other believers.
 - **Hebrews 10:19-25 (NIV)** *Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*
 - **In the days after your Baptism, you will witness other believers giving their ‘YES’ to Baptism. Remember that you are not a passive observer. Each time you see someone get Baptized you can reaffirm your decision to be “buried with Christ in the likeness of His death, and raised to walk in newness of life!”**
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ASSIGNMENT #2: Sharing Your Testimony

Take the rough notes of your testimony from the assignment on Page 6 and write out a final copy. Even though you won't have time to read out everything you write down during the video recording session for Baptism Weekend, this is still a formative and life-giving process. Take time to thank Jesus again for everything He has done for you!

- o We encourage you to share your testimony with 2-3 people before your Baptism date. Consider asking a parent, the person baptizing you, a small group leader or a friend to listen to your story, then pray for you!

Day Four Devotional: Benefits of Baptism

Luke 11:18 (NIV) *Blessed are those who hear the word of God and obey it.*

Since Jesus commanded his church to Baptize (**Matthew 28:19**), it follows there would be a measure of blessing connected with Baptism, because all obedience to God by Christians brings God's favour with it. This obedience is specifically a public act of confessing Jesus as Saviour, an act which itself brings joy and blessing to a believer. Moreover, it is a sign of the believer's death and resurrection with Christ (**Romans 6:2-5; Colossians 2:12**) and seems fitting that the Holy Spirit would work through such a sign to increase our faith, and to increase our experience of the power of new resurrection life in Christ that we have as believers. Since Baptism is a physical symbol of the death and resurrection of Christ and our participation in them, it should also give additional assurance of union with Christ to all believers who are present.

There is no magical property in the act of Baptism itself which causes a spiritual result to come about, yet there is genuine spiritual work in the life of the one being Baptized – a great joy in the Lord and in the salvation that Baptism so vividly portrays. Baptism symbolizes regeneration or spiritual rebirth. Certainly, the Lord gave us Baptism to strengthen and encourage our faith – and it should do so for every one who is Baptized and for every believer who witnesses a Baptism.

Getting Baptized honors God through obedience. When John was baptizing people for repentance, he recognized that Jesus had no reason to repent.

Upon trying to deter Jesus from this act, Jesus tells him that it was proper for him to be Baptized to fulfill all righteousness (**Matthew 3:13-15**). As Jesus began his public ministry, he was Baptized. If it was important for Jesus to obey through Baptism, it is important for believers to be

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be Baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be Baptized by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented.

Matthew 3:13-15 (NIV)

Baptism celebrates your commitment to follow Jesus and is a purposeful declaration. It is common to celebrate with those who are getting Baptized. Often those getting Baptized invite friends and family to witness this event in their spiritual life. When we declare publicly that we are followers of Jesus, we are sharing Jesus with the world and continuing this mission. Baptism is an opportunity to share our faith in Jesus and his commands with the world around us.

Baptism is not a mere tradition of Christianity or a rite of purification. It has great significance and there is a deep symbolism to the core of our faith. It is not a rite of purification for Christians - for forgiveness of sins, we look to Jesus alone. Baptism is a way to demonstrate the spiritual reality that Jesus has already accomplished through his work on the cross.

Personal Reflection

What are some of the blessings that you have received from Jesus? For example, church, small group, your family, salvation, freedom, joy, love, grace, etc.

Gratitude and Thanksgiving

Thank God for his generosity in giving blessings to those who obey. What are the benefits of Baptism that you look forward to receiving? Thank Jesus for these things.

Scripture Meditation and Worship

Read Matthew 3:1-13. What stands out to you about Jesus' Baptism?

Personal Prayer

Is there something in your life that is stressing you out or that you are currently worried about? Take that area to Jesus by writing a brief prayer to him.

Day Five Devotional: New Life in Christ

Romans 6:11-13 (NIV) *In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.*

Baptism is a symbol of Christ's burial and resurrection. Our entrance into the water during Baptism identifies us with Christ's death on the cross and his burial in the tomb. Coming up out of the water signifies his resurrection from the dead and his new life in Christ. We bury the old life, and we walk in a new life.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!
2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

When you were saved you became a new person. The problem is that the old self can be a hard habit to break. Think of the old self as filthy clothes, vices, and the worldly habits of sin. Paul says to put them to death (Romans 8:13). Sin must be dealt with a holy intolerance. It belongs to your old nature, which is corrupted and filled with deceitful desires. The old self is warped and inclined toward wrong desires and lusts. Paul is saying, put it to death.

We walk in the new life given to us by Jesus by renewing our minds. In **Romans 12:1-2** Paul says that we are not to be conformed to this world's manner of thinking, but rather we are to be transformed by the renewal of our minds. Our minds are never neutral, they are always being shaped and conformed. The question is, what are they being conformed to? Who or what is shaping them? This is what it means to live as a Christian. Our new life in Christ transforms how and why we live. And new life means a new walk.

We put on the virtues of a new life in Christ. This is not merely a list of things to do but an overarching framework established. We are

Ephesians 4:25-5:2 is a great passage with practical examples of what this new life should look like. We speak the truth (**vs. 25**), deal with anger promptly (**vs. 26-27**), don't steal (**vs. 28**), speak life-giving words to others (**vs. 29**), do not grieve the Holy Spirit (**vs. 30**), forsake self and dispense grace by imitating Jesus (**4:30-5:2**).

Habits are hard to break, and that is why we work tirelessly to deal with our sins. We do this by regularly putting off our old nature (dying to self), renewing our minds, and putting on the new life we have in Christ.

Personal Reflection

What are some of the ways that you are victoriously living a new life in Christ? Think of areas of freedom that you are walking in and the spiritual growth that you have experienced

Gratitude and Thanksgiving

Jesus empowers us to walk with him in the new life that he has given us. Thank him for the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in your life. Thank him for the continual forgiveness and strength that he provides day by day.

Scripture Meditation and Worship

Read **Romans 6:11-13** and **Ephesians 4:25-5:2**. What stands out to you from these passages? Are there areas for you to take a step toward growth and obedience? How can you do that?

Personal Prayer

Is there something in your life stressing you out or that you are currently worried about? Take that area to Jesus by writing a brief prayer to him.

Day Six Devotional: The Role of the Church

1 Corinthians 12:13 (NIV), *For we were all Baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.*

Since Baptism is the sign of entrance into the body of Christ (the church), then it seems appropriate that it be done within the fellowship of the church wherever possible so that the church can rejoice with the person being Baptized and so the faith of all believers in the church might be built up. Your Baptism is not only a special day for you, but a special day for the church.

As you get Baptized, please consider the role of the church for your future growth. God designed the church to be a catalyst for spiritual growth. We do this through discipleship, which is essential to God's plan for your growth. Consider joining a small group and serving in the church as tools for your growth. Fellowship with other believers is vital. Scripture uses descriptors for the church such as a body, household, and family. It is obvious that God's intent for his followers is to practice their faith together with other believers.

And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.
Ephesians 1:22-23

Commitment to a church is thoroughly biblical. After the first church started in Jerusalem, Luke describes their initial activity. *"All the believers devoted themselves to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's supper) and to prayer..." (Acts 2:42).* These first church members understood that their Christian life was not a solo act. They devoted themselves to fellowship which includes taking care of one another and holding one another accountable. They lived in a culture full of spiritual warfare (**Ephesians 6:10-17**) so they needed each other.

Believers who are committed to a local church and engaged in a small group have ample opportunity to hear the Word of God and apply it to their lives regularly. Many small groups read through books of the Bible together providing a study of the Word of God.

Personal Reflection

What are some of the ways that being part of a local church have benefited you? This could be spiritual but also things such as community and serving.

Gratitude and Thanksgiving

Jesus considers the church to be his body (He is the head - ***Ephesians 1:22-23***). Thank Jesus for the local church. Thank him for the benefits you listed in the previous question.

Scripture Meditation and Worship

Read ***Acts 2:42-47***. What stands out to you from this passage?

Personal Prayer

Is there something in your life stressing you out or that you are currently worried about? Take that area to Jesus by writing a brief prayer to him.

Congratulations, You've completed this booklet!

What's Next?

1. If you have not done so already, please head to our church website to register for the next available Baptism Weekend!

Follow this link to find the Baptism Registration:

<https://mysouthland.com/Baptism>.



Scan QR

2. We will follow up with you with additional information closer to the date of the Baptism Weekend. In the meantime, if you have questions please reach out to us at ***info@mysouthland.com***.

3. Don't forget to complete the assignments on Pages 6 & 17, and practice sharing your story with those around you!