

Tattooed

(Part 5: "Watermarked")

Opening Prayer, Confession of Faith & Worship

Big Idea:

Are you wearing the watermark of Christ? As a believer in Christ, have you been baptized? No. Why not? What is keeping you from participating in this spiritual act of cleansing and identification with your Savior?

Summary:

Water baptism is clearly presented throughout the New Testament as a foundational institution of Christianity; however, many believers in Christ have not been water baptized because of misconceptions. One of the primary misconceptions is that baptism is not necessary or is just a form of religious "extra credit". Not only is it Christ's direct command for us to be baptized and to baptize others, but water baptism also serves two primary purposes in the life of someone who has surrendered to Jesus Christ. First, water baptism is the way God spiritually washes away the old nature that has been cut off through this act of spiritual circumcision. Second, it is the way we publicly identify with Christ. It leaves us with a type of spiritual watermark, which says to the world around us, "I have chosen to publicly identify with Jesus Christ as a follower of His." We are declaring that we are now His and choosing to become members of His family and citizens of His kingdom with all of benefits and responsibilities that are included.

Being a Christian who intentionally avoids baptism doesn't compute. If we truly desire to obediently follow the Savior of the world who gave His very life for us, and we want to spend eternity with Him but don't desire to identify with Him in baptism, then we haven't fully comprehended the benefits of baptism. Baptism cuts off the old life with all of its guilt and shame, its addictive behavior and tendencies, and provides freedom. Baptism frees us from the life of sin and is an act of obedience to Christ. Like we see so many times in the early church, "Those who believed and accepted his message were baptized." Let's be like the Ethiopian who, upon hearing of the truth about Christ, passionately asked why he shouldn't be immediately baptized. Come on, dive in, and wear the watermark of your Savior!

Discussion Questions: (read the scriptures & discuss)

Matthew 28:18-20 and Mark 16:15-16

Is baptism commanded or suggested by Jesus? What do you think holds people back from being baptized?

Matthew 3:16, Luke 3:21-22, and Luke 4:1

What did the Son of God gain as a result of baptism? Again, why is it necessary that we be baptized and be filled as He was? Did you have a similar experience after your baptism?

Romans 6:4-8

How does baptism into Christ change us? What do we lose in baptism, and what do we gain? How is baptism related to living a victorious Christian life?

Taking Action: Share about your baptism experience with the group. If you are a believer and have not been baptized, don't let anything hold you back. Call the church office and schedule your baptism!

Ministry Time