

Bibliography and Suggestions for Further Reading...



The information in this curriculum was drawn from several excellent sources. Listed below are some recommendations for further reading and study:

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Author's Note: This study could not have been written without the invaluable information from lectures given by Dr. Carla A. Waterman at the Institute for Worship Studies, Florida Campus, in January, 2001.

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and being a disciple of Christ.*

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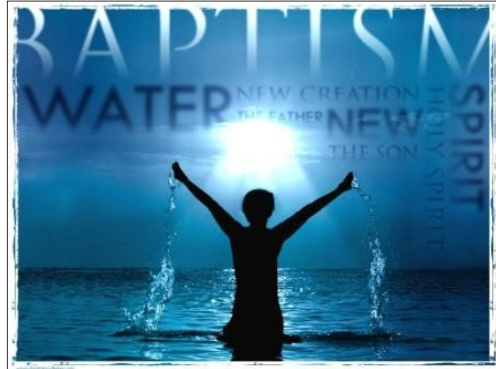
Chris Alford

Walking Out Your Baptism

Introduction

Baptism and you...

You have walked through a lengthy time of instruction and discipleship— *A Journey to Jesus*— and have made an important decision to live in God’s story, His narrative of the world. Now, your baptism, one of Christianity’s most important rites, is not too far away. *So many thoughts and questions must come to mind!*



But did you ever think that your baptism— that special, public act— links you to a countless multitude of believers before you? Baptism, as we will discover in this booklet, goes back to the very early Christian Church and was a very important part of a new believer’s entrance into the Body of Christ. *And here’s the exciting part:* We will discover that baptism is so much more than a one-time event, so much more than a social nicety mostly forgotten after the certificate and pictures are put away.

This, in fact, is the main point of this study: Baptism is an ongoing, daily discipleship issue because we are constantly in need of dying to self and being raised up into new life with Christ.

At Epiclesis, baptismal candidates are asked to make a public declaration of faith, “Jesus is Lord,” just before being immersed into the pool. That practice, too, goes right back to the very early Church, and it signals that something profound is taking place. You see, the confession “Jesus is Lord” is born out every day as we seek to “walk out” our baptism. Baptism means to follow as disciples in the footsteps of Christ— including His baptism, but also beyond!

God’s richest blessings as you prepare for this wonderful event in your life. *May the grace of God the Father, the peace of Christ, and the presence of the Holy Spirit be always with you!*

What to bring.

Bring your usual facial and hair grooming products with you for after your baptism. *Here’s a helpful note:* We don’t recommend that you use excessive make up or hair products before baptism. You can imagine what the water will do to makeup and hair spray!

Also, bring spare undergarments and any additional items you may want to wear underneath your robe (some people prefer to wear an additional plain, white tee-shirt or something similar under the robe). *Another helpful note:* Our robes are made of a thick, non-clinging fabric that zip up the front and have weights in the bottom hem.

A tour of the robing rooms and baptistery.

The last stop for part four of our study is a short tour of the robing rooms and baptistery. We’ll meet on a Sunday morning (probably just after our regular worship service) then walk down to the rooms together. If you have any questions that haven’t been covered, please don’t hesitate to ask!

Things to think and talk about from Part 4:

1. Now that you’ve heard some more details about the actual process of being baptized, is there anything else— other questions— that come to mind? Anything that you’re concerned about?
2. A behind-the-scenes look at our baptistery and related facilities helps some people feel more at ease and comfortable. Are there some things about our baptismal process or facilities that you think we could improve upon?
3. Take some time to evaluate this entire course on baptism. Has it been useful to you? More importantly, has it changed the way you think about your own baptism? Will it shape the way you live after baptism? What about the course would you change? How?

Here is some space for you to jot down some thoughts and ideas:

Part 4: *Some practical matters: When your baptism is scheduled— What to expect— What to bring— A tour of the robing rooms and baptistery.*

When your baptism is scheduled.

We've learned about the theology and history of baptism, we've studied about walking out your baptism, and now it's time to get down to even more practical matters. It's time to get ready for *your own* baptism!

First, let's talk about when your baptism is scheduled. Mark down these date(s) and time(s):

Your name: _____

Baptism scheduled for Sunday, _____

We'll be meeting at _____ at this location _____

What to expect.

As you enter into the pool, the pastor will assist you and steady you as you walk in the water. He will help guide you into a position near the front of the baptistery facing the gathered assembly of worshipers. You will stand on the pastor's right hand side.

Your words to say: The pastor will ask you to proclaim a declaration of faith. The response is "Jesus is Lord!". He will also ask you if you renounce the evil one and all his works. The response is "I renounce him!"

The pastor will talk with you before your baptism in more detail about how he will help lower and raise you in the water. Generally, however, the candidate grasps the pastor's left arm as he, in turn, holds the person's nostrils closed. He will use his right hand to support the neck and head as the person is dipped in and out of the water. The motion is a kind of combination of bending the knees and reclining backwards.

After you have been immersed, the pastor will help steady you as you stand. Next, walk back up the stairs using the handrail— a helper will be waiting with a towel— and return to your dressing room.



Outline:

Part 1: Greeting and Introductions

Part 2: Baptism: A Matter of Life and Death?

Part 3: Walking Out Your Baptism.

Part 4: Some Practical Matters.

Part 1: *Greeting and introductions— Your thoughts and expectations about baptism— A look at baptism in the early Church— Our view and practice of baptism.*

When we go through the waters of baptism, we connect ourselves to a long, rich history of religious water ritual that stretches back even to the days of Noah. Imagine that! Before we take a close look at baptism, let's examine the concept of the biblical symbol of water.

There are at least two very striking and significant watery encounters in the Old Testament... *and you can probably guess what they are with little effort.* Of course, we're talking about the great flood in Noah's day and also the crossing of the Red Sea. Now, think about what water represents in each of those two well-known stories: the flood was a deluge of *cleansing*, of washing away, of purifying. The crossing of the Red Sea meant *delivery* for the Children of Israel, a passageway to a new way of life.



Can you already see the great significance of these two Old Testament themes? Water both destroys *and* renews. It cleanses *and* delivers. We're already well on our way to a deeper understanding of baptism!

Now let's turn to the New Testament. There are many passages that have to do with baptism— there are many references to water— but biblical scholars point to at least two that have great importance: Romans 6:3-11, and John 3:1-16.

In Romans, Paul picks up the Old Testament idea of water that both cleanses and restores. Take a moment to examine the passage and briefly **2**

discuss how those two themes are revealed.

In the John 3 passage, we get to eavesdrop on the conversation between Nicodemus and Jesus. When Christ tells Nicodemus that “no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit,” He isn’t suggesting that baptism is what brings salvation (as some have interpreted it). Rather, Jesus is pointing again to that powerful, double truth about water: it both purifies and delivers— that we must die to the old and be re-born into the new.

Baptism in the early Church....

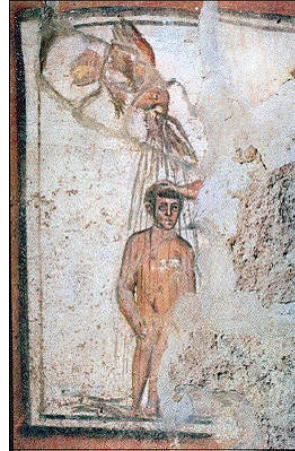
We’ve already said that being baptized links you to believers from the past, but so does going through this very act of pre-baptismal instruction. It turns out that baptism has been one of a few very important first steps in becoming a Christian since the early Church, but it’s not the first step. Going through a pre-baptismal period of instruction— just as you are doing now!— began to be an accepted way of bringing new converts into the Church in the first century. But unlike your four-part initiation, those interested in the Christian faith in the first century went through a process that could take up to three years!

Here’s how the seven-step instruction process worked: The first step was called “Inquiry” in which a person would ask questions and be challenged to “take up the cross of Christ and follow after Him.”

Next, came the second step called the “Rite of Welcome.” The “seekers,” as they were called, were presented to the Church, then asked to publicly renounce false gods (which in those days also meant renouncing Rome’s emperor and its pagan religions). Then followed something called the “Rite of Stignation,” where the minister would make the sign of the cross on the seeker’s forehead in each of the names of the Trinity. This was known as the seeker’s “invisible tattoo.” The final act saw the seeker invited to sit among the faithful. (At Epiclesis, these first two steps are combined in the first book of our “Journey to Jesus” process titled “Follow Me”).

The third step was the “Catechumen.” This took up the bulk of the seeker’s nearly three-year initiation process and was devoted to theological study and the development of Christian character.

Step four was called “The Rite of Election” where the new believer was asked, “Do you choose Jesus?” After the answer, “Yes,” the seeker stepped to a book (called the book of life, by the way!) and wrote down



Another step in living incarnationally with Jesus is to *obey*— and this follows the other two steps quite logically: if we’re going to listen to the Lord, and if we’re going to practice living incarnationally with Him, then we simply must obey. True activity of the upwardly-pointed soul is obedience. *Here’s a remarkable thing about obedience:* when we’re truly receiving and truly obeying, the choices God puts before us are clear. Obedience is required. The properly aimed soul will obey.

Things to think and talk about from Part 3:

How might a Christian confuse relationship with Church and relationship with Christ?

What difference, if any, is there between W.W.J.D. and W.D.J.L.?

What does living incarnationally mean to you?

The soul is like a satellite dish? What do you think?

What kind of false receptivity might you have a tendency to fall into? And what about false activity?

Take another look at the four quotes by Myers and Merton and find the most striking *action* words associated with the soul. What are the most interesting examples to you?

In what ways can we listen to God?

What’s the difference between *trying* to hear God’s voice and *longing* to hear it?

In what ways can we practice living in the presence of God?

The 2 Timothy passage talks about “training” yourself to be godly. Is it comforting or troubling for you to realize that walking out your baptism involves some effort?

Do you think the choice to obey God will always be clear?

Will obedience to God always be easy? How about spectacular?

and faith will spring of itself. It is the bloom of soul's health. See to it that your soul is nourished and at rest: then faith will be as natural as scent to a flower, or bloom to a peach. Do not ask if yours is of the right sort; all faith is right which is directed towards Him who God has set forth to receive the loving devotion of all human hearts." —Myers, *The Christ in Isaiah*.

"The soul that projects itself entirely into activity, and seeks itself outside itself in the work of its own will is like a madman who sleeps on the sidewalk in front of his house instead of living inside where it is quiet and warm. The soul that throws itself outdoors in order to find itself in the effects of its own work is like a fire that has no desire to burn but seeks only to go up in smoke." —Merton, *No Man is an Island*, "Being and Doing."

"The fact that our being necessarily demands to be expressed in action should not lead us to believe that as soon as we stop acting we cease to exist. We do not live merely in order to 'do something'— no matter what... We do not live more fully merely by doing more, seeing more, tasting more, and experiencing more than we ever have before. On the contrary, some of us need to discover that we will not begin to live more fully until we have the courage to do and see and taste and experience much less than usual." — Merton, *No Man is an Island*, "Being and Doing."

Three or four helpful suggestions about how to walk out your baptism...

- Listen.
- Practice.
- Obey.

The first step in living incarnationally with Jesus is to *listen*. Take a close look at John 10:14. This is the familiar passage where Jesus describes Himself as the "good shepherd"— and, He says, that He knows His sheep and they listen to His voice. The Lord longs to have a close relationship with you. If our "satellite dish" is aimed upward— if we are prepared to listen— we will hear. *And here's another helpful hint:* We don't necessarily have to strive to hear His voice, but we certainly do have to wait for it. And listen! There is a great difference between *trying* to hear His voice and *longing* to hear His voice.

The next step in living incarnationally with Jesus is to *practice* living in His presence. Recall the diagram showing how Jesus is in you just as you are in Him? Calling that to mind, reading the John 14 passage, asking the Lord to reveal this truth in your life *is* to practice living in His presence. 2 Timothy 4:7 says, "Train yourselves to be godly." If you're like most believers, you don't always feel like you're living in His presence— you don't always feel like training. Oh, Christian friend, these are precisely the times that we need to ask the Father to show us the reality of this incarnational truth.

his/her name. (This step may be found in the second book of "Journey to Jesus" titled "Be My Disciple").

Step five was called "Purification and Enlightenment" which usually began on the first Sunday of Lent. Recall that Lent is the period of about six weeks leading up to Easter. Each day of Lent, the person preparing for baptism would receive the laying on of hands and a special prayer of encouragement.

At long last, step six was the actual "Rite of Baptism," which traditionally happened on Easter Sunday morning. What a glorious (and perfect) time to put to death the old life and be raised in the new! Baptism occurred at dawn just as the sun began to rise. Those being baptized took off all their clothing to symbolize the taking off of the old way of life (don't worry, we don't follow that custom here!). After baptism, they put on new, white robes to symbolize a new life in Christ Jesus! *Here's an interesting insight:* While standing in the water, the baptismal candidate was asked, "Do you renounce the devil and all his works?" The reply was, "I do," and then the candidate would spit, as if to spit in the face of the devil (and we don't observe that particular part of the custom, either). Then the new believer would be immersed three times (in the name of each of the members of the Trinity) and finally anointed with oil, which was a symbol of receiving the Holy Spirit. *Here's the very best part of all:* After baptism, the new Christian would immediately participate in his very first communion! (Steps five and six are combined, more or less, in book three of the "Journey to Jesus" titled "Walk in the Spirit").

By the way, you might be interested to know *how* the early Church went about the actual mechanics of baptism. With a document called "The Didache" (pronounced DID-ah-kay), or "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," we have a front row seat! The Didache was a "how to" manual for the very early Church (it was written between 65-80 A.D.) and included teaching about such things as baptism, prayer, and even Church structure.

Look at this quote from the Didache:
"CONCERNING BAPTISM: 1) And concerning baptism, baptize this way: After reviewing all of this teaching, baptize in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in living (running) water. 2) But if living water is not



available, then baptize into other water; and cold is preferred, but if not available in warm. 3) But if neither is available, pour water three times upon the head in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. 4) But before the baptism, let the administrator fast, and also the one being

baptized, and all others who are able; be sure to instruct the one being baptized to fast one or two days before.” (Aren’t you glad that our baptistery is heated?)

The last step of initiation, called “The Mystagogue,” occurred during the weeks immediately after Easter when the new believer would be further instructed in mysteries of the faith, especially the Lord’s Supper, and encouraged to devote himself to a life pleasing to Christ, good works and involvement in the Church. (This step may be found, more or less, in book four of the “Journey to Jesus” titled “Walk in the Spirit”).

Our view and practice of baptism at Epiclesis...

One thing that will be helpful to the conversation about our view and practice of baptism will be to have a basic understanding of the views of other Christian denominations, especially mainline churches.

No one would argue that an adult person coming to Christ should not be baptized; the tough debate comes up when the subject turns to infants. Our practice at Epiclesis is to baptize both infants and adults. Are they the same?



The core issues are these: What does baptism represent? Does baptism “do” anything *to* or *for* a believer? Does God, through the power of the Holy Spirit at baptism, begin a work of faith in an infant *before* they are consciously able to make a decision for Christ? *Some weighty questions for the very first part of our study, wouldn’t you say?*

Here’s another very practical question: Why should all this matter, anyway? The answer, in part, is that a better understanding of these issues will help make your baptism more meaningful. These matters have been passionately debated since the early Church; following the debate helps us build a strong foundation for our own baptismal beliefs and, more importantly, how we walk out our baptism in the years ahead.

Let’s start by looking at the approach of those who practice infant baptism (this would include, among others, Roman Catholics and many Protestant denominations such as Episcopalians, Lutherans, and Methodists).

The fact is, there is no explicit, direct evidence in the New Testament to support infant baptism. However, there is some evidence to suggest that it was indeed practiced, because there are several passages that tell of

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position, it won’t get good reception. *How like the soul that is!*

“I lift my soul up to the Lord,” says the Psalmist. That’s true receptivity. When we’re tapped into the Signal we live in faith, we cling to God’s promises, we listen— *truly listen*— to the Lord, and allow ourselves to be vulnerable.

Then, when we have true *receptivity*— and this is the terrific part!— we can enjoy true *activity*. Activity is the other motion of the soul, the “output” of the satellite dish, if you will.

True activity is characterized by obedience, following the Lord’s clear voice, “strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,” action!

Now, here’s the other side of the story— here’s what happens to the unreceptive soul:

When the soul is focused downward or inward, like the satellite dish, it can’t possibly get true reception. No longer an instrument of receiving, it becomes useless and heavy and cold. It has no ultimate meaning apart from its Signal. Its receptivity is false.

When we’re cut off from the Signal— *when our receptivity is false*— we aim ourselves toward other things; we do not listen to the Lord; we do not cling to His promises; we are not vulnerable to God or others.

Even more destructive, when our receptivity is false, our activity is also not genuine: much of our energy is spent in defining and establishing ourselves. We become emotionally numb, we lose our identity. We have no true relationship with the Lord.

How do we possibly find balance?

Here are some marvelous quotes about the motion of the soul and its capacity to be receptive:

“The nature of Jesus may be poured forth as fragrance on the air or light from the sun, but there must be an appropriate organ of sense ready, or the fragrance will be wasted and the light unappreciated. Before perfect soundness can be imparted to any bruised, lame, or helpless soul, there must be the energy of the divine that resides in Jesus and the receptivity of the human, which is the necessary condition in us.” —Myers, *The Life of Peter*.

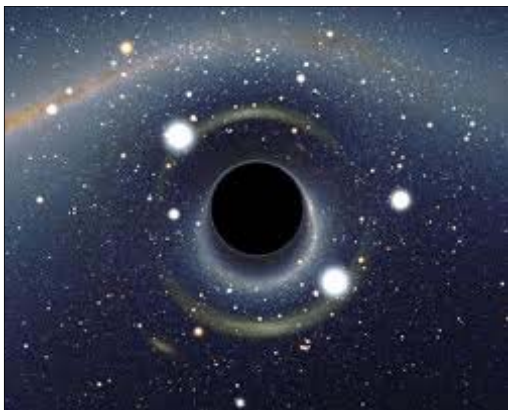
“It is not well to concentrate our thought too much on faith, lest we hinder its growth. Look away from faith to the object of faith,

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Did you ever hear someone suggest that your soul has *motion*? How can that be? Souls don't even have physical substance, so how could they *move* at all?

Listen to an excerpt from Psalm 84... and listen especially for the *motion* that is taking place: "How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord Almighty! My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God." The soul of the Psalmist is inclining toward God—*he is leaning toward the Father*.

Consider for a moment that the soul has a "natural," built-in motion—*and it's not toward God, is it?* As sinful, fallen creatures, our natural inclination is inward and toward ourselves. When we over-focus on ourselves and our problems, even when they are legitimate ones, our souls start tumbling down a long, dark hill. Sometimes that causes us to focus on self even more which, sadly, only makes the problem worse. Ever been around a person whose all-consuming passion in life is self? Like a kind of emotional black hole in space, they take in great universes of attention—they suck up all the light and energy around them, always wanting more. They never fill up and never reflect anything back.



The voids in our lives will never be filled until we come into union with our Father.

As a new believer in Christ, and because of the Holy Spirit's witness in you, you have the capacity to change the posture—*the motion*—of your soul.

Let's look at a different picture:



Suppose for a moment that your soul is like a satellite dish. Satellite dishes have to be *aimed*, don't they. You might even say that the natural force of gravity would tend to make the dish fall downward if we didn't intervene and lock it into place tightly.

The satellite dish only works properly when it is pointed upward. In any other

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entire families or households being baptized, such as the household of Cornelius, the Philippian jailer's home, or the house of Stephanas (see Acts 11:14, 16:15, 33, and 18:8; 1 Cor. 1:16; and 2 Tim. 1:16, for example). The argument goes that there had to have been small children in some of these families.

Consider also the fact that Jesus obviously held children in the highest regard. Recall the passage where Jesus rebuked the disciples for not letting the children come to Him (Mark 10, Matt. 18 and 19, and Luke 18, the latter of which translates "children" in such a way as to make clear that some were also infants). "Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it," Jesus says. Though the passage is not directly concerned with the issue of baptism, the point is often made that to refuse children baptism is to make the same mistake the disciples did.

Another strong source of support comes from the early Church Fathers. A number of early writers, especially Origen, Polycarp, and Justin Martyr, seem to suggest that the practice was ongoing since the time of the apostles.

Let's not forget, of course, that there are Christian denominations that do not practice or support infant baptism. Why not? Among other reasons, these groups (Baptists, for example) point out that Jesus Himself was baptized at age 30, and that baptism has a prerequisite of repentance and faith, which are impossible for an infant.

The differences between paedobaptists (those who practice infant baptism) and credobaptists (those who support believer's baptism) come about because each group disagrees about the nature of faith, the role of baptism, the means of salvation, the nature of grace, and the function of the sacraments. Paedobaptism and credobaptism are positions which flow out of sometimes complicated theological views that we simply do not have the space here to discuss.

But most everyone can agree that salvation is an act of God—that our being saved has everything to do with God's power and nothing to do with our ability to save ourselves. Those who support infant baptism, however, take this idea further to suggest that baptism is an outward, physical act that demonstrates the anticipation of God's salvation.

Let's sum up a bit: Those who practice infant baptism, for the most part, do not mean to suggest that the act "saves" a child or even that active, conscious faith is present. Rather, the argument is made that the act of baptism is done in anticipation of a faith to come. Many paedobaptists also see New Testament baptism as a continuation of the Old Testament covenantal practice of circumcision. We should remember that the

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promises that are made at the time of the infant’s baptism, the covenants that are entered into, are also made with the parents and even the gathered Church as well. Parents and Church members promise to pray for, nurture, and “grow up” the child in the love and admonition of the Lord. On the other hand, those who only practice adult, believer’s baptism primarily see the practice as being obedient to the command of Jesus found in Matthew 28.

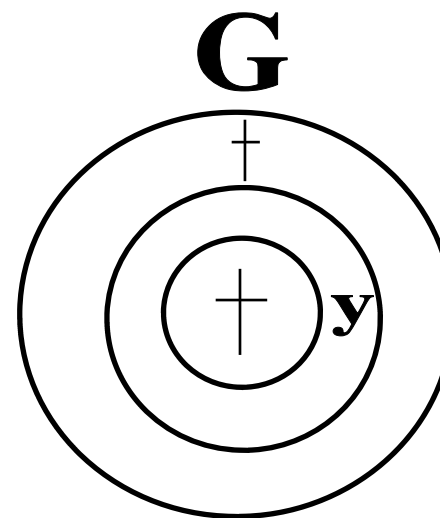
Our practice at Epiclesis, whether infant or adult, is to interpret baptism as a Sacrament, or an outward, visible sign of an inward, invisible grace. We believe that the act is the culminating rite of a person’s Journey to Jesus and a holy sign that heralds the person’s entrance into the Church. We hold to these five scriptural and historical understandings: that baptism represents death to self and new life in Christ; it unites us to Christ; it is a sign of our initiation into the New Covenant; it conveys the gift of the Holy Spirit; and that it represents a purification from sin. That’s a lot to unpack, isn’t it? Not to worry: We’ll spend the next part of our study focusing on those five principles.



Things to think and talk about from Part 1:

1. How is the dual nature of water in Scripture (both purifying/destroying and delivering) seen in baptism?
2. What did Jesus mean when He said that Nicodemus had to “be born of water and the Spirit” before he could enter the kingdom of God?
3. Early Christians went through many steps before they could enter into the fellowship of the Church. We do a similar thing at Epiclesis. Has that been a meaningful process for you?
4. What about that reference to the “invisible tattoo”? Discuss this with your mentor and see what insights you discover.
5. This course attempts to emphasize the idea of “walking out your baptism.” Now, we haven’t turned to that topic officially (wait until part 3!), but what kind of ideas come to mind already about what that might mean? What does our baptism have to do with our daily walk with

Here’s the simple model we were talking about:



The space outside the diagram represents God the Father. The space inside the outer-most circle represents Jesus. The next space toward the center represents you. The inner-most circle represents Jesus. So, as Jesus is in the Father, and you are in Him, He is also at once *in* you! What a mystery— *and what a source of strength!*

It is true that Jesus is a model of behavior for us— because of the way He lived— but He is also a model simply because of His very union with the Father. His *relationship* to God is a model. *Think about this beautiful truth for a moment:* Jesus’ character— His likeness and very being— comes from the Father. Now, if Jesus lives in us, then our character— our likeness and very being— will come from Him. The baptismal waters destroy and purify the old person, and then they deliver the new person into a brand new life. When we are baptized with Christ and into Christ and clothed with Christ, we can’t help but be changed. And, thanks be to God, Jesus does the changing for us!

So, walking out your baptism means Christ *in* you, walking with you, *for* you. Walking out your baptism means living incarnationally with Jesus. It sounds easy doesn’t it? Most every mature Christian knows that it is not. So, what are some practical steps in dealing with the everyday issues we all face in walking out our baptism?

The motion of the soul...

Before we get to some helpful ideas about *how* to live incarnationally with Jesus every day, it might be insightful to talk a bit about the motion of the soul.

Christ, not just the Church organization, and being “clothed” with Christ (Gal. 3). A look in Romans and Titus reveals similar language. What’s being described here is action! Something “happens” in our baptism. We are changed. We are redirected. And we walk differently.

You may be familiar with a slogan that was popular a few years ago: “W.W.J.D.” “What would Jesus do?” was at one time a terrific rallying cry for young people (and old ones, too) as believers tried to behave like Christ in a world that so desperately needs Jesus. But perhaps an even better question is, “Where does Jesus live?” *Here’s the point:* We should follow Christ’s example in baptism because He did it, but that’s only the start! If Jesus is only a model of behavior for us, we will have missed out on the vast abundance that is ours when we *walk* daily with Him. But if Jesus lives in us— if He is incarnated in our lives— then we not only “do” as Jesus does, but we allow Him to do it *through* us!



There’s a marvelous passage of Scripture in John (14:15 ff) where Jesus is talking with and comforting His disciples. Let’s take a close look at those verses, for they are key to our discussion:

As Jesus talks with His followers about promising to send the Holy Spirit, He gives them these encouraging words: “...Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.” This may sound a bit confusing at first glance, but it strikes at the very heart of our discussion about incarnational living— and a better understanding of it will help you as you prepare to walk in your baptism.

Turn to the next page for a model of how this biblical concept might look.

Christ?

Here is some space for you to jot down some thoughts and ideas:

Part 2: Baptism: A Matter of Life and Death?

Now, we already glanced at a few Scriptures in the first part of our study that had to do with baptism, but let’s dig a little deeper and focus on several more. As we were wrapping up our look at infant versus adult baptism, we listed five scriptural principles that we hold to at Epiclesis. Let’s take a closer look at those now.

First, read the passages, then jot down some thoughts or questions that occur to you:

Baptism as Death and New Life:

- 1 Peter 3:20-21 – The story of Noah’s Ark.
- 1 Corinthians 10:1-4 – The crossing of the Red Sea.
- Romans 6:4 – Paul writes about baptism.

Baptism as That Which Unites Us to Christ:

Romans 5:12-21 – The sin of Adam causes the fall of man (original sin), Jesus repairs the breach caused by Adam.

Romans 6:3-5 – We are united to Christ, His death and resurrection, through baptism.

Baptism as Initiation into the New Covenant (Sign of the Covenant):

Genesis 17:10-12 – Circumcision is initiation rite.

Colossians 2:11-12 – Circumcision reinterpreted as Baptism.

Baptism as Conveying of the Gift of the Holy Spirit:

Matthew 3:16 – Jesus was baptized...the spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on Him.

Acts 10:37-38 – After the baptism of John...God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and with Power.

Acts 2:38 – Repent and be baptized...and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit

Baptism as Purification from Sin:

Acts 2:38 – Repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins...

Acts 22:16 – And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on His name.

Romans 6:11 – We are those who have died to sin; ...all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

There's quite a lot to unpack in all these passages, wouldn't you say? After you've read through these passages, and also had some time to write down questions or thoughts, your mentor will want to spend some time talking with you about them.

Part 3: *Walking Out Your Baptism.*

Baptism is *action* as well as symbol...

Perhaps one of the most tragic errors Christians make is to confuse “relationship with Church” and “relationship with Christ.” It most often happens when we talk about good works, but it can also happen when we come to the topic of baptism. At Epiclesis we, like other churches, quite rightly view baptism as being an entrance into the fellowship of Church. Sadly, this is where too many believers stop and grow no further in their understanding of baptism: They never go farther and learn to walk in the newness of life in Christ.



There's that *word*: “Walk.” *It's an action word!* Take a close look at baptism in the New Testament and you will discover even more action words! In Galatians, Paul talks about being baptized “into”