



Newness of Life

OBJECTIVE

To help groups understand and experience baptism as a daily drowning of the old self and rising to new life in Christ.

FOCUS THIS WEEK

Before you were old enough to know what was going on, the God of the universe was so in love with you that you were adopted into God's family. You are a child of the King! An heir of all the riches of God. So what? Don't let anyone leave this session without being confronted by this truth: By the water and the power of God's Word, you are a new creation.

FAITH5 SMALL GROUP TIME



SHARE highs and lows to set the stage for a more open and meaningful discussion. Pair group members up one-on-one to share the best and worst things that happened this week. After a short while, return to small group and invite each person to share their partner's highs and lows. Encourage youth to write their personal highs and lows, those of their partner, and a short prayer on their FAITH5 Small Group Time Handout.



READ and highlight the theme verse, Romans 6:3-4, in your Bibles and circle key words. A musical version of this Scripture verse can be found at www.faithink.com, FINKlink LL02.



TALK about how the Bible reading might relate to today's highs and lows. Supplement your discussion with some of the following.

A. IMAGES IN WORDS AND ART

Take a look at the theme art and cartoons. What do you see in the art? Ask youth where they are in the art. How might the art and the theme verse apply to your group highs and lows today?

B. CATECHISM ENCOUNTER

Scan Luther's explanation of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. What are the benefits of Baptism according to Luther?

C. QUESTIONS TO PONDER

1. **How is sin like mud? How is sin like quicksand?** Affirm any thoughtful answers. Mud stains us, quicksand can bury us.

2. **There are seven different meanings for the word “baptize” in Greek (the New Testament language). They include to dip, to submerge, to wash and to sprinkle. Can any or all of these be used for a baptism? Why or why not?** Affirm any thoughtful answers.

3. **A friend says, “If you aren’t totally immersed under water, you aren’t really baptized.” How do you answer?** The first disciples of Jesus baptized people in rivers, in jails, in deserts, and in towns. Not all of them were able to immerse. The main thing is this: God is the actor. We are receiving the sign that we belong.

D. QUOTATIONS Ask youth to choose a quotation and share their thoughts and questions about it.

E. TERMS OF THE WEEK Review these key terms and write definitions.

Baptism: The event in which sinners are washed with water and saved by God’s Word as God begins shaping them into followers of Jesus Christ for life.

Believer Baptism: The practice taught where a person must be old enough to reject their sinful ways and choose Christ in order to be baptized.

Immersion: Practice where people are held under water during baptism to symbolize the drowning of the old and rising to new life.

New Life: In Baptism, we are named and claimed into a new life by God.

Repentance: A true sense of one’s own sinfulness and turning away from it by the mercy of God.

F. GROUP BUSINESS

1. **Servant Event Idea:** Find a candle-making set and make baptismal candles for all of the children who are baptized in your church this year. Create a design for a counted cross-stitched or embroidered towel used in the ceremony and gather an intergenerational group to make the towels.

2. **FAITH5 Home Huddle:** Encourage youth to take a few minutes for FAITH5 with their families each night at home, using the FAITH5 Journals or the Home Huddle Handout.

G. WRAP UP Summarize the event with your group, assigning someone to share what you learned at closing.

- One new thing we learned today
- One thing we already knew that is worth repeating
- One thing we would like to know more about
- The highest highs and lowest lows which our group will bring to the closing prayer



PRAY for one another. Praise and thank God for your highs. Ask the Holy Spirit to be with you in your lows. Include your friend’s highs and lows in your prayers. Toss a newspaper into the center of the group or invite youth to think of something going on in the world that calls for prayer. **Tip:** Gather in a circle. Hold hands, lock arms or go shoulder-to-shoulder to bond your group!



BLESS one another by name. Trace a cross on each hand or forehead. Look them in the eyes and give them a smile. As for their blessing as well!