

Lesson
13

Baptism: Taking upon Ourselves the Name of Christ

Purpose To review the symbolism of baptism and inspire in class members a commitment to keep their baptismal covenants.

Preparation

1. Prayerfully study John 3:3–5; Romans 6:3–6; 2 Nephi 31; Mosiah 18:8–10; Doctrine and Covenants 20:37, 71, 77; 49:13–14.
2. Write the numbers 1 through 5 on separate strips of paper. Fold the strips of paper and place them in a bowl or other container (see the activity on page 71).
3. Materials needed:
 - a. The pictures Boy Being Baptized (62018); Burial of Jesus (62180; Gospel Art Picture Kit 231); The Resurrected Jesus Christ (picture 9 in the picture section of the manual; 62187; Gospel Art Picture Kit 239); and Alma Baptizes in the Waters of Mormon (picture 5 in the picture section of the manual; 62332; Gospel Art Picture Kit 309).
 - b. A set of scriptures and a scripture marking pencil for each class member. Continue to encourage class members to bring their own scriptures to class each week.

Note to the teacher *Baptism is one of the first steps we take to come to Christ. Understanding the symbolism of baptism helps us understand the eternal nature of the covenants and blessings that come because of baptism. Through continued obedience, we can overcome spiritual death and return to the presence of our Father in Heaven. Since this is made possible by the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we take Jesus' name upon us when we are baptized and promise to remember him in all that we do.*

As you teach this lesson, be sensitive to the feelings of class members who have not yet been baptized.

Suggested Lesson Development

The Purposes of Baptism

Discussion

Show the picture of a boy being baptized.

- What do you remember about your baptism?

Allow class members to talk about their baptisms. You may want to share some memories of your own baptism.

Scripture discussion

- Why were you baptized?

Be sure the following purposes of baptism are discussed (you may want to have class members read and mark the accompanying scriptures):

1. To receive remission, or forgiveness, of sins (see D&C 49:13).
 2. To show willingness to keep Heavenly Father's commandments (see 2 Nephi 31:14).
 3. To become members of the Church (see D&C 20:71).
 4. To begin on the path to eternal life (see 2 Nephi 31:17–20).
 5. To be able to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (see D&C 49:14).
- Why did Jesus, who did not sin, need to be baptized?

Have class members read 2 Nephi 31:6–9, marking words and phrases that answer this question. Help class members see that like us, Jesus needed to be baptized to show obedience to Heavenly Father. Jesus also was baptized to set an example for us.

Baptism Brings a Spiritual Rebirth

Scripture
discussion

Explain that the Apostle Paul talked about baptism as a symbol. A symbol is an object or action that represents something else. Have class members read and mark Romans 6:3.

Show the picture of the burial of Jesus.

- What do you think it means to be “baptized into [Christ’s] death”? (See Romans 6:3.)

Explain that the word *baptism* means “to immerse” (see Bible Dictionary, “Baptism,” 618). The act of immersion—being momentarily buried under water—represents the death and burial of a person’s sinfulness. The Atonement of Jesus Christ makes it possible for us to repent of our sins and be forgiven.

Have class members read and mark Romans 6:4–5.

Show the picture of the resurrected Jesus Christ.

- How is baptism “in the likeness of [Christ’s] resurrection”?

Explain that the act of coming out from under the water represents a birth into a new life, just as the resurrected Jesus Christ rose from the tomb.

Explain that in a conversation with a man named Nicodemus, Jesus talked about this aspect of baptism. Have class members read and mark John 3:3–5.

- How does a person become born of water? (By being baptized.)
- How does a person become born of the Spirit? (By receiving the Holy Ghost after baptism. Tell class members that you will discuss the gift of the Holy Ghost in next week’s lesson.)

Story

Read the following testimony related by a convert as he bore his testimony in a Church meeting:

“I came from a broken home. We had no religion, and I was not taught any particular moral values. My life was meaningless, empty, and full of conflict.

I committed many sins. Then the gospel came into my life. I accepted the Savior wholeheartedly. I began to believe in Him and to turn away from my former ways. I was baptized, and I received the marvelous gift of the Holy Ghost. Brothers and Sisters, for years and years I felt as if I were 'dead' *inside*, and now for the first time in life, I feel 'alive'" (in *My Errand from the Lord* [Melchizedek Priesthood study guide, 1976], 161).

We Made Covenants at Baptism

Scripture discussion

Explain that section 20 of the Doctrine and Covenants contains a revelation given to Joseph Smith on the day that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized. Joseph Smith was given instructions for the people who wanted to be baptized as members of the Church. Have class members read and mark Doctrine and Covenants 20:37. Explain that this verse contains the baptismal covenant. A covenant is an agreement between us and the Lord in which we promise to obey his commandments and he promises to bless us according to our obedience.

- What do people have to covenant to do in order to be baptized? (List the following requirements on the chalkboard as they are mentioned.)

1. *Humble themselves before God.*
2. *Repent of their sins.*
3. *Be willing to take upon themselves the name of Jesus Christ.*
4. *Be willing to serve the Lord.*
5. *Show by their works that they have received the Spirit of Christ.*

Scripture discussion

- What does it mean to take upon ourselves the name of Christ?

Point out that we take upon ourselves Jesus' name when we follow his example. Explain that to learn about how we can do this, you are going to discuss some teachings of Alma, a prophet in the Book of Mormon.

Display the picture of Alma baptizing in the waters of Mormon. Explain that Alma was converted through the teachings of Abinadi and then taught the gospel to others. To help the people prepare to be baptized, he reviewed things they would be expected to do as members of the Church.

Have class members read and mark Mosiah 18:8–10. Write on the chalkboard "*Come into the fold of God, and . . . be called his people.*"

- What things must we be willing to do to be able to "come into the fold of God, and . . . be called his people"?

Write the following on the chalkboard as the items are mentioned:

1. *"Bear one another's burdens."*
2. *"Mourn with those that mourn."*
3. *"Comfort those that stand in need of comfort."*
4. *"Stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places."*

- In what ways can we bear one another's burdens? How have you seen people do this? How have other people helped bear your burdens?
- Why is it sometimes helpful to "mourn with those that mourn"? What are some things we can do to comfort those who need comfort? How have other people helped you during difficult times?
- What does it mean to stand as a witness of God?

Activity

Ask a class member to choose one of the strips of paper you have prepared and read the number written on it. Then read the corresponding situation below and ask class members to describe how they could stand as witnesses of God in that situation. Repeat the activity until every situation has been discussed.

Situation 1

You are playing basketball with a group of friends. One of your friends misses an easy shot and in frustration takes the Lord's name in vain.

Situation 2

A friend who is not a member of the Church comes to your home and notices a copy of the Book of Mormon on a table.

Situation 3

You are at an activity for the young men and young women in your ward. A new bishop has just been called, and several people your age are talking about him. "I can't believe they called *him*," one of them says.

Situation 4

You are at home by yourself. You know that your parents will not be home for a few hours. There is a movie on television that you have wanted to see. You know that it has a few offensive scenes and some profanity, but many of your friends have told you that it is an exciting movie.

Situation 5

You have been planning for months to go to the temple with the young men and young women in your ward to perform baptisms for the dead. A friend who is not a member of the Church invites you to a party that same evening. You say that you can't go to the party, and your friend asks what you will be doing that evening.

Scripture discussion

- How do the four promises in Mosiah 18:8–10 relate to our promise to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ?
- Why do you think we have been talking about baptism even though most (or all) of us have already been baptized?

Have a class member read Doctrine and Covenants 20:77, which contains the prayer on the sacramental bread. Point out the similarities between this prayer and the baptismal covenant in Doctrine and Covenants 20:37. Explain that the baptismal covenant is so important that we renew it each week when we take the sacrament. Baptism is more than just being immersed in the water. The covenants we make and the blessings we can receive are eternal.

Testimony

Bear testimony of the joy we experience when we keep our baptismal covenants. Encourage class members to remember their baptismal covenants and be true to them.

Enrichment Activities

You may want to use one or more of these activities during the lesson.

1. Give each class member a copy of the handout “Break the Code,” on the next page. (Be sure to erase the chalkboard before starting this activity.)

Have class members try to break the code of the messages on the handout. Allow two or three minutes. If no one has broken the code by then, tell class members that each letter in the code represents the letter that comes just before it in the alphabet. Give them a few more minutes to decode the messages on the handout. The correct messages are listed below:

Message 1: BEAR ONE ANOTHER’S BURDENS
Message 2: MOURN WITH THOSE THAT MOURN
Message 3: COMFORT THOSE THAT STAND IN NEED
Message 4: STAND AS WITNESSES OF GOD

2. Bring to class two objects that are somewhat heavy but that any member of the class could hold with one hand. Ask for two volunteers to come to the front of the class. Give each of them one of the objects. Have them hold the objects in front of them by placing their right hand under the objects. As they do this, explain that in this activity the objects represent burdens, or personal difficulties that may come to us. Their right hand represents a person trying to bear burdens alone.

- What are some burdens we sometimes carry? How do those burdens weigh us down?

The objects will start to feel heavy. Have the volunteers face each other, and invite each volunteer to place his or her left hand securely under the object the other person is holding without letting go of his or her own object. After the volunteers have felt the weight lifted from their right arms, have them give the objects back to you and return to their seats. Ask the following questions:

- How did this exercise show what it is like to bear one another’s burdens?

Point out that although the burdens were not taken away, they were made lighter when the two class members worked together. In the same way, we can sometimes help others bear their burdens even when we have burdens ourselves. As we help each other, our own burdens will be made lighter.

3. With class members, sing or read the words to “When I Am Baptized” (*Children’s Songbook*, 103).
4. If *Family Home Evening Video Supplement* (53276) is available, you may want to show “Baptism—A Promise to Follow Jesus,” a nine-minute segment. Although the presentation is suited more for Primary children, the principle taught is true and important for all members of the Church.

Break the Code

The following messages are written in code. They are quotations from key scriptures used in this lesson. Break the code to find the key messages.

Message 1

C F B S P O F B O P U I F S ' T

— —

C V S E F O T

— — — — — — — — — —

Message 2

N P V S O X J U I U I P T F

— —

U I B U N P V S O

— — — — — — — — — —

Message 3

D P N G P S U U I P T F U I B U

— —

T U B O E J O O F F E

— — — — — — — — — —

Message 4

T U B O E B T X J U O F T T F T

— —

P G H P E

— — — — —