



Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen” (Matthew 28:19, 20, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 15, Baptism:** “By baptism we confess our faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and testify of our death to sin and of our purpose to walk in newness of life. Thus we acknowledge Christ as Lord and Saviour, become His people, and are received as members by His church.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 104, 105

BEFORE AND AFTER

Benjamin sat quietly in the back seat of the new car with his new parents as they made their way to his new home. He had dreamed of this moment for so long, and now it wasn't anything like he had imagined. The foster care homes he had been in were temporary, and the uncertainty of bouncing from home to home, packing what little belongings he had in a small duffel bag, had become a comfortable routine for him. This was different, and he wasn't sure if the permanent nature of this relationship was a good thing or a terrible mistake.

As they pulled into the driveway, his mother said, “We are home.” The words were foreign to Ben. It was like speaking another language to him. Ben looked at the simple home with the welcome sign draped across the front of the house and choked back the uncertainty welling in him. He wanted this to work more than anything else, but he wondered if he was capable of being a member of a family.

Ben took a deep, audible breath, bravely stepped out of the car, and followed his new mom and dad into the house. He sensed immediately that things were going to be different with this home; he wasn't sure how or why, but he was certain things were going to change. Benjamin was 13 when he was adopted, and he struggled for two years with his new parents. He pushed his new parents in a variety of ways, but eventually their consistent love and commitment to him won him over.

“Of all the emotions you feel,” he reports almost 10 years later, “anxiety about making a mistake and causing your new parents to regret their choice to adopt you is overwhelming. You just want to test their commitment to you and check the depth of their love. What is surprising is that when my parents continued to love me through my rebellion, it made me angry. I thought, *You can't love me this much!* But they did, and eventually I became so used to the gentleness of my new father and the joy and hopefulness of my new mother that I found myself laughing, hugging, trusting, and loving—emotions and actions I had never experienced before in my life. The most amazing reality of adoption is: They chose me! And later, when I was able to—I chose them.”

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read Romans 6:3-7.
- » Fifteen-year-old Shelly sits in church on Sabbath as they conduct a series of baptisms. Young people as well as older ones give their lives to God in baptism. While it is a happy occasion for almost everyone, she is torn by her desire to make a commitment to Christ and her fear that she might not be faithful. She doesn't want to just do it and have it mean nothing in her life, like some of her friends who were baptized years ago. The pastor is now making an appeal for others who want to prepare for baptism. She feels her heart tugging at her. What should she do? What should she ask herself? If you were one of her best friends, what would you say to her?

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON BAPTISM

- » Read Acts 16:30-33; Acts 22:16; Galatians 3:27.
- » Jesus did not need to be baptized, because He had no sins to be washed away. But, He knew that we would, so He gave us an example to follow. When we go down into the water of baptism, our sins are washed away, and we die to our old selves. And just as Jesus was raised, so we are raised clean, whole, and new in Him. After we have received our new lives in Him, we are to go and share the good news and invite others to make their decision to follow Jesus and be baptized. Listen! Is the Holy Spirit speaking to your heart and calling you to be baptized?
- » What are you doing to listen and accept the call of the Holy Spirit to give your life and heart in baptism to God?

- » Unscramble the missing words and put them where they belong in this Bible verse.

dednammoc
gnizitpab
tirpS yloH
rehtaF
evresbo
ekam
noS
oG
syawla
wehttaM

“ _____ therefore and _____ disciples of all the nations, _____ them in the name of the _____ and of the _____ and of the _____, teaching them to _____ all things that I have _____ you; and lo, I am with you _____, even to the end of the age.’ Amen” (_____ 28:19, 20, NKJV).



Tuesday

REFLECTING

- » Read John 3:1-7.
- » Most conversions to Christ come before the age of 20. Are you ready to give your life to Jesus and be baptized? Some parents, teachers, and pastors think that young people should wait until they are older to be sure they are ready and understand the decision they are making. If you desire to be baptized, talk to your parents and pastor, they can help you prepare for baptism and find a date that works for everyone.
- » Baptism is an important step, but the days after baptism are equally important. It is important to daily walk with Jesus in prayer, Bible study, and service. Make a plan today to continue walking with your Lord and Savior.
- » "Do you feel that it is too great a sacrifice to yield all to Christ? Ask yourself the question, 'What has Christ given for me?' The Son of God gave all—life and love and suffering—for our redemption" (Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 45).

Wednesday

BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Match the following texts from the New International Version (available at www.BibleGateway.com) with the sentences that correspond to them.
 - A. Matthew 28:16-20
 - B. John 3:1-7
 - C. Galatians 3:26-29
 - D. Romans 6:3-7
 - E. 1 Peter 3:18-22
 - F. Luke 3:7-14
 - G. John 1:10-13
 - H. 1 Corinthians 12:12,13
- _____ "Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus."
 _____ "Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?"
 _____ "He was in the world, and . . . the world was made through him."
 _____ "Just as a body, though one, has many parts."
 _____ "For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham."
 _____ "For Christ also suffered once for sins."
 _____ "You are all children of God."
 _____ "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations."

Thursday

CONNECTING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Sometimes teenagers, having been baptized younger, feel that they might not have understood "everything" they understand now. That is true in the sense that as a teen you don't understand as much as you will in college. And when you become a parent, you will find that you know more than you did when you were younger. We should always be learning and growing.
- » Life as a child of God is a journey. Baptism is an important part of that journey, and it needs to be the result of a thoughtful decision. Faith in the grace of God and promise of His power to save you is the beginning. And each day from there on is another opportunity to learn and grow in Christ.
- » Your baptism may be (or may have been) on a perfect day. Your favorite pastor may have been able to baptize you. Yet that is not what matters most. As you continue to grow older you will find challenges that will remind you that you need to surrender to God every day. Seize each moment to recommit your heart to Christ as Lord and Savior, and your baptism will become more and more meaningful as you grow and mature.

Friday

APPLYING

- » Read John 1:10-13.
- » Think of pictures that people take before and after an event. One quality you find is that in the before picture usually the person is sad, simply not smiling, or slouching, whereas in the after picture they are happy and hopeful looking. In the before frame below, list the parts of the old you that you will not miss. And in the after frame, write things you look forward to growing into as you continue to walk with Christ.

BEFORE

AFTER

