

# Love You, Mean It

**Text:** Luke 3:7-22

## Plain Truth:

Baptism is an \_\_\_\_\_, identity  
and \_\_\_\_\_ of grace.

1. Baptism is an \_\_\_\_\_ with Jesus in  
\_\_\_\_\_ to the Father.
2. Baptism is an \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Baptism is an \_\_\_\_\_ of God's \_\_\_\_\_.

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# Life Group Lesson

Week of March 18

When John preached in the wilderness his message was simple yet strong. He preached “that people should be baptized to show that they had repented of their sins and turned to God to be forgiven... One day when the crowds were being baptized, Jesus himself was baptized” (Luke 3:3, 21). Many people coming to faith for the first time ask honest questions like, ‘Why is it important to be baptized?’ and ‘Is baptism essential for salvation?’ John’s simple message of repentance coupled with Jesus’ example of obedience give us insight. Jesus did not need to repent of sin, but His humility and willingness to identify with those who were turning from sin pleased God the Father. We know this because the voice spoke from heaven and said: “You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy” (Luke 3:22b).

Read Luke 3:1-22

In baptism we are given (1) an identity with Jesus, (2) an invitation to belong, and (3) an infusion of God’s grace. Baptism is an outward, visible declaration of an inner change. To repent means to turn and change directions. We no longer go in the direction of darkness, but instead turn to Christ. Once we meet the risen Christ and are willing to align our life with Him, we will begin to see a change of attitude and behavior. Other people will begin to notice, as well. John told the crowds: “Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God” (Luke 3:8a). In Christ we have a fresh, new lease on life and it is contagious!

1. Baptism gives us a new identity. Read Ephesians 1:13-14 and name one way Christ is making you *new* from the inside out. How is your life bringing God praise and glory?

How would you explain your new identity in Christ to a friend seeking answers to faith?

2. Baptism is an invitation to belong. “This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” (2 Corinthians 5:17). How is *belonging* to Christ and His Church making a difference in your day-to-day life?

Read Ephesians 1:4-8 and share one take-away that is especially meaningful to you.

The apostle Paul says, “For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with Him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead. You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for He forgave all our sins. He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross” (Colossians 2:12-14).

3. Baptism gives us an infusion of God’s grace – the Lord’s undeserved, unmerited favor. In baptism God’s unconditional love washes over us like a river of living water. But like children, we get dirty out in this fallen world. Why is it important to remember our baptism on a *daily* basis? According to 1 John 1:9, how can we be made clean daily? Close in a time or prayer and confession. Tell the Lord that you love Him and mean it.

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