

# SACRED SPACES

## WEEK 1: BAPTISM

### **DAY 1: READ MATTHEW 3:1-10**

Hope placed in anything or anyone but Jesus Christ will not last. Examine your heart. Is your hope for salvation rooted in something other than the Messiah? Do you find yourself focusing more on extrabiblical traditions, good deeds, theologies and wanton carelessness than the blood of Jesus? Just like John the Baptist challenged the Pharisees and Sadducees, we must “bear fruit in keeping with repentance.” Check the condition of your heart and throw away whatever is getting in the way of submitting your life to the transformative blood of the risen Christ.

### **DAY 2: READ 1 PETER 3:17-22**

Baptism is not the physical removal of dirt from the body; instead, it is a process of spiritual repentance and rebirth made possible only through the suffering, death and powerful resurrection of Jesus. Just like in scripture, Jesus demonstrates the fullness of Life, absoluteness of beauty and complete fulfillment of what was promised. Are you focusing on the water instead of the Messiah? Is your spiritual rebirth based in feeling or rooted in a repentant heart yearning to God for forgiveness? Do not let the outward expressions of faith rob or replace the importance of your inner spiritual growth in Christ.

### **DAY 3: READ ROMANS 6**

Jesus broke our chains of bondage to sin and death. Will you choose the old, familiar chains of your past or will you seek to be “slaves of righteousness?” As you continue growth with Christ, how have you seen the budding fruits which stem from obedience to God? How can you better present your body, mind, heart and resources as instruments for righteousness? Press on through the discomfort of obedience. “For the death He died He died to sin, once for all, but the life He lives He lives to God.” Let’s unite with Him in death, resurrection and eternal life.

#### **DAY 4: READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12**

As Christians, our common banner is baptism in Christ. Our unity comes from the blood of the resurrected Jesus, not physical acts of dunking or sprinkling water. As a single body of wildly diverse servants of Christ, each equipped differently by the Holy Spirit, if we're not careful, we can shift our focus off of Christ and waste our time, energy and opportunity gawking and disrespecting His Church and stoking the coals of sin. Today, strive for unity with believers under the common bond of Jesus; let your love be the example of Christ's love for those who don't yet know His.

#### **DAY 5: READ 1 PETER 4**

As we celebrate being reborn in the risen Jesus, moving over from death to life, let's remember that our sinful bodies and all their practices must die. If we are to have any part in life in Christ, we must leave the old, dead things behind so we can be filled with the fullness of Christ's love, life and purpose. Does your lifestyle show the signs of a baptized life with Christ? Do people notice? What still needs to die?

#### **DAY 6: READ MATTHEW 3:11-17 & ACTS 1:1-11**

As only Jesus can, His birth, death and resurrection paved the way for us to receive baptism in the Holy Spirit. With repentance, forgiveness and by the power of Jesus' resurrection, we can be filled with the Holy Spirit's presence. With the authority of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, we are equipped for every good work (Hebrews 13:20-21) to bring the good news to our homes and to all the ends of the earth. We have work to do, church. Will we squander the Holy Spirit's presence, power and purpose in our lives or will we be obedient, faithful witnesses wherever we go? The choice is ours.