

Session 11

Buried and Raised

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

Leader Preparation Guide

Session Overview

Discovery Aim. The group discovers St. Paul's plainest statement of what happens in the water: real participation in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. They resolve the *baptized into someone* thread planted at the Red Sea, discover the clothing grammar of Galatians 3:27 and its echo in the white garment of the rite, and watch Paul answer the fear that grace makes holiness optional.

Catholic Touchstone. The Catechism teaches that through Baptism the believer enters into communion with Christ's death, is buried with him, and rises with him (CCC 1227), that the plunge into the water symbolizes and effects burial into Christ's death and rising with him as a new creature (CCC 1214), and that justification is conferred in Baptism, the sacrament of faith (CCC 1992).

What You Need to Know

Tonight St. Paul says without imagery what every type has been saying with it. Romans 6:3–4: *Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.* Read it until the prepositions astonish you again: into Christ, into his death, buried with him, raised with him. Not near, not in memory of, not as a picture of: into and with. Paul's claim is participation: the baptized person was actually joined to the actual death and resurrection of Jesus, so really that Paul can date the person's death: it happened at the font.

Notice how Paul argues. Romans 6 opens with an objection Paul puts in his opponents' mouths: *Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?* His answer is not a bare warning but an appeal to accomplished fact whose logic makes continued sin an absurdity: *By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?* The argument only works if something really happened. If baptism were a symbol of commitment, Paul's answer would have to be *you promised not to*: an appeal to consistency. Instead his answer is *you died*: an appeal to fact. The whole moral life of Romans 6 hangs on the ontological weight of the aorist: this occurred. Sacramental realism is not a rival to Paul's gospel of grace; it is the engine of his ethics.

The verbs' voice matters as much as their tense: *were baptized, were buried*: passive, received. Nobody buries himself. And the rising: *Christ was raised by the glory of the Father, we walk in newness of life* with resurrection promised (6:5, 8), while Colossians dares even the past tense of us: *you were also raised with him* (Colossians 2:12). The grammar's center of gravity is reception. This is where the study's long grammar of grace pays off: the sea Israel could only walk through, the circumcision made without hands, Ezekiel's string of I wills, birth that cannot be self-achieved. Baptism is not our work offered upward; it is God's work received, which is why the Church can say in one breath that we are justified

by grace through faith and that justification is conferred in Baptism, the sacrament of faith (CCC 1992). Tonight's steelman lives exactly here, and it deserves its full strength: the claim that Paul the apostle of faith-not-works cannot have meant that a water rite effects union with Christ. The answer is that Paul is the one who wrote these sentences, that his readers all had one referent for *baptized* (no first-century category existed for an unbaptized Christian), and that a sacrament received is the opposite of a work performed.

Session 3 left a thread deliberately hanging: Israel was *baptized into Moses*, bound through the sea to the mediator God appointed. Tonight it resolves: we were *baptized into Christ Jesus*. Into a person: incorporated, made members, so that his story becomes the baptized person's legal and living history: his death our death, his tomb our tomb, his rising our rising, his filial life ours by adoption (the Jordan voice of Session 9, echoed over the adopted). Galatians 3:26–27 gives the same truth in clothing grammar, and the group will discover it: *as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ*. The Church has dressed the newly baptized in white since antiquity, and still says over them: you have become a new creation and have clothed yourself in Christ. The rite wears the verse.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem gave the newly baptized the night's most compact image: the saving water was at once your grave and your mother. Tomb and womb: the study's two oldest observations (water that drowns, water that births) fused in one font. The flood killed and carried; the sea drowned the army and birthed a nation; Naaman's old skin went down and a child's came up. Paul is not adding a new idea to the types; he is signing his name to what they always showed.

Pastoral note: tonight tells everyone in your room that their decisive death is behind them. For the scrupulous, who live as though God's verdict on them is perpetually pending, this is medicine: the sentence was carried out at the font, and it was a death sentence on the old self, already served. For the discouraged, who confuse the daily struggle with the decisive battle: Paul distinguishes them too: consider yourselves dead to sin (v. 11) is the daily act of believing what already happened. And for anyone who hears tonight and thinks of grave sins committed since baptism: the Church's answer is not rebaptism but the sacrament the Fathers called the second plank after shipwreck; confession restores what baptism conferred. Say this plainly; someone needs it.

Old Testament Roots and Fulfillment

I want you to know, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea

1 Corinthians 10:1–2 (RSV2CE)

The thread planted at the sea resolves in Paul's greatest baptismal paragraph:

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:3–4 (RSV2CE)

Voices of the Church

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

St. Cyril of Jerusalem • *Mystagogical Catecheses, Lecture 2*

Explaining to the newly baptized what had just happened to them in the font, St. Cyril teaches that

the water was “at once your grave and your mother”: in the same moment, dying and being born, the tomb of the old self and the womb of the new. What nature keeps separate, a lifetime apart, grace accomplished in one immersion.

Leader note: Cyril is narrating the actual Jerusalem rite: candidates faced west to renounce Satan, turned east, and were immersed three times. If your group has only seen infant baptisms by pouring, describing the ancient choreography makes Paul’s burial language vivid; and note that the Church holds pouring to be fully valid, the sign compressed, not the grace.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

St. Basil the Great • *On the Holy Spirit, ch. 15*

St. Basil teaches in substance that Baptism holds death and life in one action: the water receives the body as a tomb receives the dead, imaging the putting away of the old life, while the Spirit pours in life-giving power, renewing the soul from the death of sin into the life it was made for. Neither element carries the sacrament alone: the tomb without the Spirit would only drown; the Spirit uses the tomb to raise.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

The Church's Liturgy • *Rite of Baptism, the Clothing with the White Garment*

After the Baptism, following the anointing with chrism, the Church clothes the newly baptized in white and tells them why in Galatians’ own grammar: you have become a new creation and have clothed yourself in Christ. The garment is Scripture made wearable; returning at the end as the pall spread over the casket, it brackets the whole baptized life in the same sentence: this person put on Christ.

Catechism Connection

CCC 1227 states tonight’s doctrine in Paul’s own cadence: through Baptism the Christian enters into communion with Christ’s death, is buried with him, and rises with him. CCC 1214 grounds it in the sacrament’s very name: to baptize (Greek *baptizein*) means to plunge or immerse, and the plunge into the water symbolizes the catechumen’s burial into Christ’s death, from which he rises up with him as a new creature. The word Baptism is Romans 6 in miniature.

CCC 1992 guards tonight’s steelman frontier and should be quoted precisely if needed: justification has been merited for us by the Passion of Christ, and it is conferred in Baptism, the sacrament of faith. Grace’s gift, faith’s sacrament, God’s act: one sentence refusing every false either-or. And CCC 1265 names what rises from the water: not only purification from all sins, but a new creature, an adopted son of God, a partaker of the divine nature, member of Christ, co-heir with him, and temple of the Holy Spirit.

Paragraphs for this session: 1214, 1227, 1265, 1992

Thread Watch

THREAD WATCH • LEADER ONLY

Baptized into someone (planted Session 3: RESOLVED TONIGHT): into Moses through the sea, into Christ through the font. Let a participant say it before you do; the plant is eight weeks old and ready.

Tomb and womb (Sessions 1–2's double character: RESOLVED TONIGHT via Cyril): water that drowns and water that births, fused. This is also the delayed payoff of Session 1's life-from-the-waters observation.

Beloved sonship distributed (Session 9 callback): his death ours, his rising ours, his filial life ours by adoption. Connect once, warmly.

Not for your sake (Session 7 callback): the passive verbs are Ezekiel's I wills conjugated. One sentence.

The white garment (planted tonight, resolved Session 14): from font to pall, the garment brackets a life. Session 14's charge to live your baptism will pick it up.

Second plank (planted tonight, pastoral): confession restores what baptism conferred. Do not develop; just make sure it was said.

Session Goals

1. The group can restate Romans 6:3–4 in their own words with the prepositions intact: into, with, not near or in memory of.
2. The group can explain why Paul answers *shall we sin?* with *you died* rather than *you promised*: the ethics stand on an event.
3. The group has noticed the passive voice and connected it to the study's grammar of grace.
4. The Red Sea thread (baptized into Moses / into Christ) has been resolved aloud.
5. The steelman (Paul's faith-gospel forbids sacramental realism) has been given at full strength and answered.
6. The group has discovered Galatians 3:27 and connected it to the white garment they have seen at every baptism.

Timed Plan (85 minutes)

5 min • Welcome and opening prayer

10 min • Win questions

20 min • Build: Romans 6:1–14 read whole, then walked; Q1–Q4

10 min • Live discovery: Galatians 3:26–27 and the white garment

15 min • Steelman: can the apostle of faith mean this?

5 min • Send questions

10 min • Live It, memory verse, closing prayer

If you must land at 75 minutes, cut: Q2 (the objection Paul stages) can be folded into the leader's framing, and the Dig Deeper box. Never cut the passive-voice observation or the Galatians discovery.

Discussion Guide

Opening Prayer

Father, in the water you buried what we were and raised what you love. Teach us tonight what actually happened to us. Where we still live as though the old self survived, let your word read the death certificate aloud, and let us walk out of here in newness of life. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Win • open the room

QW1. Is there a day you can point to when some old version of you ended: a diagnosis, a move, a marriage, a recovery date? How does having a date change how you fight the old life when it calls?

QW2. What is something you own that you wear or keep because of what it says about who you are: a ring, a jersey, a uniform, an heirloom? What does putting it on do to you?

Build • into the text

Read Romans 6:1–14 aloud, whole, one strong reader, no stopping. Then say: Paul just made a claim about every baptized person in this room, and he put a date on your death. Let us find it.

Q1. Verse 1 stages an objection to Paul's own gospel of abounding grace: *Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?* Look carefully at the kind of answer Paul gives in verses 2–3. He does not say *you should not*. What does he say, and why is that a different kind of argument?

ANSWER • SHARE AFTER THE DISCUSSION

He says *how can we?* : not a prohibition but an incongruity: dead men do not resume their old employment: which is why Paul still exhorts (6:11–13): the fact is real, and it must be lived: *How can we who died to sin still live in it?* And his evidence is an event: *do you not know that all of us who have been baptized... were baptized into his death?* If baptism were a pledge, the answer to sin would be consistency: keep your promise. Paul's answer is history: you died; dead men do not take up their old employment. The moral life of the baptized rests not on willpower reinforced by symbolism but on a fact to be believed and lived. Notice, too, whom Paul addresses: *all of us who have been baptized*: he assumes his entire audience shares one datable experience, and he builds his ethics on what it effected.

Q2. Collect the prepositions and the verbs of verses 3–5: baptized into Christ Jesus, into his death; buried with him; united with him. What kind of relationship do into and with describe, and what do the passive verbs, were baptized, were buried, have in common?

ANSWER • SHARE AFTER THE DISCUSSION

Into and with are the grammar of incorporation, not commemoration: joined to him so that his history happens to us: his death our death, his burial our burial, his rising our rising. And the decisive verbs are passive: were baptized, were buried: received, not performed; the united of verse 5 is literally grown-together; and the rising is first Christ's, ours in promise (6:5, 8) and, Colossians

dares to say, already ours in him (Colossians 2:12). Nobody buries himself; nobody raises himself. This is Ezekiel's string of I wills conjugated into our lives, and the study's oldest lesson in its final form: from the sea Israel could only walk through, to the circumcision made without hands, to a birth no one achieves: grace acts; we receive; and receiving is faith's whole posture, not a rival work.

Q3. Session 3 left a thread hanging on purpose. Israel, Paul said, was *baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea*. Say the resolution out loud: into whom have we been baptized, and what did Israel's version teach us to expect ours to mean?

ANSWER • SHARE AFTER THE DISCUSSION

Into Christ Jesus. Israel came out of the sea belonging to the mediator God appointed: his people, under his leadership, bound to his destiny. We come out of the font belonging to the Mediator: members of his Body, sharers in his death and rising, heirs by adoption in the Son: the voice over the Jordan echoed, by incorporation, over God's adopted children (CCC 1265). Baptized into is the most intimate preposition in Paul: not enrollment in a cause but grafting into a person.

Q4. Verse 11: *So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus*. If we already died in baptism, why must we still *consider* it daily, and what does that distinction do for anyone here who confuses the daily struggle with the decisive battle?

ANSWER • SHARE AFTER THE DISCUSSION

The decisive battle happened at the font; the daily struggle is learning to live from it. Consider yourselves is not pretending; it is accounting: reckoning as true what God made true, then presenting your members accordingly (vv. 12–13). This frees two kinds of people in every parish: the scrupulous, who live as though God's verdict were perpetually pending (it was conferred at the water; and where grave sin has since intervened, confession, not re-auditioning, is the appointed door back), and the discouraged, who read every relapse as proof nothing happened (something happened; the struggle is its consequence, not its refutation). And for grave sin after baptism, the Church does not repeat Baptism: she opens what the Fathers called the second plank after shipwreck: confession, which restores the sanctifying grace and communion that grave sin forfeited (the seal itself was never lost).

LIVE DISCOVERY

The hunt. Tell the group: Paul has one more image for what the font did, and the Church liked it so much she built it into the rite you have watched at every baptism you have ever attended. Find **Galatians 3:26–27** and read it aloud. Then answer: what does the Church put on the newly baptized the moment they leave the water, and what does she say while doing it?

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ: and the white garment, with the formula: you have become a new creation and have clothed yourself in Christ. Let someone in the room describe a

baptism they attended; the verse has been enacted in front of them for years.

STEELMAN • PRESS THE OBJECTION AT FULL STRENGTH

Tonight's objection is the weightiest theological argument this study will face, and it deserves reverence: Paul is the apostle of justification by faith apart from works of law. Romans 4 stakes everything on Abraham believing God, not performing rites; circumcision itself, Paul insists, came after and added nothing to his righteousness. Is it credible that this same Paul teaches, two chapters later, that a water ceremony effects union with Christ's death and resurrection? Surely Romans 6 uses *baptism* as shorthand for conversion itself, the Spirit's inner work that water merely pictures (as 1 Corinthians 12:13, baptized in one Spirit, suggests). Otherwise Paul refutes Paul: salvation by grace through faith on one page, salvation by ritual on the next. Whatever Romans 6 means, it cannot mean that the rite does the work: that is the very religion of externals Paul spent his life dismantling.

Q5. Feel its weight first: why is guarding grace against ritualism a genuinely Pauline instinct? Then test the theory: what would Romans 6:3 have to mean to Paul's first readers?

ANSWER • SHARE AFTER THE DISCUSSION

Honor the instinct completely: if baptism were a human work performed to earn standing with God, Paul would be its fiercest enemy, and so would the Catholic Church, which anathematized that idea in her own councils. The objection guards something true: grace is not transacted. The question is whether a sacrament is a work: and everything tonight's text says answers no. Every verb is passive. The baptized person performs nothing: he is buried, he is raised, as a corpse is buried and as Christ was raised: by another. A sacrament is not our work climbing; it is God's work arriving, received the only way gifts are received: in faith. That is why the Church's own definition welds the objection's two loyalties into one clause: justification is conferred in Baptism, *the sacrament of faith* (CCC 1992). Faith and baptism are not competitors for the verb *saves*; baptism is faith's embodied reception of what it could never perform: exactly Abraham's posture, wet.

Now test the shorthand theory against Paul's first readers. When Paul writes *all of us who have been baptized*, every reader in Rome remembers a day: water, the threefold Name, coming up soaked into a new community. In the churches Paul addresses, baptism was the shared, datable initiation of every member; *baptism* had one lived referent, and Paul appeals to it as shared, datable experience precisely because his argument needs an event, not an experience-in-general. Nor does 1 Corinthians 12:13 offer a rival dry baptism: by one Spirit... baptized into one body is what the Church says happens in the water (born of water and the Spirit, one birth, one preposition: Session 10's grammar). Splitting Spirit-baptism from water-baptism to save the theory re-creates, ironically, the very split Acts 19 repaired: initiation's water and initiation's Gift belong together as the norm of Christian initiation, even where Acts records God's freedom varying the order (Acts 8; Acts 10).

Last, turn the objection around and let it bless what it feared to. It worried that sacramental realism would license sin or empty faith. Paul's own use runs opposite: he deploys baptism's realism to demolish sin's logic (you died: how can you continue?) and everywhere presumes the faith of the baptized. The rite without faith is exactly what Peter already excluded (not a removal of dirt:

Session 2), and faith without the rite is exactly what Paul never imagined. What God has joined, the study has spent eleven weeks watching him join. Let no theology put it asunder.

DIG DEEPER • OPTIONAL

For a strong group: Romans 6:5's word *united*: literally grown together (*symphytoi*), a grafting image: and Jesus' own vine and branches (John 15:1–5). Ask: what does a graft receive from the stock, and what happens to a branch that decides it no longer needs attachment? The image holds both tonight's realism (real union, real life flowing) and Session 3's sober warning (real branches can be cut off for fruitlessness): grace, again, is a gift to be lived.

Send • out of the room

QS1. Paul puts a date on your death. What in your life is still living as though it never happened: a habit, a grudge, a fear, an identity? What would it mean this week to read it the death certificate?

QS2. You have put on Christ: you wear him like the white garment. Where this week will people see the garment: and where have you been changing out of it before certain company?

Live It This Week

- Pray Romans 6:11 each morning as an act of accounting, aloud if you can: I am dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.
- If anything grave stands between you and your baptism's grace, take the second plank this week: go to confession, and tell the Lord you are reclaiming the life the font began.
- At the next baptism or funeral you attend, watch for the white garment or the pall, and pray for that person by name in Galatians' words: they have put on Christ.

Memory Verse

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:4 (RSV2CE)

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, we were buried with you, and we did not stay buried. Teach us to believe our own baptism: to leave in the tomb what you put there, to wear in the daylight what you clothed us in, and to walk, actually walk, in newness of life. Who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Leader Reference Card

Every passage used in this session, in order.

Romans 6:1-14 • The whole argument: died, buried, raised, consider, present; memory verse at v. 4

1 Corinthians 10:1-2 • Callback resolved: baptized into Moses, into Christ

Galatians 3:26-27 • Live discovery: put on Christ; the white garment

1 Corinthians 12:13 • Steelman: by one Spirit baptized into one body, weighed and answered

Romans 6:5 with John 15:1-5 • Dig Deeper: grown together; the graft and the vine

CCC 1214, 1227, 1265, 1992 • The Church stating tonight's doctrine