

On Sunday we reviewed what we talked about on Sunday Nov. 3 and then talked about Baptism.

So...a little recap about the reformation:

The Reformation

The Protestant Reformation:

- Started in 1517 and went until 1648.
- The Reformation started out as a “Reform” movement—**people wanted to reform the Catholic Church.**
- But instead of reforming the Catholic Church, the Protestant Church was born.

There were a BUNCH of leaders during the reformation but two we’ve learned about are:

- **Martin Luther** (who nailed the 95 thesis to the door of the Wittenberg church)
- **John Calvin** (the main reason why the Presbyterian Church exists!)

So what’s the big deal with the reformation? Why is it so important? What did the reformation do way back then, that matters today?

- **Language**—way back then—the language of church services was Latin...NO ONE spoke Latin...
 - **Martin Luther said that the church services should be in the language of the people**
- **Bible**—way back then—only priests read the bible because...it was in Latin...**Luther translated the bible from Latin into German so people could read it for themselves.**
- **Power**—the Pope and the priests held all of it...but the reformation was about empowering everyone—according to Luther and Calvin, common, everyday people, like you and me didn’t need a priest to read the bible and tell us what it means WE can do that.
- **Sacraments: Wait...what’s a sacrament??** Something sacred/holy
 - **In the Catholic tradition, there are seven sacraments:**
 - **Baptism;** when a child or adult are baptized they are brought into the community of faith
 - **Confirmation;** in the Catholic church, students who are seven years old go through confirmation
 - **Eucharist;** also called communion
 - **Penance;** confessing your sin’s to a priest and doing “penance” as a way to make a mends for your actions.
 - **Anointing of the Sick;** if someone is really sick a priest will anoint them and ask for God’s healing, and ask that, if they die, God would welcome them into heaven.
 - **Holy Orders;** priests and nuns take Holy Orders
 - and **Marriage;** in the Catholic faith, marriage happens with in the walls of a church and is a sacrament.
 - **Both Luther and Calvin thought 7 was too many;**
 - **So they asked the question what made a “sacrament” a “sacrament”.** They agreed, that **what made something a sacrament was if they met two criteria-if they were:**
 - **instituted** by God
 - and **celebrated** by Christ.

Baptism

How was the sacrament of Baptism celebrated by Christ?

- Matthew 3.13-17—Jesus got dunked! Jesus was baptized by his cousin John the Baptist.

How was it instituted by God?

- **Matthew 28.18-20**—in this story, Jesus appeared to the disciples after he had been raised from the dead, and told them that they were to go tell the story of who Jesus was, to make more disciples and to baptize them in the name of “The Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”. Which we still do today.

Sacraments as sign and seal:

- Sacraments are **signs** of the real presence and power of Christ in the Church, and symbols of God’s action.
- Through the Sacraments, God **seals** believers in redemption, renews their identity as the people of God, and marks them for service.

So...is the water holy?? Baptism isn’t about the water, it’s about what God does THROUGH the water that counts. So, it doesn’t matter where the water comes from, infact we use common, ordinary tap water.

So, what happens in Baptism?

- **Baptism is a gift from God**—there’s nothing we can do to earn or buy it—God freely welcomes us
- **Through Baptism God claims us as God’s own**—In baptism God claims us, just like God claimed Jesus—which means that just like Jesus, God knows us, God loves us and God calls us by name. Nothing that can separate us from God’s love.
- **We are joined into God’s family**—Baptism is the symbol that someone has been brought into God’s family—this is also known as the “body of Christ”.
- **Baptism is how the church is formed:** through the waters of our baptisms we are joined into the church.
- **Baptism is a onetime thing**—because it’s a gift from God, and nothing can ever separate us from God’s love, Baptism is a one time thing! We can remember our baptisms every day or every year on Baptism of our Lord Sunday (the first Sunday in January) but we never have to be “rebaptized”—once your Baptized it’s a done deal!

What happens after Baptism?

Baptism is a gift, so, what do you do after you receive a really great gift?

- **We say thank you!!!** We say thank you by:
 - **Going to worship** (believe it or not-worship is about saying thank you to God)
 - **Serving others** (in big and small ways; yes, serving at soup kitchens counts but so does being kind to people at school and loving your family...because, let’s face it-loving your sister/brother/mom/dad/stepmom/stepdad/parent-like thingy, can be more challenging sometimes than being kind to a stranger...)
 - **Giving gifts to God with our time, talent or treasure:** Don’t have money? You can still give God the gift of time. How you ask? By serving others!! Help with Good Shepherd at church, volunteer to help at a food pantry, help your sibling with homework (not always easy...) through it all, you’re giving thanks to God and using your time (and talent...) to do it.

Homework:

1. When and where were you baptized? Were you baptized as a baby? Were you older? Do you remember your baptism? (If you don't know the answer to these questions, ask your parents!)

2. If you were baptized when you were little, ask your parents about why they decided to have you baptized? What did it mean to them to have you baptized?
 - a. If you haven't been baptized, talk with your parents about what baptism means to them.

3. Ok—so you've read what's above, but now it's your turn, what does Baptism mean to you? (What happens in baptism? Why do we practice it still today?)