



The Journey
Week of 08.22.10

Baptism

By Sarah Leimer

My baptism last summer was a defining moment in my life's story. Although I had accepted Jesus as my savior as a teenager, last year it was extremely clear to me that I was on the verge of a new season in my life and I longed to mark that time in a powerful and special way. I wanted to publicly share my story, declare my faith and reaffirm my relationship with God as I prepared my heart to enter into this next chapter in life. I knew it was time to be baptized.

In contrast to my baptism as an infant, my memories of my baptism last year are vivid. I remember the day as vibrant, full of friends as well as many smiling and encouraging faces I did not yet know. I remember the music, the laughter, the joy of the day, but mostly I remember feeling fully alive and extremely happy. My heart overflowed with gratitude as I recounted my story of God's faithfulness and goodness in my life through both good and difficult times. As I stood there sharing, a clarity came upon my heart as I recognized how time after time God had shown his faithfulness to me. In my experience of that morning, I know my relationship with Him deepened. As I was lowered into and then raised out of those waters, I celebrated afresh being a His beautiful new creation raised into a new life. The old was gone, the new had come.

My faith journey since last August has not been an easy path, but I know with certainty, that God wanted me to have that moment in the water with him so he could whisper and remind me that not only was he faithful and beside me through my past leading up to that day, but that he would be just as faithful in my future days as well. I know and believe that He is the God who makes all things new again. He is the God who brings forth beauty from ashes. He is the God who binds up broken hearts and He is the God who has come to set us captives free. He carries our burdens; he wipes our tears and holds us so close to his heart that we are imprinted on the palms of his hands. He is my God and his word tells me that He chose me to be his child before I was even known. He will never leave me, even when things are their worst.

I love that in those waters at Kill Creek Park last summer, I was able to stand up and tell the world that I love Him and would continue to choose Him no matter what was ahead. He remains ever faithful and I cherish how God specializes in making all things new: broken lives, broken people and especially broken hearts. I believe he is who he says he is and I believe he can do what he says he can do. He calls to our hearts and we have only to respond, accept, remember, say thank you and celebrate this wild, beautiful new life we have been given.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"

- 2 Corinthians 5:17

(You are encouraged to use the SOAP – Scripture, Observation, Application and Prayer Method for a guide. Click [here](#) for an example SOAP journal entry. Page numbers refer to "The Story of God" Bible available for free at the Welcome Center in our atrium.)

monday, 08.23

Read: [Acts 9:17-19](#) (pg. 752)

tuesday, 08.24

Read: [Colossians 2:12-14](#) (pg. 807)

wednesday, 08.25

Read: [II Corinthians 5:17](#) (pg. 792)

thursday, 08.26

Read: [Matthew 3:1-6, 13-17](#) (pg. 550)

friday-sunday, 08.27-29

Read: [Romans 6:1-13](#) (pg. 772)

If you don't already receive weekly email notification about The Journey, click [here](#) to sign up.

grow (resources to help you in your study)

Sunday's Sermon: Click [here](#) for podcast, or here for [video](#)

go (action steps)

- **prayer?** Please send us an email by clicking [here](#)
- **care?** Do you need to talk with someone? Please call us at 913.341.5820 ext. 330
- **go**—Sign up to serve: email Lisa Zulke by clicking [here](#)
- **grow**—Join a small group, a 1:1 spiritual mentorship, or find about the many other [ways to grow](#)
- **give**—click [here](#) to make an online gift to Heartland and learn how you can set up recurring gifts

Small Group/ 1:1 Question Samplers:

1. Since becoming a follower of Christ, in what ways has your life demonstrated newness?
2. What feelings do you experience when you realize as this week's author did that God "...chose me to be his child before I was even known"?
3. The scripture tells us that Paul was "...filled with the Holy Spirit." Describe what it feels like for you as a follower of Christ to be filled with the Holy Spirit.
4. Wednesday's scripture refers to being "in Christ" which reflects our recent emphasis on "abiding in Christ." (See [John 15:1-17](#)) Honestly assess how you are doing at abiding in him. If you are not satisfied with your answer, what changes might you make that would help you abide in Christ?