

Buried & Raised

For teens ages 12–14 · about 45–60 minutes · Buried & Raised · theme **Buried & Raised** · built on **Romans 6:3–4** · **Acts 2:38** · **Colossians 2:12**

Your students are approaching one of the most visible moments in Christian life — going under the water. Some are excited; some are nervous about the crowd watching; some wonder if it's just a church tradition their parents expect. A few have heard baptism saves you; others think sprinkling is fine; most have never connected the pool to Jesus' death and resurrection. This flagship session clears the fog: water baptism is a believer's public oath — full immersion that pictures being buried with Christ and raised to new life, paired with the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38.

Before you teach anything, pray.

Some students are baptism candidates; some are watching friends get ready; some aren't sure they're saved yet. Ask the Spirit to make the water mean something real — not performance, not superstition, but honest identification with Christ.

The heart of the lesson

Water baptism is not a bath, a membership card, or a magic trick. It is **identification** — the outward sign of an inward faith. When a repentant believer goes under the water, Scripture says they are baptized *into Christ Jesus*, baptized *into his death*, buried with him, and raised to walk in *newness of life* (Romans 6:3–4). The Greek word *baptizo* means to immerse — down, covered, up. That is why the church practices full immersion: the picture only works when someone actually goes under and comes back up.

Down into the water. Up into new life.

God painted this picture long before the baptistery existed. Israel passed through the Red Sea — buried under cloud and water, emerging on the other side as a redeemed people. Noah's ark rode the flood — death to the old world, life in God's rescue. Naaman dipped seven times and his flesh was restored. John's baptism prepared hearts to meet the Messiah. Then Jesus Himself entered the water — not because He needed forgiveness, but to fulfill all righteousness and launch His public ministry. At Pentecost Peter preached the gospel and commanded repentant believers: **be baptized**

— and you will receive the **gift of the Holy Spirit** (Acts 2:38). Water and Spirit belong together in apostolic faith.

Salvation is still by grace through faith in Christ alone (Ephesians 2:8–9). Baptism does not earn forgiveness — it declares that forgiveness has already been received. But for the believer who trusts Jesus, going under the water is not optional decoration. It is obedience, witness, and a covenant oath before the church: *I belong to Christ. My old life is buried. I rise to follow Him.*

The water pictures what faith already claims — dead with Christ, alive with Christ.

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, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in **newness of life.**"

ACTS 2:38

"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the **gift of the Holy Spirit.**"

COLOSSIANS 2:12

"...having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through **faith** in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead."

How the session flows

- 1 Down and up.** Hook with burial/resurrection picture; read Romans 6:3–4. ~7 min
- 2 What the water means.** OT shadows, Jesus' baptism, immersion, Acts 2:38. ~12 min
- 3 Play the game.** "Buried & Raised" on screen. ~12–15 min
- 4 Quiet readiness.** Reference card, private reflection. ~5 min
- 5 Worksheet.** Scripture reinforcement in class or at home. ~15 min

6 Public oath. Invitation, candidates, prayer for water and Spirit.

~8 min

Screen for the game, printed reference cards and worksheets, pens, optional blue fabric or bowl of water for the burial picture, soft worship for quiet time, and leaders ready to talk with students who aren't sure they're ready yet.

Leading it, part by part

Down and up

Ask: if you wanted to show someone that your old life is dead and you're starting brand new, what picture would you use? Let them brainstorm. Then read Romans 6:3–4 slowly. Baptism is that picture — buried like Jesus, raised like Jesus. The question tonight is not "Will I get wet?" but "Am I ready to publicly belong to the One who died and rose for me?"

What the water means

Walk through the story arc: Red Sea (Exodus 14), Noah's ark (1 Peter 3:20–21 connection), Naaman's dip (2 Kings 5), John's baptism preparing the way (Matthew 3), Jesus entering the water (Matthew 3:13–17). Each one whispers the same truth — God brings people through death to life. Explain *baptizo*: immerse, dip, plunge. Sprinkling or pouring doesn't bury anyone. Tie to Colossians 2:12 — raised through **faith**, not through water working alone.

Then Acts 2:38. Peter's command is for repentant believers, not a crowd performing religion. Forgiveness is received by faith; baptism is the obedient response. The Holy Spirit is God's gift — not earned at the pool, but promised to those who repent, trust, and obey. Make clear: candidates should already have turned to Christ. The water doesn't create faith — it declares it.

Play the game

Run "Buried & Raised" — rounds sort what baptism pictures from what it isn't, Bible stories that foreshadow burial and resurrection, real scenarios about nerves and obedience, and lightning questions on Romans 6 and Acts 2:38. Twelve to fifteen minutes. Bridge afterward: every round asked whether they understand the water as gospel picture, not church habit.

Quiet readiness

Hand out the reference card. Nobody collects it. Five minutes. Students honestly assess whether they've repented, trusted Christ, and are ready for a public oath — or whether they need more time with Jesus first. Honor silence. Some will realize they're not ready; that's wisdom, not failure.

Worksheet

Structured items on Romans 6, immersion, and Acts 2:38. The card was private heart-work; the worksheet is biblical practice they can do in pairs or take home before baptism class.

Public oath

Close with clarity, not pressure. Three doors: (1) "I'm not ready — I need to trust Christ first" — offer prayer and conversation; (2) "I'm ready to be baptized" — connect them to your church's process; (3) "I was baptized but never understood it — I want to live what it meant." Invite response without emotional manipulation. Read Colossians 2:12 again: buried and raised *through faith*. Pray for candidates and for the whole room to honor what the water declares.

Take it further

- What does Romans 6:3–4 say baptism pictures? Why does that require going under the water?
- How does Acts 2:38 connect water baptism and the Holy Spirit without making either one earn salvation?
- Why did Jesus get baptized if He had no sin? (Matthew 3:13–17)
- What OT story best pictures "through death to life" for you — Red Sea, flood, or Naaman?
- What's the difference between baptism *declaring* faith and baptism *creating* faith?
- Why is baptism public? What is a candidate promising before the church?
- Read Colossians 2:12 — what role does faith play in baptism's meaning?
- What would change this week if you lived like your old self is buried and you're walking in new life?

A final word

Baptism is one of the few moments the whole church stops and watches a teenager say yes to Jesus with their whole body. Don't rush unprepared students; don't let nervous students back out from fear instead of faith. Give them Scripture, the down-and-up picture, the game, the card, and a clear path. When they come up out of the water, the room should know what happened: another soul went under with Christ and rose to walk with Him.