



Black Panther: Baptism Lesson Plan

Purpose:

To use the scene in *Black Panther* where Black Panther takes the heart-shaped herb as a means to describe 2 key aspects of Baptism: 1) Dying to Sin/Self and Rising in Christ Jesus, and 2) Baptism is our membership into the Body of Christ/Communion of Saints.

Examples from Scripture and Tradition:

Romans 6:3-11: Dying to Sin and Being Raised in Christ Jesus

- This passage speaks of how we die to sin and our old self in Baptism, partaking in Jesus' death, and how we rise to new life through Jesus' Resurrection.

Ephesians 4:3-7: ...One Lord, one faith, one Baptism...

- This passage speaks to the unity we have in our faith and how we are part of one body, that is the Body of Christ.

Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry by the World Council of Churches

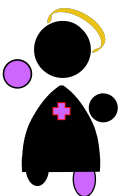
- This document's section on Baptism discusses what Baptism is based on Biblical studies and shared Christian tradition through an Ecumenical lens. You can access this document online.

Supplies:

+ Computer/Device to Stream (Something else to project to, depending on group size)

+ Bible

+ Clip from *Black Panther* when Black Panther ingests the heart-shaped herb and meets his father again (You can also search for this clip online.)

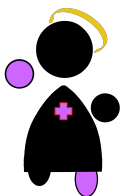




Note: if you have younger viewers, make sure you get signed permission from parents. This film has a PG-13 rating.

Procedure:

1. Ask participants if they remember their baptism. If they do not, ask if they remember seeing a baptism for another person. Ask what their thoughts were. Ask what they think baptism is. (Don't look for any particular answer here, just how they feel. This can be lengthened or shortened as need be.)
2. Show the clip from *Black Panther* when Black Panther ingests the heart-shaped herb, which gives him his powers, and sees and speaks with his father once again.
3. First talk about the aspect of Black Panther being buried. Read Romans 6:3-11. Talk about how just as Black Panther is buried, so we too are buried in Jesus' death in our Baptism. Talk about the use of water and how immersion can symbolize drowning. Also discuss how Black Panther comes out from being buried. We are also baptized into Jesus' Resurrection, which is why we hope in a new life after this one.
4. Next, discuss Black Panther's conversation with his father. The panthers seen in the Ancestral Plane are like the Body of Christ, also known as the Communion of Saints. Time permitting, read Ephesians 4:3-7. In Baptism, we are made members of the Body of Christ. These members are the saints of the church from beyond





time and space. Like Black Panther with his father, our hope is that we too will meet these saints again in the Resurrected Life.

5. Close by asking participants what they think it means to live life in this world after baptism. Does it mean we are perfect like Jesus? Does it mean we still have more work to do? These questions will help prepare for the next lesson: *Growing in New Life*.

Questions for Further Thought:

- + Baptism is also about forgiveness of our sins. Can you see anything in the scene when Black Panther ingests the heart-shaped herb that is similar to the forgiveness of sins?
- + Discuss Black Panther's "re-Baptism" when he ingests the heart-shaped herb a second time. Baptism is a one-time event in our lives. Might there be other ways we can recognize the need to reaffirm our faith? If necessary, discuss Christian traditions that have a reaffirmation service.
- + What does it mean for this analogy for Baptism that Wakanda worships the god Bast?

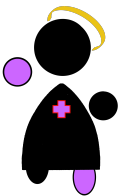


Lesson Plan Written by The Rev. Trey Kennedy

Please use this lesson plan freely while giving credit to The Rev. Trey Kennedy

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