



**BAPTIZED
FOR LIFE**

**VIDA EN
ABUNDANCIA**

***BEING CHRISTIAN:
BAPTISM, BIBLE, EUCHARIST, PRAYER***
BFL/VEA Reading Discussion Guide

READ

The goal is for your local Baptized for Life (BFL) leadership team to read and discuss Rowan Williams' short book, [Being Christian: Baptism, Bible, Eucharist, Prayer](#) before the May 2019 BFL Residency.

THOUGHTS on Rowan Williams' *Being Christian* from BFL/VEA Evangelist,

Charlotte Hand Greeson: I like the contrast between *Being Christian* and *The Stories We Live*. I find that *Being Christian* is both an exploration of what we regularly do in practice and the possibilities of what we *might* do. It is PRACTICAL. I am particularly fond of the scripture chapter, as I think Williams helps normalize the challenging parts of scripture for us more progressive Christians.

Being Christian is a concise but beefy book. In general, Williams' asks, "What are the barriers between you and God?" It will be most helpful for everyone to read the whole text and then discuss it together. At the end of each of the four (4) chapters, there are three (3) reflection/discussion questions. The questions ask the reader to reflect on the text, consider tradition, and engage in practice.

RECOMMENDED PROCESS

1. Acquire copies *Being Christian* (print or e-book) for each member of your leadership team.
2. Invite group to read whole book, paying attention to these questions:
 - a. The shape of the book is important. Why did Williams put Baptism first and Prayer last?
 - b. Is there a chapter that resonated with you more than the others?
3. Recruit volunteers to lead each chapter discussion.
4. Schedule two or three in-person meetings, allowing at least 30 minutes to discuss each of the four chapters PLUS enough time before and after the chapter discussions to collect group thoughts & feelings, determine what to do next, and to pray.

SAMPLE FORMAT

Welcome and Introductions as needed (5 mins)

Opening Prayer (5 mins)

- Period of silence + spoken prayer

Discussion of one chapter, facilitated by volunteer and supported by volunteer timekeeper (30 mins)

- You may choose to use the reflection questions provided at the end of each chapter, provocative questions of your own, additional suggestions below, or a mix. To stay within the 30-minute timeframe, choose one question to discuss as a group. If you get to a second, that will be a bonus!

If discussing two chapters in same session, take a stretch break and provide refreshments if possible. (10 mins)

Repeat DISCUSSION (30 mins)

Closing Reflections (10 mins)

- Rowan Williams' book is action-oriented! You'll want to summarize your group's conclusions at the end of each chapter in order to share what you have learned about your own and your group responses.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

- Extemporaneous and Lord's Prayer

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

BAPTISM

Consider the categories Prophet, Priest, and Royalty. How are/might you as individuals and communities, be restoring humanity to God's vision? (p4)

What does being baptized (or a baptized member of the Body of Christ) mean to you?

BIBLE

How do you engage with scripture? What's your daily or weekly practice?

"When we read together, we hear together." Williams believes that we should always be asking "How do I find myself in this? How am I going to be renewed by this reading?" Reading TOGETHER allows us to note how we are changed by hearing scripture...and to observe how those around us are changed. How are you being changed?

EUCCHARIST

To celebrate communion means to live as expected guests, welcomed and wanted. Do you feel this way when you celebrate the Eucharist? Do you feel you/your community communicates this emphasis?

PRAYER

Williams sums up the writings of three church fathers and their beliefs about the Lord's Prayer. Did you ever think this much about the prayer that Jesus taught his friends? Did you resonate with one analysis more than the others?