



Baptism

Outward Sign of Inward Grace

Often parents ask what age is appropriate for their child to be baptized. As you will see, a child's spiritual condition is far more important than his/her age in determining if they are ready for baptism. We want this outward sign to be a true reflection of an inward reality that they are truly followers of Christ.

The section below called **"Study for Mom and Dad"** will help you determine if your child is ready. It will also help you prepare yourselves to work through the sessions and instruct your child. Of course, your pastoral staff is also available to help guide you.

How it works: Set aside 10-15 minutes to work through each session together. For younger children, do it together as a family. For older children or a teen, they can do the study on their own and then later review it with you as parents and pray together afterward.

1. **Prayer** - Taking time to pray together is important. Follow the prayer instructions in each session.

2. **God's Word** - The Bible teaches us what God wants us to know. Use a reader-friendly Bible translation, like the NLT, or Bible of your choice to help your child easily understand the truths.

3. **Answering** - Allowing for questions will help children to learn and understand what the Bible teaches about baptism. They may need help understanding the symbolism, but it will be great to see how much they will be able to gain from their own study.

4. **Talk together** - Spend some time talking about what you have learned. The parent-child relationship is so very important. Allow this time to help you grow closer together as you help your student learn and grow in their faith.

Study for Parents, Moms, Dads, and Adults

Pray for your child through this process. Pray that God would work in his or her heart to save them if they have not already made that decision. Pray that He would open his/her understanding of Him, their personal faith, and their decision to follow Christ for a lifetime. Pray also that God would give you discernment to know how to instruct your child concerning their life in Christ.

Read Romans 6:1-11.

This passage is a picturesque description of what has happened to believers at conversion and will happen in our future. Baptism is an outward sign of an inward spiritual reality. When instructing your child about baptism, it is wise to not encourage him or her to be baptized before the spiritual, inward reality is measurable.

Read Galatians 5:16-26.

Once again, age is not as important as the spiritual maturity and understanding of those seeking baptism. Some students are ready sooner than others, even inside a family, and this is OK. A student should be able to articulate the basics of their faith—who Jesus is, what He has done for them and how they are trusting in what Jesus did to provide a way for them to know God.

We should see over time the evidence of God's Spirit working in our children to create new life in Christ. The new life should have evidence that there has been a change. The Bible calls that the "Fruits of the Spirit" in Galatians 5. A person should have a growing desire to put away the old self and put on the new, seen in Romans 6. They will also have a growing interest in God's Word, serving others and serving God. A person's baptism is an important event, and your desire should be for your child to be baptized only once. Consider waiting to baptize your child until these things are clear.

Think and Discuss:

1. Do you think your child is a true believer and follower of Christ? _____
(*“I don’t know” is a valid answer. Doing this study together may help to clarify this.)

2. Can you see ways in which the Spirit of God is gaining control of his/her life? What are the things you can see in your child’s attitudes and behaviour that lead you to believe that he or she truly belongs to Christ?

3. How have you seen your child grow in his/her relationship with God?

4. What signs do you see that make you question if they are truly believers and growing followers of Christ?

5. Being honest, who desires them to be baptized more—you, as their parent, or does your child truly desire to be baptized?

6. What motivations can you see behind your child’s desire? Is it to please you? Are they genuinely concerned about obeying Christ? Are they wanting to testify of their commitment to Christ?

Spend time praying that God would make these things clear to you and to your child. Genuinely ask God to give you evidence of where your child is in their faith. Ask God to give them a deep desire to understand and obey His word. Also, ask God for help as you guide your child to grow up in his/her faith.

A Study of Baptism for Students & Parents

Session 1: Why Be Baptized?

Pray and ask God to help you learn and understand God's plan for being baptized.

Have you ever wondered why people get baptized? Circle the reasons below that you think are good reasons to be baptized. You may choose to circle none of them...

To impress the pastor	To please Mom or Dad	To get wet
To become a believer	To clean my body off	To show off

Correct Answer...NONE of them!!

Read Matthew 28:19-20.

Jesus gave this instruction to His disciples to remind them what they were supposed to do. (Circle the answer) When someone is in charge and they tell you exactly what to do, it is a ...

a. Suggestion: Maybe I should do it sometime?

b. Command: I must obey and do it?

c. Idea: Something I could do but don't have to?

Now read Acts 2:38.

In this verse, who was commanding the new believers to be baptized?

Talk with your parents: Who is someone you would like to invite to see you be baptized?

Why would you like to invite them?:

Pray and ask God to help you live to obey and follow Him so your friends can see that you love God and are his follower.

Session 2: What Does It Mean?

Talk to God in prayer and ask Him to help you understand this lesson about symbols. He always hears, and He has answers for you in His word, the Bible.

Draw the symbols next to each word that you would normally see representing or symbolizing each.

Recycle

Music

Handicap Access

Boys and Girls Bathroom

Definition, Symbol:
is something that
people can see
that tells about
something else that
they can't see.

If you saw one of these symbols hanging on a door outside of a room, what would it tell you about what is happening inside that room?

Now read Romans 6:3-5. Baptism is a symbol or a “sign” ...a spiritual one! We are not asked to wear a symbol or sign walking around. Instead of wearing a sign, we do something else so that others can see what has happened inside of us - Baptism.

Look Back at Romans 6:3-4.

1. Verse 3: List 3 things that happen to people when they become true believers:

2. Verse 4 says that we have been buried with Jesus, and have also been raised with Jesus for a reason. What is the reason?

Now read Romans 6:6-7.

3. What is a new life becoming free from?

Talk to your parents about these questions:

1. Do I really believe that Jesus died for me and that's the only way I can be forgiven?

2. Part of having a “new life” is being serious about obeying God and learning to stop sin. Does my life look like a new life? What sin do you think I should work on getting rid of?

Pray and ask God to help you be strong and serious about living for/with Him.

Session 3 Who Should Be Baptized?

Pray for a family member who doesn't know Jesus today. Pray that God would help them to realize that they need Jesus too.

Read Acts 16:25-34.

In this story, after the earthquake, Paul taught the jailer and his family about Jesus and how to believe and follow Him.

1. What did the people do first before they were baptized?

2. Who was baptized in the jailer's house?

3. Why did all the people in his house get baptized? (See verse 34)

4. What is the most important thing for someone to be able to explain before they are baptized?

Preparation & Testimony:

1. Talk to your parents:

a. Ask your parents to share with you about their baptism experience, if they have been baptized?

b. Do you think I am ready to be baptized?

c. When I get baptized, I will need to say something about how I became a believer and follower of Jesus. Can you help me think of what I should say?

2. Writing and preparing your testimony (answering these questions)

a. What is the story of you accepting Christ as Savior of your life?

b. How have you seen your personal life change?

c. What are the ways you have seen evidence of God in your life?

d. Why do you want to be baptized?

e. What ways has your family helped you in getting to know Jesus and also choosing to be baptized?

Celebration and Planning:

1. What family member would you like to have present at your baptism? Why?

2. What would you like to do to celebrate your baptism as a family?

- People to invite?

- A place to eat?

- A thing to do?

Pray and ask God to allow your testimony and baptism to be an opportunity for your family to celebrate with you but also people who don't know Christ to be challenged to consider Him through your special day!

Testimony Page

The word “testimony” is a fancy word that means “to tell what you know or believe.” In the spaces below, write out how you became a believer in Jesus and how you want to follow Him. Your mom or dad can help you write, but these ought to be your own thoughts and words.

In your testimony, be sure to answer the first 5 questions. If you want to share more, you can answer the other questions or you can say something else that you love about Jesus or something that you have learned about following Him.

Here are some starter questions for you to answer in your testimony:

1. What is your name/Age?
2. Tell us the story of when you became a real believer.
 - What lead you to realize you were a sinner and needed a savior?
 - Did anyone teach you? Did anyone pray with you?
3. What do you know about who Jesus is and what he did for you?
4. Is there something sinful that Jesus is helping you to overcome?
5. Why do you want to be baptized?
6. Do you have a favourite Bible verse or Bible story? (You can quote your favourite verse or tell us about your favourite Bible story) Explain why is this your favourite.
7. Do you feel like God wants you to do or be something special when you get older?

Write your testimony below or on a separate page:

Testimony