

# How To Talk With Your Child About Baptism

## I. The Struggle

As a parent, you know that God has entrusted the care of your child to you and it is a great joy to see your child grow in faith! But it is also a challenge to know how and when to encourage your child in coming forward for baptism. It can be difficult to know how much your child understands about God and the Gospel in order to know whether he or she is ready to take the next spiritual step. This guide can help give you direction and instruction in talking with your child about baptism!

## II. What Is Christian Baptism?

### A. Baptism Is Commanded By Christ

Matthew 28:18-20, “<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’” (NAU)

Baptism is not an optional practice for Christians, but is an ordinance commanded by Christ. Throughout the New Testament, there are no examples of Christians who chose not to be baptized. Instead, baptism was the expected action of those who believed.

### B. Baptism Is Only For Believers

Acts 2:41, “<sup>38</sup> Peter *said* to them, ‘Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.’ <sup>40</sup> And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation!’ <sup>41</sup> So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.” (NAU)

Though many denominations practice infant baptism, and though it is personally significant to many, the Bible itself does not teach this practice and there are no examples of infant baptism in Scripture. Baptism is for all those who have confessed Jesus as Lord and Savior. It doesn’t save, it doesn’t wash away sins, but it is a testimony for those who believe.

### C. Baptism Is A Picture Of One’s Belief In The Death, Burial, And Resurrection Of Jesus Christ, The Eternal Son Of God.

Romans 6:4-6, “<sup>4</sup> Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. <sup>5</sup> For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, <sup>6</sup> knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin.” (NAU)

Baptism by full immersion lowers the person into the water to symbolize the death and burial of Jesus and brings them up again to symbolize his resurrection. Baptism is the outward and public sign of an inward repentance and trust in the Gospel.

### **III. Signs Your Child Is Ready For Baptism**

How do you know when your child is ready to talk about salvation and baptism? There are several signs that your child is at the point when baptism should be encouraged and sought.

- A.** Your child knows that God exists and has made him or her for Himself – Colossians 1:16
- B.** Your child understands he or she is a sinner who needs a Savior – Romans 6:23
- C.** Your child knows and believes that Jesus died on the cross, was buried, and rose again to pay for the sins of the world and for them personally – 1 Corinthians 15:2-4
- D.** Your child has, in prayer, confessed their sin to God and asked for His forgiveness and help to grow in following His word – Romans 10:9
- E.** Your child is growing in relating to God and obedience to His word – 1 Peter 2:2
- F.** Your child feels comfortable talking with your pastors and church leaders – Hebrews 13:17

### **IV. The Next Steps**

If your child has shown the above characteristics,

- A.** Reach out to your pastors and church leaders to meet with you and your child to ask about your child's faith and desire for baptism.
- B.** Your church will most likely want to have a short lesson or class for the child and any others who want to be baptized. You should accompany your child to this class so you can help answer questions they may have after.
- C.** If you, your child, and your pastors feel comfortable with baptism at this point, your pastor will schedule the baptism for a Sunday morning so your local church can rejoice in your child's obedience to God's Word!

Romans 6:17, "But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed." (NAU)