

baptism

TALKING TO
YOUR CHILD
ABOUT
BAPTISM



Baptism is a public declaration of a personal decision to follow Jesus.

For a Christian parent, the baptism of a child is one of life's most joyous events.

As Christians we believe that the most important decision a person can make is the decision to put their trust in God through his son Jesus Christ. The symbol God has given us for this decision is baptism. When a person is baptized in water he is "born again" to a new spiritual life (John 3:3). The Holy Spirit then begins to mold and shape his outward life as he follows God and grows as a disciple of Jesus.

As important as baptism is, the decision to be baptized is an individual decision, thus it is not a decision parents should make for their children. However, as a parent you may wonder, "How will I

know if my child is ready to be baptized?"

We know that children are fully covered by God's grace regardless of the complexity of their Biblical knowledge or spiritual understanding. A child who is being raised by a Christian parent should view herself as a Christian kid. However, at some point in her development God will invite her to claim her faith as her own, and make the decision to follow Jesus as an individual. It is at this point in her spiritual development that she should be baptized. Through baptism a child is individually committing his or her life and future to Jesus.

Each child comes to this spiritual milestone in their own way. Some earlier than others. When your child talks to you about his desire to be

baptized, recognize that the Holy Spirit is working in your child's heart. Pray for God's wisdom as you continue on this journey with your child, and rejoice in the work God is doing in your child's heart.

Is My Child Ready?

Pray | Listen | Respond | Affirm

Key Baptism Scriptures

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| John | 3:3-7, 16-17 |
| 1 Peter | 3:20-22 |
| Romans | 6:4-5 |
| Matthew | 3:13-17 |

God sees no distinction in people, all are welcome to accept His love.



Gal. 3:27-29

For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for **you are all one in Christ Jesus**. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Baptism is an act of obedience to God.

What does Baptism mean?

- When you are baptized you are **born again**.
(John 3:3-7)
- When you are baptized you **promise your life to God**.
(1 Peter 3:20-22)
- When you are baptized you are **made clean** – all your guilt is washed away.
(Hebrews 10:22)
- When you are baptized you are **buried with Christ**. Jesus' death becomes your death and Jesus' resurrection becomes your resurrection.
(Romans 6:4-5, Colossians 2:12)
- When you are baptized you are **clothed with Christ** and **united in Christ with all other Christians**. Everyone who is baptized wears the same "clothes." Our differences don't divide us because we are all one in Christ.
(Galatians 3:27-29, Ephesians 4:4-5)
- When you are baptized you are **forgiven** and no longer owe God a debt for your sins – in the past or in the future. Jesus has paid the debt and you are not condemned any longer.
(Colossians 2:13-14)

Baptism Stories in the Bible

Look up these stories in your Bible and read them with your child. Ask your child about the different circumstances of each story. Then ask them what all the stories had in common.

- Peter baptizes Cornelius - Acts 10
- Paul baptizes Lydia - Acts 16:11-13
- Philip baptizes the Ethiopian - Acts 8:26-40
- John baptizes Jesus - Mt. 3:17-19
- 3,000 baptized in one day - Acts 2
- Paul baptizes the Jailer - Acts 16:16-40

Baptism Conversation Starters

1. Tell me why you think God is real.
2. Tell me in your own words who Jesus is.
3. I know you've heard that "Jesus Saves." What does that mean?
4. Why is sin such a big deal to God?
5. You know people still sin after they get baptized. Why don't people get re-baptized?
6. Why do you want to be baptized?

Baptism Activities:

A Baptistry Tour

Take your child on a tour of the baptistry in your church. Go to the dressing areas, let them feel the water, and answer their questions about baptism.

Baptism Stories



Find three people who could tell their baptism story to your child. Arrange it so it can be done face to face either in person, or through a video chat.

Write Your Child a Letter



Take a moment to sit down and write your child a letter. Express to them your excitement, joy, and prayers for them as they get baptized. Be honest in telling them that the journey of being a believer can be hard, but that they should always remember the moment they got baptized because it will encourage and strengthen them.



Go Bible Shopping

Go to a book store and let them look at a variety of different Bibles. Buy a Bible and write a dedication in it, then present it to them on the day of their baptism.