

## **A Baptism Conversation between Parents and their Kids**

Dear Parent:

We hope you'll enjoy using this tool to engage your child in conversations about what it means to be baptized. Once they have put their faith in Jesus, this is an appropriate "next step" in their journey of being a follower of Jesus! As you complete this packet, you can use the checklist at the end to make sure all the steps in the process are complete. When you are ready, contact us to set up a time to meet with your child and you to talk about baptism, making sure that they have a good understanding of what it is they are about to do. This is a really fun time that we as staff look forward to! We love to hear the kids tell their story in their own words, and to ask their many questions about baptism.

Whether or not your child chooses to be baptized at this time, these are priceless conversations to be cherished and are stepping stones to a greater understanding of their faith. Sometimes, your children will have lots of questions. Remember, if you don't know the answer, it is ok to say so. Children love it when we are authentic and when you tell them "I don't know, but let's find out together." It puts you on the journey together and models for them that is OK not to have all the answers.

We wholeheartedly believe in Deuteronomy 6:7 that charges parents with the joy and responsibility of helping their kids along their spiritual journey. And it is our privilege and responsibility as a church to partner with your family in this journey.

We hope you enjoy great spiritual conversations with your child. We would love to hear your stories!

Happy Parenting!

Jon Ditty  
Family Ministry Pastor

Sharon Howat  
Children's Pastor

***Parents – Your child should fully understand the following in order to be ready for baptism. These materials are designed for families to read and review together, but do not answer for your child or pressure them to answer. This is an important step in your child's spiritual journey that should be prompted primarily by the Holy Spirit. Before you get started make sure to pray for your child and have enough time to engage in any discussions that may arise.***

**PARENT TALK:**

Baptism is more than just “getting wet” in front of a bunch of people at church. Baptism is an integral part of our relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

You see, God has been reaching out since the beginning of time—desiring to live in relationship with all of mankind. But because of our sin, because we have turned our backs on God and (in essence) told Him to get out of our lives, we are separated from Him.

But God has created a way for us to reconnect to Him by offering us salvation: this incredible gift of grace that comes through His son Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. We receive this gift of grace any time we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior—turning our lives over to Him completely. And when we turn our lives over to Jesus, He tells us to be baptized...as an outward expression of what He has done for us, and is doing, in our hearts.

While baptism is an important (and significant) part of our decision to receive God's gift of grace and become a follower of Jesus, each of us has come to this decision differently because each one of us has had a uniquely different experience...or journey to Jesus. *(NOTE: If your child has not yet made the decision to become a follower of Jesus, please contact the Family Ministry to find out when our next Salvation seminar is or to schedule a meeting with a pastor.)*

Now, the obvious question to baptism is, “Why? Why should I get dunked under water?” The first answer is simply: Jesus was baptized Himself. He modeled it for us. One of the first stories we have of Jesus as an adult is Jesus going up to John the Baptist and getting baptized (Read Matthew 3:1-16). But Jesus didn't just get baptized to show us the way. He tells us to do it. Jesus said, in what a lot of people call The Great Commission (Read Matthew 28:19).

**ASK YOUR CHILD:**

What should you know or do before you get baptized? *Become a follower of Jesus*  
Why do you think Jesus wanted to get baptized? *He wanted to identify with us in our sin or set the example for us*

**PARENT TALK:**

Another good reason to be baptized is because it's a great picture, a great visual image and outward expression of what has already happened inside in your heart. When you are baptized, you are lowered into the water. This is called immersion. When you are

lowered and immersed, you are covered completely, and then raised up, out of the water. This is a beautiful image of Jesus **death** (lowering into the water), His **burial** (covered completely by water) and His **resurrection** (raised up, out of the water). Likewise, baptism is a great picture of our death to our old self. We bury that old life of sin and are raised up to a new life as a true follower of Jesus. Read Romans 6:3-4

Maybe you were baptized as a baby. That was an important faith step that your parents made. A promise to help you grow in your faith, and a promise to make God the center of your home. But the truth is, at some point, when the time comes and you realize who God is...and how you haven't lived up to His standard...and how God has reconnected us back to Him through Jesus...we need to make that decision for ourselves. We can't only rely on what our parents or grandparents may have done for us as a baby. We need to decide for ourselves and then act on it because there is a sense of urgency. Much like the first people who heard the Good News and then acted on it (Read Acts 2:37-38).

#### **ASK YOUR CHILD:**

What is baptism a picture or example of? *Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection*  
Who can make a decision for you to follow God or be baptized? *I can or only me*

#### **PARENT TALK:**

One last thing we need to be careful of: Making baptism something that it's not. You need to remind yourself that baptism is not a work that you do in order to earn salvation. It's simply a gift, a public, outward act that shows the change that has happened in your heart.

To re-cap this journey: We **hear the Gospel** (or Good News), we **believe** it, deep in our hearts, we **repent** for our old way of life without God, then we **confess** to some other people what has happened in our hearts, and then we are **baptized**. When we get baptized we are doing what Jesus did, doing what Christians have done for many, many years, and you are doing what Jesus said to do.

But the journey isn't over. It continues and will continue on and on and on because this is all about becoming more like Jesus. As we begin this new life as a follower of Jesus, we have this gift of the Holy Spirit which is God's Spirit literally living inside us, guiding us and prompting us to grow and become more and more like Him. More and more like Jesus. And we do this by following Jesus' words found in the Bible. And we do this by living and acting as Jesus did. Doing the things Jesus did, like loving others and caring for the "least of these". Just as Paul writes in Romans 6:5-14,

*If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know*

*that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace."*

**ASK YOUR CHILD:**

Tell me in your own words what baptism is. *An outward act to show what has inwardly changed (or similar explanation)*

Tell me in your own words what happens after we are baptized. *We want to be more like Jesus or desire to grow as a follower of Christ (or similar explanation)*

***If you believe your child is ready to be baptized and make a public declaration of their commitment to Christ, please complete the following pages and contact the Family Ministry office to schedule your child's baptism.***

## ***Faith Story (Testimony)***

Use this sheet to write a brief testimony telling what God has done for you. This faith story or testimony will be shared by you or the person you choose at your baptism.

Sharing your story is important for several reasons:

- It helps you remember and appreciate what Jesus has done for you
- It helps your church family remember and appreciate what Jesus has done for them
- It gives people outside the family of God hope and may encourage them to follow Jesus

There is no right or wrong way to tell your personal story or faith journey, but here are some simple steps to get you started. Remember to keep it simple, short, and focused on Jesus.

- Tell what your life was like before you trusted Jesus as your savior
- Tell how you heard about the Gospel (Good News), believed the Gospel, and repented of sin
- Tell what has changed in your life now that you are following Jesus

***MY FAITH STORY:***

## **What to Expect at Your Baptism**

1. Arrive on time and check-in with the pastor who is baptizing you (you will be provided a location, date, and time when you schedule your baptism).
2. You will be shown to the baptism area and helped into the water at the appropriate time.
3. You or the person you chose will read your faith story.
4. You may be distracted by all the people watching. Just remember, they love you and are excited to celebrate with you.
5. Cross your arms in front of you and hold your nose or the pastor's hand as you are being lowered into and raised out of the water. This may be a little frightening, but the pastor will help you and you will only be underwater for about two (2) seconds.
6. You will be helped out of the water and walked to your changing room. A parent can meet you and help you change.

## **What to Wear and Bring to Your Baptism**

1. Wear dark clothes (shirt and pants) that cannot be seen through when wet. You may wear a swimsuit underneath these clothes if you are more comfortable.
2. Bring a change of clothes for after the baptism. Changing rooms are provided.
3. Bring a towel.
4. Bring a hair brush or comb.

**REQUEST FOR BAPTISM**

\_\_\_\_\_ (full name of child) knows Jesus as Savior and Lord and understands what it means to be baptized. His/Her faith story is attached.

\_\_\_\_\_ (first name of child) would like to meet with a Family Ministry pastor and schedule their baptism.

I agree that my child is ready to be baptized.

Parent Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Email: \_\_\_\_\_

***TO BE COMPLETED BY FAMILY MINISTRY PASTOR:***

I believe \_\_\_\_\_ is ready to be baptized.

His/Her baptism is scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_.

Pastor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return completed form and copy of child's faith story to the church office or scan and email to Pastor Sharon at [showat@fbcminneapolis.org](mailto:showat@fbcminneapolis.org).

## BAPTISM CHECKLIST

- I have decided to follow Christ and have asked Jesus to be my Lord and Savior.
- I have discussed being baptized with my family and we are in agreement that I know what baptism means.
- I have completed my Faith Story.
- My parents have completed and signed the Request for Baptism form and returned it to the church office.
- I have met with a Family Ministry pastor and scheduled my baptism.
- I have invited my family and friends to my baptism.
- I know what I need to do and bring on the day of my baptism.