

BONUS SESSION

WATER BAPTISM & YOUNG CHILDREN

Bonus Session Teaching on Water Baptism & Young Children

We are so excited that you are considering baptism for your child! Every child can have a personal relationship with Jesus, and we encourage them to make a decision to follow Him. Our children are encouraged to not just learn about Jesus, but learn from Him by walking with Him every day. We advise parents to wait until their child is asking to be water baptized. This is usually a good indication that they are ready to be baptized and that it will be a spiritual milestone in their life. While younger children under the age of seven can have a relationship with Jesus, they will not necessarily remember or understand the significance of the event, so we encourage parents to wait for baptism until they are a little older. The Bible does not describe a specific age, but describes baptism as a believer's decision to celebrate God cleansing away sin, and bringing the inner spirit to life! If your child is not quite old enough to make this decision on their own, this could be a great start to an ongoing conversation and teaching with your son or daughter!

As you discern if your child is ready to be water baptized, here are some questions to ask your child. The following answers show that your child understands.

1. When did you decide to follow Jesus and become His forever friend?

Your child should be able to describe to you their understanding of what Jesus did, that he or she understood what Jesus did, and that he or she needs Jesus in their life. It may have been at church, at home, or even sometime when they were alone.

2. What does it mean to be water baptized? Baptism is to celebrate what God has done in your spirit. Baptism is a way to celebrate "I'm a Christian and I want to show the world." It's a picture and celebration of what Jesus has done on the inside.

3. Why do you want to be water baptized? Jesus was baptized and He tells His believers to be baptized. As a friend of Jesus, baptism is a way to express, "I'm a friend of Jesus and I want to follow Him."

Your Child is Not Ready

If you don't feel your child understands what it means to be water baptized, it's totally appropriate to wait. During this time, let your child observe water baptism and talk to them about what it means. We'd love for you to read through the water baptism devotional with your child and spur them on in their personal friendship with Jesus.

Your Child is Ready

If you feel your child understands what it means to be water baptized, then we'd love for you to read through the water baptism devotional with them.

Review this Water Baptism Devotional with your child:

Obeying Jesus' Commandment

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20 ESV

- Being baptized in water is one of the first steps you take in following Jesus. A friend of Jesus does not just learn about Jesus, but follows Jesus and does the things He did. The number one reason you should get baptized in water is because Jesus did and He told us to also. When you became a friend of Jesus, you were brought into God's kingdom under Jesus' guidance. That means you have decided to do what Jesus says and follow His example. Jesus was water baptized, so we should be too. Take time right now to read about Jesus' baptism in your Bible in Matthew 3:13-17.

What is the number one reason you should be baptized in water?

Discuss the Outward Picture:

"...Buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead." Colossians 2:12 ESV

- Water baptism is an outward picture of what Jesus has done for you on the inside. Jesus died for your sins, was buried, and then was raised from the dead! When you asked Jesus to be your forever friend, there was a death, a burial and a resurrection (that means raising back to life) that happened in your spirit as you prayed the prayer (1 Corinthians 12:13).

- By being baptized, you are showing people that your old spirit and all your past sins (the bad things you did) are buried with Jesus. When you go all the way under the water when you are baptized. When you come up out of the water, you are saying that Jesus has given you new life. Everyone sees the picture of the change that has taken place inside your heart.
- ***What is water baptism a picture of?***

Discuss the Decision of Faith:

“We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.” Romans 6:4 ESV

- Water baptism does not save you. It has no purpose or meaning until after a person has decided to follow Jesus and invited Jesus into their heart and life. But water baptism is a very important step in your new Christian life. When you decided to follow Jesus, you made a decision of faith to receive Him into your heart. When you are baptized in water, you are making a decision of faith to follow Him all the days of your life. You are choosing to let Jesus and your new, born-again spirit be in charge of your life. Your water baptism will always be a reminder of your decision to follow the Lord.
- When you are baptized in water, it means you have made a decision of faith to do what?