



# **BAPTISM**

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS



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# LETTER TO PARENTS

As parents, we make a myriad of decisions. One study estimated that parents make close to 1,800 significant decisions during the first year of a baby's life! While most of these decisions are essential, passing on our faith in Jesus remains the most crucial decision we can make.

The Israelites are encouraged in Deuteronomy 6 first to have God's commandments on their hearts and second to impress them on their children. The psalmist tells how God's people will "tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord." We see the importance of passing faith on to our children throughout the scriptures.

As a parent, we dream of the day our child decides to follow Christ. Once that day comes, we feel such joy! You are reading this guide because your child has decided to follow Jesus. We want to celebrate that milestone in your family's life! We also want to continue to partner with you in the discipleship of your child. Discipling a child in how to love and follow Jesus is the job of parents and the church. It takes a church to disciple a child!

Because your child has decided to follow Christ, they now have the desire to make a public profession of their faith. This book is designed to open the door to discussion with your child. This guide will cover what it means to be a Christian and the meaning of baptism. We will also help your child begin to write out their spiritual story (or testimony). We hope this process will be the beginning of a lifetime of faith conversations with your child!

Our church is here to help you in whatever way we can. Please don't hesitate to reach out and let us know how we can be a partner in discipling your child.

**Fellowship Fayetteville Family Ministry Team**



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# PARENT ORIENTATION

It is an honor to get to walk through this process with you and your child. What an exciting time as your child has begun following Christ or is seriously considering it!

We understand that you know your child more deeply than we do. That's why we trust the Holy Spirit's work in your life as you determine if your child is ready to be baptized. This book will guide you through conversations with your child that can help them express their faith in Christ and help them more fully understand the decision they have made.

Please don't be in a hurry to get through this material. Use this as an opportunity to develop patterns of faith conversations with your child. As you discuss each topic, who knows how the Holy Spirit will use these questions to reveal your child's heart to you? This book is designed to be processed in three sessions. You can complete these sessions in as little as 15 minutes, but they can last longer if your child wants to talk. While we encourage you not to rush through the sessions, we also encourage you to read your child for signs that they are done for the day.

**Session One | What Does It Mean to be a Christian?**

**Session Two | What is Baptism?**

**Session Three | Telling My Story**

## **Purpose of the Parent Orientation**

The goal of the one-hour parent orientation is to allow us to connect with you and help you understand how to use these materials. As the body of Christ, it is our job to equip you with resources and experience to be able to have these conversations with your child. During this class, we will cover the materials you will use to help your child understand baptism. We will also answer any questions you may have regarding baptism here at our church.

We hope that you will feel confident in having faith conversations with your child at the end of our time together. Also, we pray that God will give you discernment regarding your child's readiness to be baptized.

# WHAT DOES EVIDENCE OF FAITH LOOK LIKE IN CHILDREN?

**Knowing God** means believing the Bible is true. Does your child have a desire and eagerness to learn about the things of God and worship Him? Do they believe – not just know – the truth of God we read in His Word?

**Loving God** means seeing him as most valuable. Does your child have an affection for God and a desire to know Him personally? Do they value Him and His Word above the things of this world? Do they express gratitude for salvation?

**Trusting God** means believing in Him with confidence. Does your child show trust and belief in God? Do they have a repentant heart, showing remorse when they sin? Are they grieved when they sin – not out of fear of punishment but of love for God?

**Obedying God** means knowing, loving, and trusting Him enough to do what he says. Does your child desire to obey the commands of God? Do they show evidence of the Spirit conforming them to the image of Jesus? Are they bearing spiritual fruit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control)?

## Encouragements

- We are not asking your child to be wholly sanctified before they are baptized. Baptism follows a changed heart. The fruit of that changed heart will take time and may look different in each child's life.
- It's okay if your child is not ready to be baptized.
- Please pray and spend time with your child over the next few weeks. Your willingness to do so will help them see that their spiritual life and well-being are your priorities.
- You may feel intimidated by the prospect of having to help your child understand things that may still be a mystery to you. That's okay! While you bear responsibility in this process, God is ultimately the Author of your faith and theirs. Lean into the Lord, asking for help, wisdom, and discernment as you lead your child into an understanding of the gospel. Know and rely on the love He has for you and your child. Contact the Elementary Ministry staff or other believers if you have questions.

# NEXT STEPS

## Reflect on the Gospel

Take some time to process the information in this book. Ask God to guide you as you prepare to walk your child through this baptism process. Pray that God would bless your conversations and connect you and your child as you talk. While you reflect on this information, take some time to remind yourself of your own faith story. Remember what God has done and continues to do for you. Thank Him for how He has welcomed you into the family of God.

## Work Through These Sessions with Your Child

Plan a time for you and your child to talk when each of you will be able to give your full attention. You could even pick a favorite spot in town to go and work through the sessions. Use this as an opportunity to gain some precious one-on-one time with your child. As you talk through these sessions, validate your child's questions. Working through the questions together can be an opportunity to open the door to spiritual conversations with your child that can lead to future discipleship.

You can find the resources and videos you'll need at [fellowshipfayetteville.org/kidsbaptism](http://fellowshipfayetteville.org/kidsbaptism)

## Pray for Your Child

As you walk through this baptism process, take time daily to pray for your child. Ask God to speak to each of your hearts. Pray that your child will understand the gospel and what God has done for them. Pray that your child will learn to love Jesus more than anything in their life. Also, consider how God created your child, their gifts & talents. Ask God to begin to develop those gifts so they can serve and honor Him.

## Schedule a Baptism Interview for Your Child

We would love to celebrate what God is doing in the life of your child & family. This is an excellent opportunity for your child to share their story with someone other than their parents. While we rely heavily on your wisdom, the parent, to determine if your child is ready for baptism, this is a good time for the staff to reinforce that your child is ready to be baptized.

Email [fayettekids@fellowshipnwa.org](mailto:fayettekids@fellowshipnwa.org) to set up a baptism interview.

## Video Their Story

Before their baptism, we would love to show the congregation your child explaining their faith. Our media team will schedule a time to film your child's story at the church. We will use the material from Session 3 of this book as the 'script' to develop a 60- to 90-second video that communicates to the congregation what God has done in their life.

## SESSION ONE

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# WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

# SESSION ONE | WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

*Depending on your child's age, you can use this as an opportunity to help them become more familiar with their Bibles. Have them look up the verses in their Bibles and read them together as you talk about them.*

To understand what it means to be a Christian, first, we need to understand the gospel. What is the Gospel? Gospel means "good news." To help us understand why the gospel is such good news, we need to go to the beginning of creation.

In the beginning, God created all things. His creation was good and without fault. Adam and Eve were the pinnacle of his creation, created in His image. They were created to be in a close, loving relationship with God. In this creation, God gave them freedom and an abundance of ways to live out that freedom in the worship of Him. There was one thing God asked of Adam and Eve: to not eat from the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Adam and Eve, tempted by Satan, chose to disobey this one thing God asked of them, thus bringing sin into the world. The Bible tells us that through Adam, sin entered the world and affected us all. Sin can be described as "anything we think, do, or say that goes against God's way."

## **Read Romans 3:23.**

Who has sinned? Have you ever sinned? *(all have sinned)*  
Right, we all have sinned. All of us have disobeyed God at some point in our lives. We have all done something or had an attitude that God does not like.

Sin has consequences. Read **Isaiah 59:2a**.

What does that verse say a result of sin is?

*(separation from God)*

Right! Our sin separates us all from God because He is holy and perfect and cannot be in fellowship with sin.

## **Read Romans 6:23a.**

What does this verse say we deserve because of our sin? *(death)*

Because of our sins, we deserve to die and be separated from God forever. That's not very good news, is it?

So, what did God do about it? Read **Romans 5:8**.  
What did God do?

Even though we don't deserve it, God sent his son Jesus (**John 3:16**) to die for us. He took our punishment for sin.

How can we respond to that amazing gift of God?  
**Read Romans 10:9-10, 13.**

We can believe in our hearts that Jesus died for us and rose again 3 days later and confess Him as the Lord (or boss) of our lives. When we do this, we become followers of Jesus or Christians.

When we become Christians, we believe that Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection pays the price for our sin. We believe that our faith in Christ frees us from sin's power and eternal consequence (Read **Acts 13:38**).

**Watch this video  
(Video One) with your  
child to learn more.**

[fellowshipfayetteville.org/kidsbaptism](http://fellowshipfayetteville.org/kidsbaptism)



# KID'S QUESTIONS

1. Read **Romans 3:23**. Who has sinned?
2. Have you ever sinned?
3. Read **Isaiah 59:2a**. What does that verse say happens because of sin?
4. Read **Romans 6:23a**. What does this verse say we deserve because of our sin?
5. Read **Romans 5:8**. What did God do about the consequences of sin?
6. Read **Romans 10:9-10, 13**. How can we respond to that amazing gift of God and be saved?

What do we have to **A\_\_\_\_\_ (Admit)**? *(We are sinners and need God's help.)*

What do we need to **B\_\_\_\_\_ (Believe)**? *(God sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sins and he rose 3 days later.)*

What do we **C\_\_\_\_\_ (Choose)** to do? *(to follow Jesus and obey Him all the days of our lives)*

# ACTIVITIES TO DO TOGETHER

## Activity 1: Heart Map

- **What to Do:** Draw a big heart on a sheet of paper. Inside the heart, draw or write things that are important to you. Talk about how inviting Jesus into your heart means he becomes the most important part of your life.
- **Bible Connection:** Revelation 3:20 “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.”

## Activity 2: The Good News Chain

- **What to Do:** Cut strips of paper. On each strip, write one part of the “Good News” about Jesus (God loves us, Jesus came to Earth, Jesus died for us, Jesus rose again, We can believe in him and have forgiveness). Link the strips together to make a chain.
- **Bible Connection:** John 3:16 – “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

# PRAYER TO PRAY TOGETHER

“Dear God, thank you for showing us what it means to follow Jesus. Help us to understand your love and to believe in you with all our hearts. We ask that you fill us with your Holy Spirit, so we can live like Jesus every day. Help us to love others just like you love us. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

### **Parent Questions**

Open communication is key in discerning whether your child truly understands the gospel message and their need for Christ. Consider whether influences like peer pressure (all their friends are doing it) might affect your child's decision. Some kids may be interested in baptism because they thought it looked cool to get in the water in front of the church or because they wanted to eat the communion wafer, and someone told them they must be baptized first. By engaging in a conversation with your child, you can explore what is motivating them. Below are some questions you can consider when trying to discern if your child is a follower of Jesus.

#### **Do they know what sin is? Do they understand they have sinned?**

The first step in realizing that we need Jesus is understanding sin. Romans 3:23 helps us see that we have "all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." We might understand sin as actions, a tendency to not live in accord with God and others, or a failure to love. The Bible uses lots of language to describe sin, but kids may not grasp all the nuances. If kids can articulate that sin is something that we do that God doesn't want us to do and that they, like all people, have sinned and need God's grace, that's great.

#### **Do they understand who Jesus is? Do they believe in His death, burial, and resurrection?**

You can engage in open and honest conversations about your child's understanding of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Encourage your child to ask questions and discuss the significance of Jesus' teachings, his sacrifice, and the message of hope through his resurrection. Again, kids may not grasp all the nuance of the story of Jesus and his role in the Trinity. Still, a basic understanding of the gospel message and affirming its truth is essential. Fostering an environment of exploration, reflection, and dialogue can help you gauge your child's understanding of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

#### **Have they repented of their sin?**

Repentance means to have a complete change of direction. Kids who have repented of sin will show a genuine change in their behavior and attitudes. Children who have genuinely repented may show remorse for their actions, seek to make things right, and strive to live according to Jesus' teachings. It's essential for you to have open and honest conversations with your child about the concept of repentance. Approach this process with love, understanding, and guidance. Don't expect your child to grasp everything fully; look for evidence they want to change.

### **Are they showing signs of new life?**

One way for you to know if your child has trusted Jesus is if they express a genuine interest in learning more about Jesus and the Bible. They may ask questions about faith, express a desire to pray, or show kindness and empathy towards others. Additionally, if children demonstrate a growing understanding of forgiveness, grace, and love, it shows that they are bearing spiritual fruit. Cultivate open and honest communication with your child, allowing them to freely express their thoughts and feelings about their faith journey. Your child may show spiritual growth through subtle changes in how they respond to you and or other family members, a willingness to share with their siblings, or even the desire to help around the house.

SESSION TWO

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**WHAT IS BAPTISM?**

# SESSION TWO | WHAT IS BAPTISM?

## What is Baptism?

Because many of us come from a variety of backgrounds and have likely had different experiences with baptism, it is helpful to establish a standard, biblical understanding of baptism.

## Baptism is an Ordinance

Baptism is one of the two ordinances (the other being Communion) given to us by Jesus to identify with his death, burial, and resurrection. An ordinance is simply a command. Baptism is something Jesus tells us to do as his followers. It is a picture of the intangible work of the gospel in our lives and the Spirit's guidance to the truth.

## Baptism Identifies Us with Christ and with the Church

As a church practice, we are reminded that those who have been baptized bear witness to their identification with Christ. It serves as a reminder of the work of Jesus on the cross and his resurrection. As someone is immersed in the water, we remember Christ's death and burial, which provided an atoning sacrifice for our sins. As they are brought out of the water, we remember Christ's resurrection and the hope of new life.

## Baptism is a Symbol

Baptism serves as a symbol of an inner change in the life of a believer. Baptism is not "necessary" for salvation. Baptism is not something that brings about salvation; it occurs after salvation. We practice baptism by immersing ourselves in water.

Baptism is an outward expression of what happens to us when we trust Jesus. It's a picture of being cleansed from sin and publicly showing others that we want to follow Jesus. Baptism symbolizes our union with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection. It sets the pattern for the cruciform life we are embarking on.

Watch this video  
(Video Two) with your  
child to help  
you think through it.

[fellowshipfayetteville.org/kidsbaptism](http://fellowshipfayetteville.org/kidsbaptism)



## KID'S QUESTIONS

1. Imagine you are planting a seed. What happens before the plant can grow big and strong?
2. What does coming up out of the water after being baptized remind you of? *(Discuss the idea of something being buried to grow.)*
3. What does coming up out of the water after being baptized remind you of? *(Help your child connect it to the idea of a new beginning and Jesus rising from the dead.)*
4. Why do you think it's important for people to share with others that they are following Jesus? How is baptism an important way to do that? *(Talk about being a witness and letting others know about your faith.)*
5. Read **Matthew 3:13-17**. What happened when Jesus came up out of the water?

## ACTIVITIES TO DO TOGETHER

### Activity 1: Water Painting

- **What to Do:** Use watercolors or watered-down paint to create a picture that reminds you of new life. This could be flowers blooming, the sun rising, or anything that feels fresh and new. Talk about how baptism symbolizes this new life in Jesus.
- **Bible Connection:** 2 Corinthians 5:17 – “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”

### Activity 2: Act It Out!

- **What to Do:** With your parent's help, act out a simple baptism. You can use a small tub of water or just pretend. Talk about what each part means – going down and coming up.
- **Bible Connection:** Romans 6:4 – “We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”

## PRAYER TO PRAY TOGETHER

“Heavenly Father, thank you for teaching us about baptism. We pray that we understand how baptism shows we belong to you. Help us remember we are part of your family. Help us live our lives to honor you. Thank you for your promise to always be with us. Amen.”

# QUESTIONS ABOUT BAPTISM

## **Why do we get baptized?**

Christ commanded believers to baptize those who choose to follow Christ as a part of making disciples.

- To follow Christ's example. (Matthew 3:13-17)
- To obey Christ's command. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 18:8; 1 John 2:3)
- To identify publicly as a follower of Christ. (Acts 8:12-13, 36-38, 16:29-33)

## **Who should be baptized?**

### **Read Acts 2:41**

Who does this verse say were baptized? Those who accepted the message of the good news of Jesus, the gospel. Every person who has decided to follow Christ can and should be baptized.

The one requirement for baptism is belief in Christ! Because an infant does not make a choice to follow Christ, Fellowship does not practice infant baptism. As a way of dedicating our children to God, we have Parent/Child Dedications.

## **Who can baptize at Fellowship?**

At Fellowship, families and friends can and should be involved in baptism. You can participate by sharing the story of the person being baptized or possibly even baptizing them. Because baptism is a public identification with Jesus, it makes sense to perform baptism within the gathering of the church whenever possible so that the church can celebrate and the baptism can instruct the church. It also seems appropriate that the church leadership exercise some oversight to help maintain a correct understanding of baptism and prevent the practice from being abused. So, at fellowship we encourage men in a spiritual leadership role to baptize.

SESSION THREE

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# TELLING MY STORY

# SESSION THREE | TELLING MY STORY

*Note: If you have felt the Lord guiding you to wait for your child to be baptized in the previous sessions because you are unsure about their faith, you can wait on this lesson until later.*

Since baptism is an outward symbol of what Christ has done in our hearts, we should be able to communicate, at some level, the decision we have made to follow Christ and the life change we have experienced. We understand that when kids begin following Christ, they have different levels of understanding of what Christ has done for them. Your child may or may not be able to articulate a deep theological understanding of salvation, but they should be able to communicate some level of faith and trust in Christ.

This session will help you work with your child in articulating their faith story. This session is not designed to coerce our kids into saying the “right” things. Instead, we designed it to help your child find the words to express what Christ has done in their hearts! Feel free to work with them to find the words to express their faith in Christ. While working with your child, you may find they do not have a specific moment to point to when they accepted Christ. Don’t worry about defining a specific day/time if they have trouble finding one. While we believe that there is a moment in which we pass from death to life, some kids cannot point back to one specific moment when they made the decision to follow Jesus.

## Share Your Story

This is an excellent opportunity to share your story with your child if you have not done so before. Use the guide below and share with your child when you decided to follow Christ.

NOTE: These steps are also in the kid’s book.

Think about these things when you think about your story:

- **What was your life like before you knew Jesus?** *(Even if you were young, were there things you didn’t understand or felt curious about?)*
- **How did you learn about Jesus?** *(Did someone tell you? Did you hear about him at church or in a book?)*
- **What made you decide to believe in Jesus and follow him?** *(Was there something you heard or learned that made you want to follow Jesus? Who was with me? Did someone help answer my questions? Where was I? When did this happen? How old was I?)*
- **How has your life changed since you started following Jesus?** *(How is your life different now that you know Jesus is in your life? Do you feel more loved? Do you understand things better? Are you trying to be kinder?)*

## Putting it All Together

Now, go back and put each of those sections into story form. Use the questions as guides to tell your story. You will have the opportunity to help your child write their story using these guiding questions in their book if they are old enough, or you can write it for them.

There is another version of an outline you can use on Page 16. This version is not in the kids’ book.

**Watch this video (Video Three) with your child to hear someone share the story of how they became a Christian.**

[fellowshipfayetteville.org/kidsbaptism](http://fellowshipfayetteville.org/kidsbaptism)



## KID'S QUESTIONS

1. Can you remember the first time you heard about Jesus? Who told you? *(Help your child recall early experiences learning about Jesus.)*
2. What is one thing you have learned about Jesus that makes you happy or excited? *(Encourage your child to share a personal connection.)*
3. Imagine a friend asks why you want to be baptized. What is something you could tell them about your relationship with Jesus? *(Help your child practice a simple explanation.)*
4. Read **Matthew 7:24**. What is one thing you might want to try to do differently to obey what Jesus says? *(Discuss the idea of living in obedience, growing in faith, and making positive changes.)*

Take some time to write out your story using the guidelines below. Have a parent/adult help you think through each of these areas.

- What was your life like before you knew Jesus?
- How did you learn about Jesus?
- What made you decide to believe in Jesus and follow him?
- How has your life changed since you started following Jesus?

## ACTIVITIES TO DO TOGETHER

### Activity 1: My “Jesus Story” Pictures

- **What to Do:** Draw three or four pictures that tell your story of how you came to know Jesus. They don't have to be perfect! You can draw a picture of when you first heard about Jesus, a picture of you praying or deciding to follow him, and a picture of something that's different or better in your life now.
- **Bible Connection:** Psalm 78:4 — “We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done.”

### Activity 2: Practice Sharing!

- **What to Do:** Pretend you are talking to a friend or family member about your decision to follow Jesus. With your parent/adult, practice telling your story in a simple way. You can even use your “Jesus Story” pictures to help you remember.
- **Bible Connection:** 1 Peter 3:15 — “But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”

## PRAYER TO PRAY TOGETHER

“Loving God, thank you for what you have done in our lives. Help us remember how special it is to talk about our faith. We pray that you give us courage to share our stories with others, so they can know you too. We thank you for your love and for hearing our prayers. Help us grow closer to you every day. Amen.”

# WRITING MY STORY

My story by: \_\_\_\_\_

Here is why I decided to follow Jesus:

If they can remember the details, write them here:

*(Who was with you? Where were you? How old were you?)*

The biggest difference Jesus has made in my life is:

A verse that I really like is:

I like that verse because:

I want you to know:

# APPENDIX



# DISCIPLING MY CHILD

As parents, you play an essential role in guiding your child through their relationship with God, and this is best achieved by embedding spiritual practices into the natural flow of daily life. The process unfolds through intentional **time**, leveraging key **moments** and marking significant **milestones** in your child's life and relationship with God.

One of the most critical ways to disciple your child is by devoting regular **time** to studying the Bible and praying together. This doesn't have to be a long, formal ritual but a consistent, manageable practice that fits into your family's rhythm. Whether first thing in the morning or before bed, carving out space for these moments every day helps weave faith into the fabric of your child's life. By dedicating this time, you show them that God is a constant presence, not just a part of church. These times together allow for reflection on Scripture, prayer, and discussions about God's role in their lives. As you read the Bible, encourage them to ask questions, express their thoughts, and share their concerns.

**Moments** are unplanned opportunities to speak God's wisdom into your child's life. When your child comes to you with questions or struggles, whether related to their faith or daily life, use those moments as opportunities to bring God's wisdom into the conversation. These spontaneous, teachable moments are powerful tools in a child's spiritual development, as they help connect real-life experiences with God's Word.

When your child fails a test and comes home upset, you can leverage this moment to remind them of how much you and God love them and how their performance doesn't change how God feels about them. When your child wins their basketball game, you can use this moment to speak the truth about their identity in Christ. You can teach them how to celebrate in a way that honors God and their gifting without belittling others.

An example of a **milestone** might be when your child enters jr. high school, a time of increased independence and social challenges. At Fellowship, we have an opportunity for you to offer them words of wisdom and blessing through our sixth-grade blessing service. Each child will receive a student study Bible, and you can leverage this time to offer your blessing over them as they gain greater independence and ownership over their faith.

It's crucial to continue celebrating your child's spiritual growth and relationship with God. Every birthday, new

grade, or rite of passage is an opportunity to remind them of God's faithfulness in their lives and to reflect on how far they've come in their faith journey. By acknowledging these milestones in light of their relationship with God, you reinforce the idea that their life is a continuously unfolding story of God's work in them.

In discipling your child, remember that the most meaningful spiritual growth happens in the ongoing rhythm of your family's life. Regular Bible study, prayer, and conversations about their faith will create a space where your child can develop a deep and lasting relationship with God. From their early questions about God to their first moments of independence, you have the privilege of continually reminding them that God is with them every step of the way. This role is not just a responsibility but a profound honor and a testament to the value of your guidance in their lives, no matter where they are in life.

# FAQ

## **Should someone be re-baptized? What if I was baptized as a child? What if I was baptized but walked away from faith for a time?**

We do not believe it is necessary to be baptized to be a member of Fellowship or be involved in serving at Fellowship. Frequently, in the New Testament, baptism immediately followed a person's repentance and declaration of faith in Jesus (Acts 8:12-13, 8:38). In every New Testament instance of baptism, repentance and faith come first (Acts 2:37-38, 41). It follows that baptism is an outward expression of life change and an act of obedience to Jesus (Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:18-20).

You should be baptized again if you feel you were baptized prior to true repentance and faith. It is truly a matter that is between you and God. We encourage any follower of Jesus who has not been baptized as a believer to be baptized in obedience to Him and as a public announcement of their faith.

## **Is baptism necessary for salvation?**

We do not believe that baptism is necessary for salvation. Scripturally we see that salvation is based on faith alone and God's grace alone (Ephesians 2:8-9). It isn't any action, like baptism, that saves us, but God's grace expressed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. We receive this grace through faith in Jesus.

## **Why do we do baptism like we do (submerged in water)?**

We baptize by immersion because it seems to be the method that was used in the early church and is implied in the Greek word baptizo, meaning dip or immerse. To summarize the New Testament teaching concerning baptism, it seems clear that baptism is for those who have expressed faith in Jesus, wish to be obedient to his commands, and publicly announce their decision to follow Him. The baptisms we see in the New Testament and the word's definition indicate complete immersion underwater. In short, baptism is for those who have trusted Christ and should be performed by immersing those individuals in water.

## **What about infant baptism?**

Many denominations baptize infants (Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Anglican). This practice is known as pedobaptism. Each denomination has a unique understanding regarding the reasons for this practice. Still, all draw from a few examples of baptism in the New Testament that could have included infants (Acts 16:13-15, 32-34, 1 Cor. 1:16). These passages record whole households being baptized but do not explicitly include any infants.

A closer examination of Acts 16:30-34 may reveal something about household baptisms.

<sup>30</sup> [The jailer said], "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

<sup>31</sup> And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household." <sup>32</sup> And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. <sup>33</sup> And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household. <sup>34</sup> And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household.

It seems apparent that Paul and Silas preached the gospel to the jailer's entire household, and those who believed were baptized, which follows the pattern established in the rest of the New Testament.

In short, no evidence in the New Testament indicates infants were baptized. Therefore, we encourage any follower of Jesus who has not been baptized as a believer to be baptized in obedience to Him and as a public announcement of their faith.









