

Maybe all you really want to know is whether your kid is ready.

Here's the thing: There's no "right" age or action to indicate your kid is ready. It's hard to know exactly when anyone is ready, because baptism is an outward expression of an inward choice to follow Jesus. If you've been baptized this is a great opportunity to share your personal story and your experience. If you haven't been baptized, this is your next step too! Since being baptized is an inward decision, don't try to force it or make your kid think it's something that has to be done before a person starts following Jesus; it's not. (Remember Ephesians 2:8-9: there's nothing we can do to rescue ourselves.)

But if your kid comes to you and asks about baptism, talk about what baptism announces to people and why we do it. If he or she can express a personal understanding of baptism and still wants to take that step, great! If not, use the discussion as an opportunity to talk more about Jesus and his rescue.

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 have a specific memory of when 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 sometimes when they were alone.

2. What does it mean to be water baptized?

It means I'm following Jesus. It means I'm a Christian and I want to show the world. It's a picture of what Jesus has done on the inside of me.

3. Why do you want to be water baptized?

Because Jesus was baptized and he tells us to be baptized also. Because I'm a friend of Jesus and I want to follow Him.

If your child is ready to participate in an upcoming baptism service, you can register by completing the online form at www.genchurch.ca/baptism/

BAPTISM

Family Discussion Guide



At Generations Church, we believe water baptism is a celebration of our decision to follow Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour. This is a brief guide to help families discuss baptism and figure out whether or not your kid is ready for it.

*We recommend you use a bible and read through the scriptures mentioned with your child.

“All of us were baptized into Christ Jesus. Don't you know that we were baptized into his death? ⁴ By being baptized, we were buried with Christ into his death. Christ has been raised from the dead by the Father's glory. And like Christ we also can live a new life.”

Romans 6:3-4

First things first: baptism is a BIG deal. It's a one-time, public announcement that you follow Jesus because you believe he rescued you. Except instead of telling people one by one, you show the whole church at once...by getting dunked in and out of water. It's a little bit like wearing a jersey to show you're a fan of a sports team. Or wearing a ring to show that you're married.

talking to your child

Any person—kid or adult—who gets baptized should understand what he or she is showing others. In kid-friendly terms, baptism is kind of like saying:

I need a rescuer. Everybody has done wrong things. It all started when God told Adam not to eat from one tree in the Garden of Eden. God said, “If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die” (Genesis 2:17). Unfortunately, God’s enemy, the snake, tricked Adam and Eve into thinking God didn’t really love them. So they chose to disobey him (Genesis 3:1-6). That’s when death and all the wrong things in the world began. Adam and Eve eventually died. And now everyone who disobeys God—which is all of us—deserves the same punishment (Romans 3:23).

God sent a rescuer. God created us to love him and be close to him, forever. And he loved us way too much to let death stand in the way of that. So he sent his own, perfect son Jesus—who didn’t deserve death—to take *our* punishment (John 3:16). But Jesus didn’t stay dead; he came back to life. Jesus took our punishment by dying— and got rid of it by coming back to life. Since Jesus beat death, now death can’t separate us from God anymore (Romans 8:38-39).

Jesus is MY rescuer. There’s nothing any of us can do to make up for the wrong things we have done. Even if we do a million good things, it’s not enough (Ephesians 2:8-9). But this rescue is a special gift God gives us all for free. And just like we have to open presents if we want to see what’s inside, we have to decide that we *want* God’s gift. Making that choice is like opening our present! When we do, God sees us as his very own children (John 1:12). That means we are close to him again.

I follow Jesus. Ephesians 5:1-2 says: “You are the children that God dearly loves. So be just like him. Lead a life of love, just as Christ did. He loved us. He gave himself up for us. He was a sweet-smelling offering and sacrifice to God.” Leading a life of love in this

world full of wrong things is not easy (Romans 8:17). And we’ll definitely mess up sometimes. But ...if we accept God’s gift and do our best to live like Jesus, we will one day live with him forever in a perfect, glorious world, where there’s no sickness or sadness or death or anything bad. And that will be worth the wait (Revelation 21:1-4).

If a person—kid or adult—is ready to make that announcement, here’s why he or she really *should* get baptized:

Most importantly, Jesus wants us to get baptized. After all, he got baptized (Matthew 3:13-17), and following Jesus means doing what he did. Also, he told people to get baptized in Matthew 28:19-20: “Go to the people of all nations and make them my disciples. Baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to do everything I have told you.” Once we decide to follow Jesus (which is what it means to be a disciple) we should obey him by getting baptized.

Baptism is a picture of Jesus’ rescue. When we go under the water, it reminds us of how Jesus died and was buried—and we choose to get rid of (or bury) our old life of disobeying God and not being close to him. When we come up out of the water, it reminds us of how Jesus came back to life, which got rid of death—and now we can learn to live like Jesus did, and do what he wants us to do (Romans 6:3-4).

Baptism is a picture of how we have been made clean by God. When Jesus rescued us, it was like he wiped away all the wrong things we had done, just like water washes away dirt (Romans 6:23). The water in baptism shows people that we’ve told God we’re sorry for all the wrong things we’ve done. We’ve asked God to forgive us and make us clean through Jesus (Psalm 103:10-12).