



How Do I Know If My Child Is Ready for Baptism?

As parents, many of you have wrestled with the question of whether your child is ready for baptism.

The decision to trust Christ as their Savior is the most important decision your child will ever make. The next milestone is to join with other believers to publicly declare and celebrate their new life in Christ through the act of baptism. Baptism is, and should be, a big deal in the life of every believer. We want each child to fully understand the significance of baptism when they participate in this event. So, how can you know if the time is right for your child to take this important step of obedience?

What Should Be Expected Before a Child is Baptized?

There is no specific developmental age that indicates whether or not your child is ready for baptism. Here are some principles you should look for as you assess your child's readiness:

- Your child should understand what baptism is and what it is not. Baptism is one of the two ordinances instituted and commanded by Jesus for believers. It is an outward symbol of an inward reality that one has accepted Christ as their personal Savior. It is not an action that leads to salvation, something "cool" to do, or a church membership requirement.
- Interest in baptism should be child initiated. As baptism is a personal expression of one's love and identification with Christ, it is expected that this is a spiritual conviction of the child and not driven by the parent(s). Do they understand the significance of identifying themselves as a Christ follower?
- Your child should be able to share the gospel including memory verses for support.
- Your child should be comfortable articulating to others what life was like before belief in Christ, how they came to believe in Christ, and what their life since trusting Christ is like.

If your child has expressed an interest in baptism on their own initiative, here are some questions you can ask to clarify their readiness:

- Why do you want to be baptized?
- What do we need to be saved from? Why? What did God do to save you?
- Do you believe that baptism saves you? Why or why not?
- Tell us about when you knew you wanted to follow Jesus? What were you doing? Were you at home/church/somewhere else? What did you do next?
- In what ways does believing in Jesus change how you live?
- How do you feel about standing up in front of a group of people to share your story of grace?

What Does Participating in Baptism Look Like?

At Fellowship Bible Church we practice the ordinance of baptism in a variety of settings. We will do baptisms during our regular weekend worship services 2-3 times a year. We also celebrate baptisms at special times during the year, as at our annual church-wide Party on The Lawn, and during special all-church evening worship and prayer gatherings throughout the year.

Because we believe a profession of faith and baptism are so important, we require all children who desire to be baptized at Fellowship to attend a baptism class in order to determine their understanding and readiness. If your child is interested in being baptized, please complete the **Baptism Interest Form** and we will be in touch!

Whether this is the time for your child to be baptized or not, baptism is always an opportunity for your family to be confronted with the truth of the gospel; that we were once dead in our sins, but have been raised to new life through faith in Jesus and to talk with your child about this amazing picture of the hope that is in Christ!