

A dramatic splash of water is captured in mid-air, with numerous droplets suspended around the main splash. The background is a soft, golden sunset over a body of water, with the sun low on the horizon. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

# *Baptism*

Is my child ready?

*At Faith Bible Church we have declared the importance of the role of parents in the spiritual training of their children. It is an exciting thing when children come forward to declare their faith in Jesus Christ through the ordinance of baptism. Many parents wonder, “How do we know if our child is ready?”*

### *Some questions parents should consider.*

Has my child personally responded to the gospel message and received Christ as their Lord and Savior? (Romans 10:9-10) Are they mentally and spiritually mature enough to participate in baptism? Although scripture does not indicate a minimum age a child must be to participate in baptism, it is important that the child asking to be baptized is old enough to express a sincere desire to follow the Lord. The child should be able to give a credible profession of faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. You should also see evidence of a growing relationship with Jesus Christ in your child: fruit of the Spirit, a desire to lay down their will for God’s, love for the things He loves, a hatred of sin, etc. Encourage your child to talk about how the Lord has been at work in their life. These things will help you to discern the genuineness of their understanding of and commitment to a growing, life-long relationship with Him.

### *When a child desires to be baptized parents should assess the child’s understanding of the Gospel.*

The child should understand that the gospel, “is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.” (Romans 1:16). You might ask your child the following questions to gauge their grasp of the gospel message. It is all right if a child’s theology and doctrine are very simple. This discussion can be an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the gospel message. A list of questions is provided for you at the end of this booklet. You may wish to have your child write out their responses to these questions or you can write for them as they tell you verbally. This will be a helpful first step if you decide your child is ready to be baptized.

1. What is sin and who is a sinner?—A violation of God’s law, rebellion against God. All people are sinners. (Romans 3:23, Romans 5:12, James 4:17).
2. What are the consequences for sin?—Death, judgement, separation from God. (Romans 1:18, 6:23a, Isaiah 59:1-2).

3. Why did Jesus have to die?—God is holy and He has the right to punish sin. Every man is sinful. Jesus, though He never sinned, died in our place to be the sacrifice God demands in order to forgive the sins of sinful mankind. (1 John 2:2, Hebrews 9:22, 1 Timothy 1:15).

4. How does Jesus' death accomplish our salvation?—It is only because Jesus substituted Himself, and took the punishment we deserve, and died in our place that we can stand forgiven for our sin before a Holy God. (Isaiah 53:5, Romans 6:6-11, Eph.1:7, 2 Cor. 5:21).

5. What must we do to be saved?—Repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only way to have my sins forgiven, and therefore be made right with God. (Acts 3:19, 16:31, John 3:14-16, Rom 5:1-2).

6. What do the answers to these questions mean for you personally? How has the gospel impacted your heart and your life?

### *When a child desires to be baptized parents should assess the child's understanding of the ordinance of baptism.*

Your child should be able to articulate why they want to be baptized. Many children desire to go through baptism because others have done it and they do not fully understand what they are representing. Here are some helpful verses that explain the meaning of baptism.

- It is a command to follow that was given by Jesus and is an act of obedience. (Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 2:38, 41).
- Baptism by immersion is a symbol of:
  - The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. (Romans 6:3-5, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).
  - The washing and cleansing from sin. (Titus 3:5, Acts 22:16).
  - The work of the Holy Spirit at the time of your salvation. (1 Corinthians 12:12-13).
  - Our death to self and life in Christ. (Romans 6:6-13).
- Baptism is only for believers in Jesus Christ and follows salvation. It does not accomplish our salvation. It is an outward expression of an inward change that has already taken place. (Acts 8:12-13a, 35-36).
- Baptism is a blessing to the one being baptized and to all observing.

## *What are the next steps?*

If you decide that your child is ready to be baptized, you should visit our website [www.faithbiblelincoln.org](http://www.faithbiblelincoln.org) or contact the church office. We will inform you of the next date that baptisms are scheduled and put you in touch with a pastor who will meet with you and your child in the weeks prior to the baptism ceremony. Sometime before your scheduled meeting, it is recommended that you ask your child to answer the questions provided at the end of this booklet. You should also have them write out their testimony of faith. Writing it out is a helpful way for them to share their testimony with the pastor when they meet and can also serve as a clear and concise way for them to articulate the Lord's work in their life leading up to this step of obedience. If your child prefers to type, an online version of this worksheet is available on our website.

## *How can I help my child write their testimony?*

Be available as they write. Sometimes children can better verbally articulate what they would like to say, so it is all right if they speak while you write down their words. Ask questions to help them explain themselves. If they are self-conscious about sharing their testimony encourage them that when a testimony of God's work is shared, God encourages the hearers and glorifies Himself. Tell them it is likely that someone who will hear their testimony on baptism day needs to hear what they have to say! Pray with them as they seek to put into words what God has done in their life. Here are some things your child can write about in their testimony.

1. Write about their life before the saving work of Christ in it.
2. Ask your child to describe how the Lord brought them to faith. They might write about who they heard the gospel from, or if there was an event that made them aware of their need for a Savior.
3. Ask your child to describe their understanding of sin and what it means to trust in Jesus Christ for forgiveness. Ideally this would be able to be read aloud in just a few minutes.

## *Questions to work through.*

1. What is sin?

2. What are the consequences of sin?

3. Why did Jesus have to die?

4. How does Jesus' life, death, and resurrection accomplish our salvation?

5. What must we do to be saved?

6. What do the answers to these questions mean for you personally? How has the salvation that Jesus offers impacted your heart and your life?

## *My testimony.*

What was your life like before the saving work of Christ?

Describe how the Lord made you aware of your need for a Savior. Was there an event that made this happen? Was there a person who told you about the gospel?

What does it mean that you are a sinner? Explain what has happened since you trusted in Jesus for your forgiveness.

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