

catalyst**KIDS**

Parent Tools

BAPTISM



cat · a · lyst
kad(ə)ləst

noun

that which evokes a transformative process

kid
/kid/

noun

a child or young person

cat · a · lyst kid
kad(ə)ləst /kid/

noun

a biblically anchored, big-dreaming, world changing child or young person who evokes a transformative process in those around them



A Few Things to Consider

Before we get started, here are just a few suggestions to help prepare yourself for these conversations.

First, use this resource for what it is: a **guide**. There is no “one size fits all” approach to talking about these subjects with children, because there is no “one size fits all” child. You know your child best. **You know how to best communicate with your child.** Remember, God chose you and He did so for a reason. Be confident in that truth when talking with your children.

Focus on the relationship behind the rule... love will motivate in ways a law never could

Next, try to avoid saying things like “The Bible says...” when talking about scripture. Instead, say something like “God tells us in His word...”. This may seem like splitting hairs, but phrases like “the Bible tells us...” removes God from the focal point and can set the Bible up as a rulebook in the minds of our children. The most important thing to focus on when communicating scripture to your children is **the motivation behind the commandment**. Always remember, relationships are more important than rules. Sure we need rules, but **love will motivate behaviors and beliefs in ways a law never could.**

Finally, **be the example**. Talking with your kids about prayer? Let them hear when you are praying. Talking to them about the Bible? Let them “catch” you studying God’s word. It can be difficult if we let it be, but **the more they see these disciplines in us, the more they will begin to show up in them.**

Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Deuteronomy 6:7

baptism

/ˈbap tɪzəm/

noun

1. (in the Christian Church) the religious rite of immersion in water, symbolizing a self-identification as a follower of Christ.
2. a ceremony or occasion at which baptism takes place.



What Is Baptism?

Baptism is a symbol, or as commonly stated; *an outward symbol of an inward transformation*. However, saying that to a child will likely only result in confusion and frustration. A good way to explain to children is that baptism shows people on the outside that God has changed our hearts on the inside.

Let's use this opportunity to clear up some misconceptions about baptism by detailing some of the things baptism is not.

Baptism is not part of salvation. God tells us we are saved by believing in our heart and confessing with our mouth that Jesus is Lord (*see the Parent Tool on Salvation*). Once we've done that, baptism is how we show this change to others.

Baptism doesn't "wash our sins away". As an old hymn goes, "Nothing but the blood of Jesus" can wash away our sin. Baptism doesn't purify us any more than a hot shower does.

Baptism does not make us "better" Christians than those who have not been baptized. Nor does it make us holier or more righteous than others, etc.

How Do We Get Baptized?

There are two predominant methods of baptism, sprinkling or pouring water on the head, and full immersion under water. It is our belief that full immersion baptism more accurately reflects the baptism we see in the Bible, therefore, our church practices full immersion. While there are no specific instructions given, the tradition of full immersion comes from a Jewish ritual bathing done as a sign of repentance and renewal.

There are also clues in the Bible that support this belief, mainly that John specifically chose an area to baptize in because there was "plenty of water", enough to be able to stand in it and immerse those

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:37-38

Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were coming and being baptized.

John 3:23

wishing to be baptized. We are not saying that other methods are wrong or invalid, only that we believe immersion to be the most accurate to the method we see used in Scripture.

The nuts and bolts of immersion baptism are fairly simple: first the person being baptized stands in the water and is given an opportunity to share with those in attendance their reasons for wanting to be baptized. Next, the person baptizing will lower them under the water, usually by laying them backward, and lift them back up out of the water. Overall, it is a very simple exercise and the person being baptized is only under the water for a second.

While the *motions* of baptism are simple, the *emotions* behind it are anything but. Each step represents a portion of identifying your life with that of Jesus' life.

First is the opportunity to address those present and tell them the reasons for wanting to be baptized. Remember, baptism is a *public declaration*, so this is an opportunity to state the desire to depend on the Holy Spirit to honor God and to love others, as well as to show that you are a follower of Jesus. This declaration is not a promise to "behave" or "be good", rather it is a declaration of your desire to live your life for God.

Next, the act of being immersed under the water is a symbol of our old self being buried, like when Jesus was placed in the tomb after the crucifixion. This is what Paul was referring to when he wrote to the Romans that we are to consider ourselves "dead to sin".

Finally, being raised from the water symbolizes the new life we have because of our acceptance of Jesus as our Savior, and also of Jesus being raised to life at His Resurrection.

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.

Romans 6:4

With all this symbolism, remember the most important aspect of baptism is the change Jesus has made in our hearts, giving us the desire to be baptized at all.

When Do We Get Baptized?



First, there is no set age for how old someone has to be in order to be baptized, but keep in mind that baptism is a "next step" after having made the personal decision to follow

Jesus. When it comes to kids, this can be a bit tricky since it may not be immediately clear how much of this decision they understand. Here are a few things to consider if your child has approached you with a desire to be baptized (remember, these are only suggestions, not rules). Ultimately we all need to rely upon the Holy Spirit to guide us in these commitments.

- 1) If this desire is expressed either at, or right after, a baptism service, they may simply be wanting the attention they see others getting. If this is the case, you may consider letting the issue lie for a period of time. If the desire doesn't go away, it is likely genuine.
- 2) Ask them open-ended questions about baptism. For example: "Why do you want to be baptized?" instead of "Do you want to be baptized to show others that you want to follow Jesus?" Don't give them the "right" answer in the form of your question.
- 3) Ask them to tell you about how they came to believe in Jesus and what their faith means to them. If they can articulate this, they are most likely ready to be baptized.

What Next?

If you aren't sure that your child is ready to be baptized, you can wait, there is no need to rush the decision. You can also contact your Kid's Pastor or any other Church Staff Member with any questions or to arrange a meeting with your child so they can provide some guidance in the decision.

If you believe it is the right time for your child to be baptized, contact your Kid's Pastor to find out when the next opportunity will be. Once that is finalized, **MAKE A BIG DEAL OUT OF IT!** Invite family, friends and anyone else that would want to witness the event. Encourage your child to invite their friends as well. This will be an awesome opportunity for your

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

2 Corinthians 5:17

child to demonstrate their faith in Jesus to their friends. Also, don't forget the camera and take lots of pictures!

Further, baptism is only a step into a new reality. Encourage your child to make prayer, reading the Bible and other ways of spending time with God a priority in light of the public declaration of what God is doing in their hearts.

As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?"

Acts 8:36

Why Provide These Tools?

We are providing these tools because we believe in you and because we need you.

God sovereignly chose **you** as the parent of your kid. **God believes in you, so we believe in you.** By equipping you with some simple resources you can use in the difficult discussions that come up, we want you to feel confident in your role as the primary spiritual influence in your kids lives.

It is easy to think of the Kid's Pastor, or some other Kid's Leader as the person with the most spiritual influence in your kids lives, but those people are only around your kids for a couple hours every week. You are the ones that are doing life with your kids and **you have more impact on their spiritual development than anyone else ever could.** We want to partner with you in raising a generation of **CATALYST KIDS!**

... so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands...Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Deuteronomy 6:1-7



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