GETTING READY FOR Baptism

PRESENTED BY

KidsWorld

CONTENTS

Introduction

Preparation for Parents

Suggestions for Conversations

CONVERSATIONS

CONVERSATION 1 **Salvation & Baptism**

CONVERSATION 2 **Remember & Celebrate**

CONVERSATION 3 **Making Passionate Disciples**

INTRODUCTION

We're so excited that your child has indicated that they would like to be baptized. This guide is designed to help you have conversations to guide your child through this important, transformational decision. This is a series of conversations for you to have with your child.

- **CONVERSATION 1** – to happen a month before a scheduled baptism at Christ Community - Salvation & Baptism. *This conversation may happen as part of a baptism class at your campus.
- **CONVERSATION 2** – to happen the weekend of the baptism - Remember & Celebrate
- **CONVERSATION 3** – to happen a few weeks after the baptism - Making Passionate Disciples

Please know that we are here to assist you and encourage you at any time during this process. If your child has more questions we would be happy to meet with you individually. We are praying for you as you nurture the faith of your child and help them form a solid foundation for their life with Christ.

PREPARATION FOR
PARENTS

You may be feeling overwhelmed or lacking knowledge to begin this process. Rest assured, you are not required to be a theological or spiritual giant. Each conversation includes guided questions along with Bible verses to read together. Take time before you meet with your child to read through each conversation, making notes about what you want to say, so that you can speak from your heart.

Prayer is a vital component. Seek God through prayer before you begin your preparations, as you begin your conversations, and as you continue through this process.

While you go through this process, remember that God has said He will strengthen you, He will help you, He will uphold you with His righteous right hand (Isaiah 41:10). We are called to depend upon the Lord's grace which, "is sufficient for you" (2 Corinthians 12:9), and that "the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say." (Luke 12:12)

SUGGESTIONS FOR
CONVERSATIONS

In this busy, fast paced day and age it may be difficult to find time to meet one on one with your child. However, this is an important decision that your child has come to in their faith and it is worthy of your time and effort. There are 3 different conversations in this booklet to guide your child through. Consider each conversation to be a springboard for discussion, together seeking out what God says in the Bible. As you do so, you are helping your child to formulate their understanding of the topics and

how they may be applied to life. These discussions don't need to be read exactly as written. Take time to make them your own, using your own wording as you relate to your child.

There are also response questions at the end of each conversation for you and your child. These are intended to help your child begin to articulate their own faith story and begin to flex their faith muscles. The questions for you, the parent, are to encourage you as you recall your own joy in the saving work of Christ and be able to share that with your child.

To prepare for each conversation consider where and when you will meet. It might be a special time to go to a local coffee shop for a treat, or set up a special time at your home, away from distractions. This is showing your child that this time is important and meaningful to you, and can help to strengthen your relationship as you grow together in this process.

The response questions may be answered together, or you may want to think on them individually. Perhaps think through them and write your response separately before your next conversation. At that time you could share some of your answers as a way of reflecting back on what you've learned as well as a way of preparing for the next lesson.

Remember also that you want to influence not only the head, but also the heart of your child. It is important that they understand the truth of God's word. The response of their heart to the truth is even more important. Be open to discussions that perhaps you weren't prepared for, and answer honestly if you don't know. Together, look for the answers in the Bible, through other resources, or be willing to take it to God in prayer. As with all things, make your plans, but prepare to hold them loosely and depend on the Holy Spirit to guide you in this journey.

CONVERSATION 1

SALVATION & BAPTISM

INTRODUCTION TO THE CONVERSATION

Children who have grown up in a Christian home may have had early experiences with the Lord. However, they can be prone to doubt as to whether or not they are actually saved. They may know of Jesus and many of His stories, but may not have a full understanding of salvation, that is, the understanding of what we are saved from and saved to. Chances are they have all of the information, but may not have put it all together into that "a-ha!" moment, or may not have verbalized that moment to you.

This session is going to cover the steps of salvation, and what the response of baptism is about. Before moving forward to baptism, you want to make sure that your child has trusted their life to Christ.

Here at Christ Community, we use a tool called **God's Good News** to illustrate the good news that God has a plan to redeem us. Walk through each of these truths and fill in the blanks with your child as you prepare for baptism.

TRUTH 1

1. _____ created us to enjoy a personal relationship with him and a purposeful life.

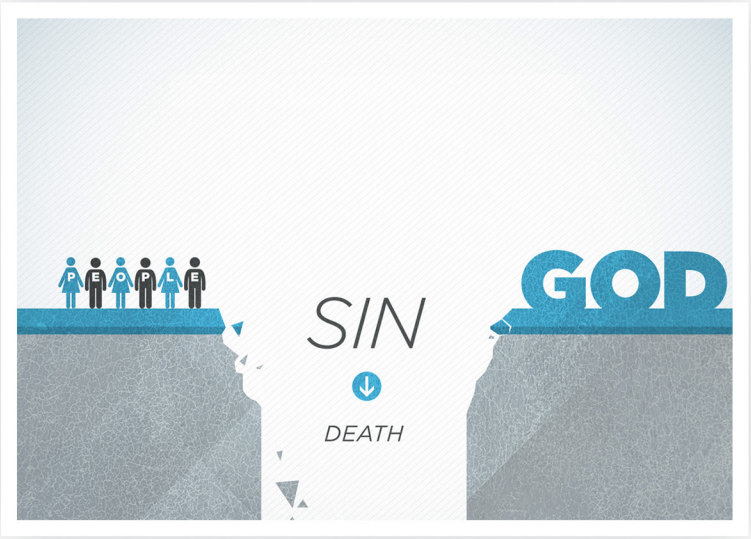
Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. - John 17:3

TRUTH 2

Our _____ separates us from God.

But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you...- Isaiah 59:2

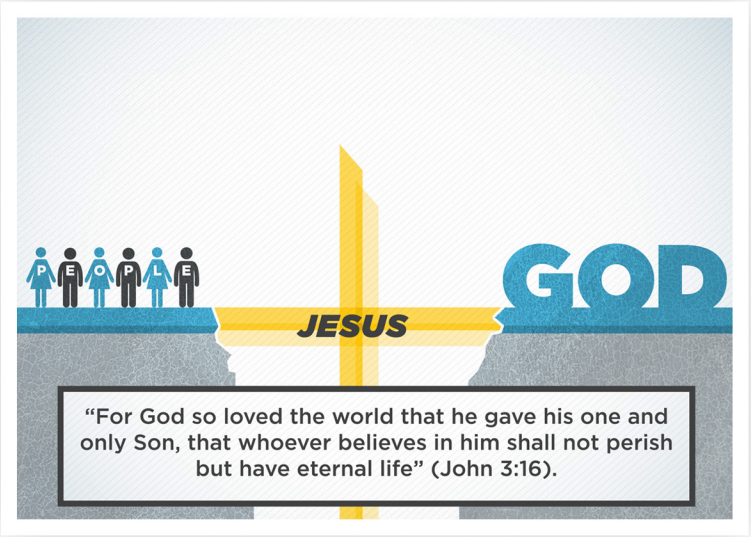
For the wages of sin is death..
- Romans 6:23



TRUTH 3

God bridged our separation through his Son, _____

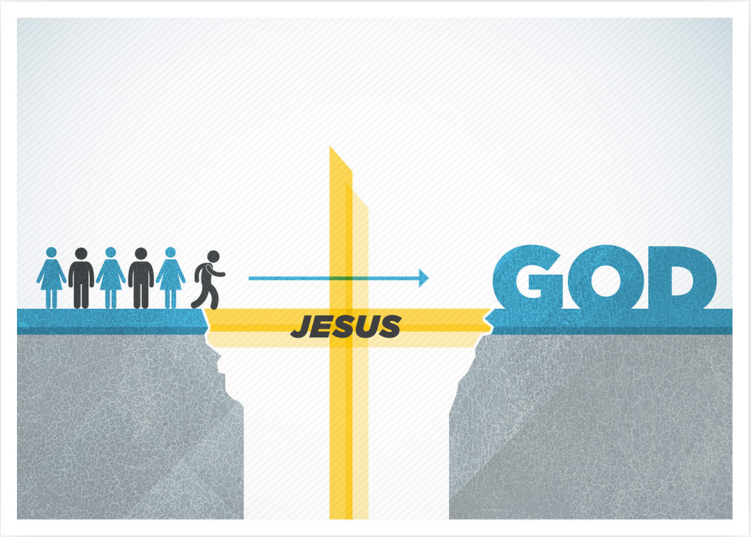
For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. - 1 Peter 3:18



TRUTH 4

We must put our _____ in Jesus the Savior and King.

It is by grace that you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. - Ephesians 2:8-9



If you have never prayed a prayer that is like the one here to begin your relationship with Jesus, **you can pray this prayer now.**

"Lord Jesus. I believe you are God's Son. I believe you died on the cross for me and you were raised back to life. I admit that I have sinned and I'm sorry. Please forgive me for my sins. Thank you for giving me the gift of your Holy Spirit to help me live a life that is pleasing to you. I want to follow you for the rest of my life as my Lord, the one in charge of my life. And as my Savior, the one who has saved me from my sin and the punishment for my sins. I love you Jesus. Amen."

BEFORE WE GO FURTHER...

1. Have you put your faith and trust in Jesus as your Savior and forgiver of sins?

2. Do you intend to follow Christ and obey him as the Lord of your life for the rest of your life?

RESPONSE

PARENTS

1. Read Hebrews 4:14-16. What does it mean that Jesus can "sympathize with our weakness" (v :15)?

2. How does this make you feel? Thankful? Grateful? Unworthy? Confident? What is a way that you can express those feelings to God over the next week?

CHILD

1. God knows you individually and you are part of His plan. Even if you were the only person who believed in God, would He still have sent Jesus to die for you?

2. How would you tell someone about God's Good News? Write what you would say.

WHAT EXACTLY IS BAPTISM?

By this time you should have a view of whether or not your child has an understanding of what it means to be saved. Once we are saved, one of our responses to God is to be baptized. The following Scripture and questions will guide you and your child through the meaning of what baptism is and who should be baptized.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF BAPTISM?

Baptism is immersion into water. It illustrates Christ's death and resurrection for us. It also shows our commitment as a Christian to follow Jesus.

Look at the following verses:

Romans 6:3-5 2 Corinthians 5:17 Ephesians 2:8-9

John 14:6 Luke 23:32-43

ASK:

1. Does baptism make you a believer or show that you already believe?

2. Are you saved just because you are baptized?

3. Do you think someone can go to Heaven without being baptized? Why do you think that?

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

Every person who has put their faith in Christ for forgiveness of sins should be baptized. It is a symbol outside of ourselves of what God has done on the inside of us. **Look at the following verses:**

2 Corinthians 5:14-17 Colossians 3:1-4

By choosing to be baptized you are making a public statement that you want to follow the example set by Jesus. You also are recognizing that Jesus commanded us to be baptized. By being baptized you are demonstrating that you have made a decision to follow Jesus and that you are a Christian.

Look at the following verses:

Mark 1:9 • Matthew 28:19-20 • 1 John 2:3 • Acts 8:12-13

ASK:

1. Why should someone get baptized?
2. What is baptism a symbol of?
3. Do you feel that you are ready to be baptized?

Read Galatians 3:26-28

What does getting baptized say about you?

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-14

What does it mean to be baptized into the body of Christ?

Why should we be baptized in front of our church?

✶Answer any questions your child may have, and close your time in prayer.

RESPONSE

PARENTS

1. Do you feel that your child is ready to make a public profession of faith in Jesus? What are ways that you can support your child in this decision? How will you celebrate their decision?

2. Reflect on the time that you were baptized. Were you excited, scared, nervous, joyful? If you have not been baptized, why not?

3. As you continue to think on your own baptism, are there ways that you can re-energize the joy you felt at that time? How can you share this with others?

CHILD

1. Why do you want to be baptized?

2. What has changed inside of you since you have come to know Jesus?

I'M READY TO SHARE MY FAITH!

As a Christian we want to share our faith. The perfect time to do this is at baptism, and we ask that you write out your faith story. The response for this conversation is for your child to write out their story. Let them write in their own words as you continue to encourage and guide them.

Let this verse be a source of encouragement:

"So never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord….With the strength God gives you, be ready to suffer [with me] for the sake of the Good News. For God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was His plan from the beginning of time—to show us His grace through Christ Jesus." -2 Timothy 1:8,9 (NLT)

✶Take a moment to pray together about their choice to trust Jesus and the opportunity that they will have to share their faith. Thank God for your child and their decision to trust Jesus.

RESPONSE

WRITING MY STORY

1. When and how did I ask God to forgive me and lead me?

2. Who is God to me? What has He done in my life?

3. Why do I want to follow Jesus?

4. Who has helped you take these steps in your life?

5. What does being baptized mean for you?

6. How will your life be different because you have put your trust in Jesus?

As you put all of these answers together, they form your faith story. Rewrite your answers to these questions in paragraph form so you can share your story with others!

Some Pointers

- Spend about 15 to 20 minutes answering the questions.
- Focus on general details rather than a lot of specific details. Be concise.
- Be genuine. Don't feel like you have to impress anyone. Be true to yourself and your story.

Example: My name is James and I am 11 years old. I have grown up knowing God. I believe that Jesus died for my sins. God helped me after I broke my leg. During the accident I felt like "God, where are you??!" Then He came and walked me through it all. He was right by my side, especially during the surgery. I was a little afraid, but when I got in the surgery room all of my fear went away. I believe Jesus is my Savior and I want to be baptized because it's the right thing to do, it's what Jesus wants us to do.

WRITE YOUR STORY HERE:

CONVERSATION 2

REMEMBER & CELEBRATE!

This conversation is intended to happen on or the day after your child's baptism day, but it requires some preparation on your part as a parent. Plan how you will remember and celebrate what God has done, is doing, and will continue to do in your child's life as they continue to trust Him.

PARENTS

WRITE A LETTER

You have been taking bold steps in this process that not only honor God, but also are ensuring multigenerational faithfulness. Think about the future of your child, and what you desire for them to have and experience in their life with Christ. Do you want them to continue to trust God? Do you want them to share their faith? Do you desire them to have a Christian spouse and raise their own children with a heart for God?

Write a letter to your child detailing the hopes and dreams you have for them as they begin this new life in Christ. Tell them how you feel about this step in their faith and the hope you have for them. Remember this dream that you have for them and trust God. Pray for your child continually as they grow and remember to thank God for the incredible blessing they are in your life.

✶Sometime the day of or the day after their baptism, read this letter to them and talk about your feelings surrounding the importance of this day and this decision. Pray with your child.

CELEBRATE WELL

Mark this occasion for your children by having other people write notes or letters as well, or by having a special meal or celebration for your child. New life is a big deal and publicly proclaiming it calls for a party!

CONVERSATION 3

MAKING PASSIONATE DISCIPLES

INTRODUCTION TO THE CONVERSATION

Our life in Christ doesn't end or slow down after baptism, it's just the beginning. It's so exciting to think about the future of your child, as well as their future generations that may be impacted because of their current decision to follow Christ. During this conversation you'll be looking at what a Christian life looks like and decide together the next steps of your child's new life.

MY NEW LIFE

We are a new creation in Christ and He has given us a great example to follow. He says that our actions and the "fruit" of our life will show us as Christians. **Look at the following verses:**

Galatians 5:22 – 25 2 Corinthians 5:17

The Bible also says that we are each given unique gifts and abilities to be used to serve Him and build up the body of Christ. When we are all doing our part, we are advancing God's plan for His Kingdom here on Earth. **Look at the following verses:**

1 Corinthians 12:12-20

As we grow in Christ we want to know Him more and share Him and what we're learning with others. We can grow through coming together with others to celebrate who God is and all He has done for us. We can grow deeper in our faith by studying His word, using personal disciplines, and sharing our faith with others. On the next page are some topics to discuss with your child and determine where they are a priority in your family's life.

BELONGING TO THE FAITH COMMUNITY

- How can we be committed to attend church weekly?
- How can we be involved in life with other believers?

GROWING DEEPER IN CHRIST

- Will we set aside time devoted to studying God's word or listening for His voice?
- Will we choose to grow with others in a Community Group setting?
- Will we participate in family activities that help us know God's word better (learning Remember Verses together, reading the Bible together, sharing with each other when we see God active in our lives)?
- How do we set aside time for private study, perhaps journaling or creating art to share with God and each other about what we're learning?

SERVING THE LOCAL BODY OF CHRIST

- Do we ask "what needs to be done" then step in and help?
- Do we view our home as a training ground to serve and help each other?
- Do we regularly commit to serving in the local body at CCC?
    - As a parent are you modeling this commitment
    - Are you helping to create opportunities for your child to serve

REACHING THE WORLD FOR CHRIST

- You may not be ready to go out into the world to serve yet, but have you discussed future opportunities in your child's life? Planting the seeds now may lead to a great harvest of service later.
- How can we, as a family, serve the community that we are a part of?
- Are we ready to share our faith with others to reach them with the Gospel?
- Can we together choose a child in a foreign country to sponsor?
- Do we regularly pray for leaders and people of other countries?

Remember to use these pointers as a springboard for conversation. It's difficult to add all of them to your current family lifestyle or the patterns and habits your children are accustomed to. Perhaps pick one or two items that really stand out in conversations and work on them for a few months. As they become more natural and part of your family life, review the list again and see what new areas you can add.

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

Before closing this conversation, discuss with your child if they have enjoyed having this special one on one time together. Perhaps you can make a plan to continue to meet together for a "spiritual check-up". Remind them that prayer is our way of talking to God, and that you often ask God to bless your child. They can continue to grow stronger in their own prayer life and know that they can come to you for guidance when they are struggling.

✶Close this conversation with prayer and a blessing over your child, such as this; "(child's name) I pray that you would love and trust our Lord Jesus all the days of your life, so that Christ may dwell in your heart through faith—and that as you are grounded in faith you may understand the width, length, height and depth of Christ's love for you and be filled with all the fullness of God. Amen"

ONE FINAL NOTE FOR PARENTS

Is “Jesus in my heart” an accurate, Biblically appropriate phrase to describe someone’s salvation experience? As in, “I asked Jesus into my heart.”

“The heart” is used metaphorically in many places in Scripture to refer to our spiritual condition. Some examples of that are found here: Deut. 6:5, 2 Chron. 16:9, Prov. 4:23, Mt. 18:35, Mk. 7:21, Rom. 2:15, Rom. 10:9

We do not want to, nor should we try to, eliminate these ideas from our language, teaching and singing about our spiritual condition. It is true that for certain age groups these metaphors are more difficult to understand but that is true with all metaphors of Scripture. That is a developmental, educational concern, not a theological concern specific to this particular concept.

The concept of believers being indwelt by the Spirit of God is certainly Biblical (Rom. 8:11). Specific language of God’s Spirit being in our hearts is given us in Scripture (2 Cor. 1:22). As well as there being mention of the Spirit of his Son into our hearts (Gal. 4:6).

So the heart is frequently used as a metaphor, and the idea of the Spirit being within us as well as direct verses of God’s Spirit and the Spirit of his Son in our hearts are in the Bible. But what about the specific phrase, “Jesus in my heart”? Is there evidence of that anywhere in Scripture?

Eph. 3:16, 17a says, “I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.”

Based on this Biblical passage there are certainly theologically appropriate uses of the phrase, “Jesus in my heart.” It is best used, though, to describe the spiritual condition of someone who is already a follower of Jesus. If a Christian says, “Jesus is in my heart.” That is appropriate.

However, “Jesus in my heart” should not be used in speaking to those who are not yet following Jesus as a way to describe what that person should do. For example, someone should not encourage a non-believer to “ask Jesus into their heart” or “invite Jesus into their heart/life.” That would be incorrect but not solely because of the phrase “Jesus in my heart.” That is incorrect because of the assumption that we are asking or inviting God to do anything.

When someone chooses to follow Jesus they are recognizing what Jesus has already done and choosing to submit their life and will to his. In Scripture we see the principle that when choosing to follow Jesus, in the moment of conversion, the emphasis is on our action responding to the work of Christ and the grace of God that has already been extended to us through the Holy Spirit.

Some examples of that are found here: Mk. 1:15, John 12:36, Acts 2:21, Acts 2:38, Rom. 4:5, Rom. 10:9, Eph. 1:13, 1 John 1:9

God’s action is already done. So to think or teach that we must ask God or invite God to do anything else for us to be saved, including but not limited to asking him into our heart, is incorrect.

In order to maintain correct Biblical teaching and consistency among our leaders in working with kids, we would like leaders to use one of the following phrases when talking with children about beginning a relationship with Jesus. These are not listed in order of preference. These phrases may be used interchangeably depending on the situation of the conversation or presentation, the developmental appropriateness for the child or group of children, and the preference of the leader or parent.

- Begin a relationship with Jesus.

- Put your faith and trust in Jesus.