

Is Your Child Ready to Be Baptized?

At Hillside Community Church, we do not require a minimum age for baptism. We believe that **you** as a parent play a key role in discerning when your child should be baptized. Please read the following questions and prayerfully consider if now is the "right time" for your son or daughter to be baptized.

- 1. Has Your Child Trusted Christ as Personal Savior?** Examples in Scripture are clear that baptism comes after faith in Christ. Has your child made a personal decision to trust Christ alone for forgiveness of sins? Does he/she fully understand that man is a sinner and can do nothing to save himself? Does he/she fully understand that the reason man cannot save himself is that he cannot be perfect, which is God's requirement to enter heaven? God solved this problem in Christ, His perfect Son, and our perfect substitute! Has your child trusted Christ alone to save from sin?
- 2. What is prompting your child's interest in baptism? What is the primary reason? Is the primary reason one which matches the biblical purpose for baptism?**
 - **Peer or sibling influence.** It's easy for kids to "hop on the bandwagon" when a peer or sibling makes a decision to get baptized. Notably, interest by children in baptism piques right after a baptism service. To what extent is this a factor with your child?
 - **Consider your own influence.** It's possible for parents with the best intentions to persuade or orchestrate their child into the baptism process. It's one thing for you to expose your child to the truth concerning baptism, but it should be *his/her* decision to take the next step. Is this your decision or your child's decision?
 - **Is it a matter of the heart?** A child may see a baptism and think it looks like something "cool" . . . it is something they can participate in at the worship service, and it looks "fun." Does your child, however, fully understand the significance of baptism?
- 3. In 10 years will your child remember this as a significant step in their spiritual journey?** Romans 6:1-14 is the clearest scripture text on the meaning of baptism; baptism is an identification with Christ such that a person knows they are crucified, buried and risen with Christ as a result of their faith union in Him, and this becomes a reference point in their spiritual journey. Subsequent to salvation, one knows this as fact, reckons on it daily, and yields their body to righteousness rather than sin. This kind of living is the exact opposite of our worldly culture. At what age, then, will this be most meaningful to your child? At what age will their baptism signal to others a separation from the world's way of thinking and doing?



4. Does your child understand the biblical basis for baptism? If so, do these reflect his/her motives for baptism? Can he/she articulate these reasons?

- **Baptism is the initial step to being identified as a learning follower of Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20).** It is not necessary for salvation, nor is it necessarily encouraged as an immediate follow-up to salvation for everyone. (Baptism has more to do with discipleship than initial salvation.)



5. Is your child able to articulate his/her testimony in such a way that others will understand that God has worked in his/her heart and life to bring salvation, and will others be persuaded to consider the truth of the gospel (cf. Acts 26:1-29)?

- **Baptism is an outward expression of an inner reality ... a public proclamation of an inner intent ... to be a follower of Jesus.** This should be so real to a child that they want to tell others about it.

Prayerfully consider these questions. Pray specifically for the Holy Spirit to lead your son or daughter in their decision. Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom to understand and guide your child. Perhaps the above questions have caused you to wonder if now is the best time for your child to be baptized. This may be a decision where if you are not confident, it is probably best to wait. On the other hand, you may be more confident than ever after considering the matter further.

Still have questions? Call Pastor Steve or Pastor Nate



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