

Baptism

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age. *Matthew 28:19-20*

Discussing baptism involves explaining its significance as a symbol of one's faith in Jesus Christ and commitment to Him. It's an opportunity to help teens understand that baptism is an outward expression of an inward change. This is a moment to celebrate their personal decisions to follow Christ, signifying a new life in Him. It's important to communicate that baptism doesn't give salvation but rather is a public declaration of salvation that has already occurred. Encourage teens to ask questions and express any thoughts about this step in their faith journeys.

➤ conversation starter

How do you feel about baptism? Do you have any questions or thoughts about what it represents?

Would you like to talk about getting baptized? Do you have any worries or concerns?

➤ navigating the conversation:

- **Explain the Symbolism:** Discuss how baptism symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It represents dying to the old self and being raised to a new life in Jesus.
- **Clarify It's Not for Salvation:** Emphasize that baptism is not seen as a means of salvation but as an act of obedience after one has made a personal decision to follow Christ.
- **Encourage Personal Decision:** Baptism should be a personal decision made when an individual understands its meaning and has personally committed to following Jesus.
- **Talk About Readiness:** Discuss how there's no set age for baptism. It's more about understanding and making a personal commitment to Christ.
- **Share Your Experience:** If you've been baptized, share your experience and what it meant to you. Personal stories can be very impactful.
- **Address Any Fears or Concerns:** If they're nervous about being baptized, discuss those fears. Reassure them that the church community is there to support them.
- **Pray Together:** Offer to pray with them about their decisions to be baptized, asking for guidance and clarity.
- **Discuss the Next Steps:** If they're interested in getting baptized, talk about the process in your church, such as any baptism classes or meetings with church leaders.
- **Encourage Continued Growth:** Remind them that baptism is a step in their faith journey, not the end. Encourage ongoing growth in their relationships with God.
- **If You've Not Been Baptized:** If you have placed your faith in Jesus for salvation and have not been baptized, consider joining your teens and get baptized along with them. This would create a powerful bonding moment and form a lasting memory.

