

how to talk to your high schooler about baptism



Are they going to listen? Am I doing enough? Am I doing too much? When they go off on their own, are they going to remain faithful? Parenting young Christians feels scary, but it doesn't have to be. We hope this guide helps you be confident.

the parent's role in this stage: *support the branches*
Encourage your teen in their endeavors as they grow in new directions. As they branch out, support and guide them while they take ownership of their faith to prepare them to flourish in the ages to come. This is especially true when it comes to baptism.

are we too late?

Your teen is growing in independence, testing boundaries, and asking deeper questions about life, faith, and purpose. **Why haven't they decided to get baptized yet?** It's okay. They will when they're ready. This stage can feel intimidating for parents, especially if your teen has grown up in the church but hasn't yet taken the step of baptism.

The good news is that this is a pivotal time to guide, affirm, and mobilize them to their decision. But **remember**, it needs to be **their** decision.

their motivation

You know your child better than anyone, but in this stage, teens are **motivated by freedom**, even though they might not be ready for it. And they feel like **everyone is watching**, which is a lot of pressure.

Teens may feel pressure, doubt, or uncertainty about baptism. **Maybe they feel ashamed** to admit that they have sin. Your role is to guide and shelter them. Use conversations to explore faith, sin, repentance, and baptism. Model the grace of Jesus by welcoming them without judgment, helping them reflect, and encouraging honest dialogue about their relationship with God. Yes **they need to learn that sin is bad**, but at the same time they need to learn that **confessing sin to follow Jesus is good**.

Match their motivations by giving freedom where you can. Put them in the drivers seat.

study with them

Be ready to guide them in Scripture when they ask for it. Help them see the need to be baptized.

what's the problem? sin.
Isa 59:1-4 & Rom 5:23

what's the answer? Jesus.
John 3:3-15 & John 14:1-7

what baptism does? joins us.
Rom 6:3-11 & Gal 2:12-15

how do we respond? believe, confess, repent, & be baptized.
Acts 2:37-40

If it seems like they've got this down, prompt them:

what do you need before you take the next step?

making conversation

Teens will be **in their head** quite a bit, meaning they often overthink and second guess themselves.

Help them get it out with low risk casual conversation. Try things like...

When they attend a class or a devotional: What does that mean for our walk with Christ?

When your student shares that someone did something wrong: Where do you think sin influenced their actions?

When someone they know gets baptized: What prompted them to make that decision?

When your church is engaged in a service activity: Is there something we could do to get involved?

When they seem like they are conflicted: What does trusting Jesus look like for you right now?

When they don't want to talk: Is there something on your mind?

They might not talk much, nor even remember the conversation. **They will**, however, **remember you cared** enough to ask.

coaching tips

Your teen wants something to do, but wants to feel like it was their decision. Find creative ways to spark ownership over their faith through service, study, or discussion.

Your teen wants to be noticed on their terms. Without feeling like you're looking over their shoulder, catch them doing something good and celebrate it.

Your teen wants to feel like they got it. When they ask a question, resist giving the answer. Instead, lead them to find it on their own.

this all might sound like a lot, but I can assure you... *God's got this.*