



FUNDAMENTAL #10

What is baptism?

MEMORY SCRIPTURE

Then Peter said to them, “Repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”—Acts 2:38

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Baptism is a symbolic religious ceremony involving water. In the New Testament we learn that people were baptized by being completely put under water, from head to toe. This is called water baptism by *immersion*, because during the ceremony, a person is completely *immersed* in water. It only lasts a few seconds—just long enough to make sure the entire body is under water all at once. People wanting to be baptized into the Body of Christ (the spiritual Church of God) today follow this same method.

After coming up out of the water, the newly baptized church member then takes part in another brief ceremony, often called the “laying on of hands.” A minister places his hands on the head of the person being baptized and prays that person will receive a portion of God’s Spirit. With the power of the Holy Spirit then working in a person after baptism, it is possible for a Christian to make true change in life and become more like Jesus Christ.

BEGIN YOUR STUDY

Read the memory scripture together with your children, then read through the summary statement (remember to simplify the statement, if necessary). Have your children cut and paste the summary statement from this page in their **“Fundamentals Bible Study Journal”** (as suggested in the **Memorizing Scripture** resource **“The Fundamentals”**).

Tell your children that there are three main parts to this Fundamental, and they can be found in this scripture. Have your children copy the memory scripture down in their journals, writing each phrase in a different color to highlight the different steps:

- Repent
- and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins;
- and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.





Ask your children, What do you remember about **Fundamental #9** on repentance? After a brief review, discuss how the next step after repentance is to be baptized. The Bible shows us that a person getting baptized should be old enough to make such a big decision. Even Jesus Christ waited until He was an adult before getting baptized by John the Baptist. So it's natural to begin thinking about baptism as a child, and it's good to take steps to repent and follow God's way of life, but it's only as an adult that you decide to make the full commitment to God for your entire life.

As we learned in the summary statement, being baptized involves being fully immersed in water. (Younger children may have fun practicing this concept by having a variety of objects to dunk in the bathtub, fully immersing them in the bathwater.) The apostle Paul likened baptism to getting rid of the "old man"—in other words, the things God tells us not to do (**Romans 6:4-6**). It's like getting really dirty from playing outside and then washing all of it away! Then as a "new man" or "new woman," you live how God tells you how to live.

Ask your children, Is it always easy to do the right thing? Why not? Discuss with your children how we need God's help to consistently make the right choices. God gives us the power to help us, through His Holy Spirit. Tell your children that right now God is helping them because His Holy Spirit is working *with* them, but after they are baptized, God's Spirit will actually be *in* them. The Holy Spirit is described as a *helper* or *comforter* and is a gift that God gives (**John 15:26**).



DIGGING DEEPER INTERACTION #1

Begin today by asking if your child remembers the three parts of the baptism process. Then review the memory scripture. Remind your child that when you become baptized it represents getting rid of the "old man" or "old woman"—the things that God tells us not to do.

Today you are going to create a set of "old man, new man" paper dolls. Help your child draw and cut out two people-shaped paper dolls. Have your child decorate one doll to show that it is wrinkled, dirty, and falling apart. Then decorate the other doll as being fresh and clean.

Ask your child, What are some things that first doll might do? (You may wish to refer back to your discussion on repentance for ideas.) What are some mistakes that you make a lot that are hard to stop doing at times? Perhaps something like fighting with a sibling or refusing to do chores? Choose a few examples to write on this doll.

Then ask your child, What are the opposites of those behaviors? Perhaps saying kind words to a sibling or doing what Dad or Mom asks right away? These are the behaviors the "new man," the second doll, would do. Record them on the doll.

DIGGING DEEPER INTERACTION #2

Begin by having your child say or write out **Acts 2:38** again. Remind your child how you have talked about the first two parts—repentance and baptism—and today you are going to talk about the third part—receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit.



Ask your child to brainstorm a list of some favorite gifts: both gifts received and gifts given to others. Tell your child that God loves to give gifts! And He has a gift that is even better than the biggest and best gift on that gift list, and even better than getting every single one of those gifts at the same time! This is a gift that makes it possible to live a happy life because it helps us do all the things God tells us that we should do. That special gift is the Holy Spirit.

Now brainstorm a list of gifts that help others. This could include not just material gifts, such as buying groceries for a church member or donating gently used clothes, but also service gifts, like giving a ride to someone to church or mowing a neighbor's lawn. Decide on a small gift that will help someone and give it. Be reminded of how God gives us the gift of His Holy Spirit to help us.

BIBLE STORY: JOHN THE BAPTIST

It's right there in the nickname. The prophet John, who prepared the way for Jesus Christ's message, baptized many people. Read through [Luke 1](#) with your child to learn about his unique purpose. You can also read [Luke 3:21-22](#), or [Matthew 3:13-17](#), to learn about Jesus' baptism.

Go through the EEI resource "[John the Baptist](#)" (in the [People of the Bible](#) section) to learn more about baptism and the unique prophet John.



BONUS IDEAS

There are several examples of members in the early New Testament Church getting baptized. Help your children find these scriptures to add to their "[Fundamentals Bible Study Journal](#)." (Hint: You'll find some in the book of [Acts](#).)

If you are baptized, talk with your children about your thought process and decision that led you to get baptized and describe your baptism experience.

WRAP-UP ACTIVITY

To make this Fundamental's scripture poster, have your child draw a body of water on part of the poster and color it blue. Then have your child write [Acts 2:38](#) only on the blue part, showing that the words are all fully "immersed" in the water. Hang the poster up for display somewhere in the house.

To end your study, have your child recite the memory scripture for a small audience, perhaps to a younger or older sibling, or as part of a Sabbath school session.