



Faith Chest (Birth) Discussion Guide Session Three

Baptism—Methodist Perspective

Warm-Up

(video segment 1:09 minutes/discussion time ____ minutes)

Discuss in your small group: Since last session, what have you done to deepen the spiritual atmosphere in your home? For example, did you have prayer or devotions with your spouse? What were the challenges you faced and what were the successes?



Legacy Point 1

The Methodist Teaching on Baptism

(video segment 8:33 minutes)

Baptism is a sacrament...an outward and visible symbol of an inward and spiritual grace. It signifies:

1. initiation into the church.
2. saying "yes" to God; saying "yes" to us.
3. new life.

2 Corinthians 5:17, *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"*

Water...a powerful symbol that is:

- needed to live...spiritual nourishment.
- for cleansing of sin.
- brings life...a new beginning.

Philippians 3:13, *"...forgetting the past and straining toward what is ahead..."*

Matthew 28:19-20, *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."*

Baptism is a covenant between humanity and God. God is the covenant keeper!

Romans 3:23, “...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...”

God’s covenant promise placed on a person at baptism is a reminder that they are in a relationship with God because of *his* faithfulness.



Let’s Talk About It:

(discussion time ____ minutes)

- ❖ **When you see a baptism in your church, what touches your heart the most?**



Legacy Point 2

What Does a Child Need Spiritually?

(video segment 7:06 minutes)

Your child needs the church!

- Parents should raise their child in a community of believers. It is the church’s responsibility to help the parent(s) in nurturing faith.
- The church helps a child capture the big picture of God.
- Faith is not just taught but caught. Faith is to *know* God not just know about him.
- Parents and the community of God can model what it means to be a Christian.
- The child needs to be taught about repentance...to turn *from* sin and *toward* God.

Matthew 3:11, “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.”



Let's Talk About It:
(discussion time ____ minutes)

- ❖ Of the spiritual needs mentioned, which one would you like to invest in your child?



Legacy Point 3

The Baptism Ceremony at Your Church (video segment 9:57 minutes)

The pastor explains that baptism is grace...God's gift to us.

Matthew 28:19-20, “So go and make followers of all people in the world. Baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything that I have taught you...”

Baptism is the start of something great in a child's life...faith!

The family and sponsors openly profess their faith that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord.

The congregation commits to help parents raise their child in the faith.

The sponsors' role is a privilege and a responsibility. They:

- pray for the child.
- are partially responsible for the child's spiritual development.
- help the child remember his/her baptism.
- model the Christian walk.

Baptism means “immerse”...the immersion of God's love.

The anointing with oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

The Faith Chest is symbolic of parents investing in the treasure of their child's faith.



Let's Talk About It:

(discussion time ____ minutes)

- ❖ **What special plans will you have for your child at his/her baptism?**



Wrap-Up

(video segment 0:24 seconds)

Build not just a Faith Chest but also a legacy of faith in which the treasure of Jesus Christ is given to your child!

Assignment:

Plan a blessing event...a time to build your child's faith chest and meet together to celebrate this new beginning in your child's spiritual life. (See Appendix 1: *Create a Blessing for Your Child*)

Closing Prayer: *(Form small groups again and encourage each person to pray for the following.)*
Ask God to bless your family's spirituality and your role in leading it.

Where do you go from here?

You have seen how beneficial it is to be in conversation and prayer with other adults in a similar life stage. This might be a good time to start or join a small group.