



Youth *Baptismal* Sabbath

Leader's Manual

Produced by the North Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
Education, Youth & Ministerial Departments

Youth Baptismal Sabbath

1st Sabbaths of May & December

(Alternate dates can be set locally)

Leader's Manual

For

Church School Teachers & Leaders
Academy & College/University Teachers, Chaplains & Administrators
Pathfinder & Adventurer Leaders
Sabbath School Leaders for Primary, Juniors, Teens, Youth & Young Adults
Parents
Pastors

Produced by the
North Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
Education, Youth & Ministerial Departments
March 2009

Table of Contents

	Page
Your Mission	3
Getting Started- The A, B, Cs	4
Preparing a Meaningful Baptismal Service	8
Helping Young People Become Strong Leaders for God After Baptism	9
Frequently Asked Questions- FAQ	12
Resources for Baptismal Groups	14
Inspired Insights on Young People, Baptism & Their Mission	16

Your Mission

Every child will grow up to be either a missionary or a mission field.

Many influences will determine which way a young person goes; the influences of—

- Home and parenting
- Church atmosphere and activities
- School experiences
- Friends
- The Holy Spirit
- The child's own decisions, and
- YOU!

As a spiritual leader of young people you have an incredible privilege and responsibility. You can help the young people in your circle of influence catch a vision of what Jesus has planned for their lives and to invite them to take important steps in that direction.

One word spoken, one invitation made, one personal testimony shared, one verse of God's word read can be the turning point in an entire life.

Because of sin we are all born self-centered and wake up every day self-centered. We need a complete change of thinking and direction in our lives, described in the Bible as the new birth. Jesus gave us the symbol of baptism to help us understand how to begin a new Christ-centered life with Him and to let the world know about our decision.

You can invite the young people in your circle of influence to accept Jesus as their Creator, Savior, Lord and Friend, to embrace all Bible truths, and to be baptized and unite with God's final movement on earth. What an opportunity!

Getting Started- The A, B, Cs

Ask Them (Acts 22:16)

Pray for the young people in your circle of influence by name. Ask the Lord to speak to their hearts, to surround them with godly influences and to help them make decisions they can be proud of for eternity. Ask the Lord to help you be a positive influence and to have the courage to talk with young people easily about Jesus and Bible truths. Ask for the Holy Spirit, who is already working on their hearts, to give you wisdom as you work with them.

When the opportunity comes, talk to young people individually. Ask them questions such as

- “Do you love Jesus with all your heart?”
- “Do you want to live for Jesus for the rest of your life?”
- “Are you looking forward to the Second Coming of Jesus?”
- “Have you ever thought of being baptized?”
- “Is there anything that would make it difficult for you to be baptized and unite with God’s final movement on earth?”

In a group setting you can talk briefly about how important baptism is to Jesus and then pass around a sign up sheet for each person to indicate if they would like to—

- Prepare for baptism
- Learn how to live a Christian life after baptism
- Help a friend prepare for baptism

Congratulate young people when they make one of these vital decisions. Let them know that Jesus smiles on them and will help them follow through on this decision soon. Tell them that many young people around the world are preparing for the second coming of Jesus by giving their lives to Him, being baptized and helping others to follow Jesus, too.

Begin a Baptismal Group (2 Timothy 2:15)

This group is for those—

- Preparing for baptism
- Thinking about being baptized
- Already baptized but who want to learn better how to live for Jesus
- Who want to help their friends prepare for baptism

If there is only one person who made a decision, ask them if they have friends or family members who might like to be in the group. Invite as many as possible to join the group. Form two groups if that will help you involve more people.

Set a regular time and place for the group to meet that works best for the most people, such as—

- Home- As part of family worship or some other time that works.
- School- Just before or after school, or during Bible class, lunch period or the last period of the day.
- Pathfinders/Youth Group- One segment of the program or just before or after the meeting.
- Sabbath School- Lesson study for one quarter or add a separate class.
- Friday night gathering in a home or church setting.
- Retreat, Week of Prayer or Campmeeting- Plan an entire retreat that prepares young people for baptism, or devote a week of prayer for the same purpose. During Campmeeting time can be set aside for an on-going group, seminar or series.

Decide which materials you will use for your Baptismal Class. Many churches and schools already have materials on hand. You can also look at the “Resources for Baptismal Classes” in this Leader’s Guide to find many options.

At your first group meeting (30-60 minutes) take some time for each of the following—

- Learn each person’s name and something interesting about them.
- Pray that God will guide each of your lives in His pathways.
- Remind the group of the date for the special youth baptismal service so all can plan to be there.
- Introduce the Bible study materials and begin the first lesson.
- Offer refreshments if appropriate. Young people love food and friends.
- At the end remind the group of the next meeting and let them know they can invite more friends.

Continue with Consistency (Galatians 6:9)

One of Satan’s greatest nightmares is to see young people leaving his service and becoming workers for Jesus. He will try to disrupt or destroy the lives of the young people in your group or the group itself through schedule conflicts, misunderstandings, petty disagreements, tension in homes or churches, financial or health crises and a hundred other ways.

Determine from the beginning to be consistent in meeting and working with the young people as you move toward Youth Baptismal Sabbath. Ask God for

wisdom, courage and the ability to be consistent. Refuse to get discouraged if at times there seems to be a lack of interest or focus.

Your Baptismal Group will tend to be much more consistent if you identify people to take these three roles—

- 1 Leader- YOU!
 - Role- Leads group meeting, Encourages Personal Bible study, Starts and ends on time.
- 2 Partner(s)-
 - Role- Provides Bible study lessons, Substitute leader. Allow the Partner(s) to lead the study from time to time to develop their spiritual leadership skills.
 - People you might recruit for this role- Older young people who have been baptized; Those in the group who have already been baptized; A New Adventist Member; A Recent Host; Another youth leader, teacher, parent or pastor.
- 3 Host-
 - Role- Arranges for comfortable location for meetings.
 - People you might recruit for this role- A young person preparing for baptism; The parent or teacher of a young person preparing for baptism.

Disciple the young people you are working with (1 Thessalonians 4:1)

Pray for the young people in your group by name. Ask God to help them surrender fully to Him. Pray that they will find joy in their daily walk and stand tall for Him and His kingdom. Take time to ask each one about their life. Listen to what they say and what they don't say. Help them learn to establish a regular time, place and plan for meeting personally with Jesus in Bible study and prayer every day. Show them how to take their problems to Jesus all through the day in prayer. Let them know that baptism is the doorway into a new Christ-centered life. Show them how the Bible truths help them while they are young and all through life. Emphasize the benefits of each Bible truth. As you study a Bible truth, ask the young people what that Bible truth means to them. Ask how they plan to put it into practice in their lives. Remind them that everyone on earth is either a missionary for Jesus or a mission field in need of Jesus. Help them reach out to their friends to offer hope in Jesus. Let them know you are excited that Jesus is coming soon and that more and more people are getting ready for that great day!

Express your thanksgiving to God (Acts 2:47)

Young people are attracted to cheerful, joyful believers. Talk often of the goodness of God. When you meet ask questions such as

- “How have you seen God at work the last few days?”
- “What are three things you are thankful for today?”
- “What is your favorite verse in this lesson and what does it tell you about Jesus?”

Let them know that you believe Jesus has put your group together to encourage each other in holy living and to help more people learn about Jesus and His return. At the Youth Baptismal Sabbath allow those being baptized to share victories Jesus has given them as they have prepared for this experience. Invite those who have helped prepare them to share how they have seen God at work in this journey.

Follow up after the Baptism (Acts 2:41-42)

Often a person’s biggest tests of faith come *after* their baptism rather than before. Jesus was severely tempted by Satan for forty days after His baptism. Let your young people know that although Satan will test them they can call on Jesus for help, strength, forgiveness, cleansing and power. Don’t discontinue your Baptismal Group after Youth Baptismal Sabbath. Meet for several more weeks for Bible study and prayer and encouragement. It might even be time to begin another Baptismal Group so those who have just been baptized can help their friends prepare to make the same good decision they have.

Glorify God (Revelation 14:6-12)

Glorify God for what He is doing to wrap things up on Planet Earth in preparation for His return, and that He is using young people and leaders of young people in His final master plan.

Help someone else start a Baptismal Group (2 Timothy 2:2)

You are now an expert! You have had the wonderful experience of helping at least one person follow Jesus through baptism and uniting with His church. Now help someone else do the same. Perhaps it can be one of your partners in the group or even one of those baptized. As the number of soul winners are multiplied the message of Jesus and His soon return will go rapidly to all the world. Then Jesus will come again! “You should look forward to that day and hurry it along...” 2 Peter 3:12 NLT

Preparing a Meaningful Baptismal Service

1. **Time & Place.** As soon as possible select a time and place with the pastor who will baptize the young people.
 - a. Pastor(s) who will baptize
 - b. _____
Date (usually the 1st Sabbath of May or December)
 - c. _____
Time (usually Sabbath morning or afternoon)
 - d. _____
Location (usually outdoors or a church)

2. **Program.** Plan the program, getting input from the young people and their families. As much as possible involve those being baptized and those who helped them prepare. Be careful that the program doesn't drag or go so long that you wear out the participants. Some possible ingredients to consider are—
 - a. Welcome- Youth leader, Elder or Pastor
 - b. Prayer- Young person
 - c. Special music(s)- Young people
 - d. Brief Testimonies by each baptismal candidate
 - e. Introduction of Friendship Triads for each candidate
 - f. Baptismal Vows- Officiating Pastor and Baptismal Candidates
 - g. Baptisms- Officiating Pastor and Baptismal Candidates
 - h. Encouraging words by members of the congregation(s)
 - i. Congregational Song of Rejoicing
 - j. Presentation of Baptismal certificate & gift to each new member
 - k. Closing Prayer- Young Person
 - l. Fellowship Dinner, Agape Supper and/or Communion Service

3. **Logistics.** Check with the pastor, elder or congregational leaders to be sure each of the following items are planned for—
 - a. Towel, swimsuit/underclothes & plastic bag- (Each baptismal candidate)
 - b. Baptismal Robes- (Head Deacon and/or Deaconess)
 - c. Water in baptistry or other location- (Head Deacon)
 - d. Baptismal Certificate- (Church Clerk)
 - e. Gift for each person baptized- (Church Treasurer)
 - f. Friendship Triads- (Head Deacon and/or Deaconess) (For more information on this see "Helping Young People Become Strong Leaders for God After Baptism")
 - g. Decoration of Location- (Head Deaconess)

Helping Young People Become Strong Leaders for God After Baptism

Wouldn't it be wonderful if six months after their baptism a young person had the joy of seeing someone else baptized that they had led to Jesus and into the Adventist movement?

Here are three crucial ingredients that will greatly increase the chances of that becoming reality.

1. **Before baptism**, be very clear on what it means to be a Seventh-day Adventist and how the church will help them in their walk with Jesus. When someone is about to join the Adventist church they are usually more receptive to spiritual influences than at many other times in their lives. This is the time to talk with them about what baptism means and what comes after baptism.

A week or so before the baptism you or the pastor (along with their Friendship Triad if possible, see below) should ask those who are preparing these three questions. "Have you come to the place in your life where you can you say—

1. "I have accepted Jesus as my Savior and Lord. I have peace in my heart because I know He has forgiven my sins and is planning to take me to heaven when He comes back. I know He is willing to give me victory each day of my life and that He will give me the Holy Spirit in a special way when I am baptized.
2. "I understand that the Bible is different from any other book ever written—it is God's voice speaking to me. I'm willing to ask the Holy Spirit to change my life to match all the teachings of the Bible.
3. "I realize that in these last days God is raising up a movement called the remnant church for the purpose of taking the gospel into all the world and encouraging each other in holy living. It keeps all the commandments of God. It arose as a result of prophecy, teaches and preaches prophecy and has a prophet in it. And I want to be a part of this church and its mission."

If someone isn't yet clear on any of these three points go back and do more in-depth Bible study in that area. If they are clear on each of these points then do a quick review of each of the parts of the baptismal vow.

Then tell them, "As your new, official church family we are thrilled to welcome you. We have four hopes for you in your first six months as a member. Here they are: During your first six months as a new member we hope you—

1. “Make at least seven good friends in the church. We’ll help you get acquainted with lots of people.
2. “Develop a regular time, place and plan for personal Bible study and prayer each day that is reinforced by a Sabbath School class. If you don’t already have a Sabbath School class you are a member of we will help you find the right one for you.
3. “Discover a ministry you enjoy. There are many ways you can use your God-given talents to build up God’s work. We’ll help you try out different ministries until you find one that fits you.
4. “Have the privilege of leading someone to Jesus, seeing them accept all the Bible truths and unite with this movement through baptism like you are about to. At your baptism you will have a chance to share briefly what Jesus means to you, how you decided to be baptized and join the Adventist church and how you want to use your talents to share Jesus with others this year. Doing this will build your confidence in Jesus and help you become more bold in talking to other people about Him in the future. At your baptism which of these ways of sharing would you prefer—
 - a. You talk for 2-4 minutes
 - b. You write something down and read it
 - c. You write something and have someone else read it
 - d. I ask you some simple questions about how God brought you to this decision
 - e. We do a video interview to be shown at your baptism.”

You’ll find that new members get excited to learn that baptism isn’t the end of their experience but the doorway into a vibrant walk with Jesus and fellowship in His church. They begin taking their own initiatives to accomplish these four hopes.

2. At the baptism, have the new member(s) share their testimony. (See above for five ways this could be done.)

A testimony shared at the time of the baptism accomplishes several valuable things—

1. It strengthens the new believer as they identify what God is already doing in their life. According to Revelation 12:11 it is actually a part of the salvation process.
2. When the congregation hears what God is doing in the new believer’s life it opens their hearts to welcome the new believer into their homes and lives.
3. The testimony reminds everyone present that church membership is based on spiritual convictions rather than social relationships.
4. Unbelievers who might be present see that God can transform lives.

3. After the baptism, the “Friendship Triad” gets together each week for several months to help the new believer make progress toward the four hopes list in #1 above.

How does this work? Let’s say that as soon as young person “Jimmy” is baptized (or before), church members “George” and “Carlos” (same gender as Jimmy) agree to form a friendship triad with Jim. Every week for thirteen weeks either George or Carlos or both get together with Jim to do something. This can be anything—a weekly Bible study group at Jimmy’s home with his family and friends, an invitation to eat breakfast, lunch or supper together, a chance to play basketball or racquetball, an opportunity to feed the homeless, etc. In the process George and Carlos invite other friends from church along. Before long Jim has at least seven good friends in the church. When Jimmy goes through typical after-baptism struggles he has some close friends to talk with and who reach out to him if he misses Sabbath School or church. George and Carlos help Jimmy in accomplishing the four hopes listed above.

If possible involve the members of the Friendship Triad in the final visit before baptism, introduce them at the baptism itself, and encourage the two friends and the newly baptized member to think of specific people they would like to see accept Jesus, be baptized and unite with the Adventist movement in the next six months.

Frequently Asked Questions- FAQ

1. Why set a date for baptism?

We set a date for anything that is important to us- weddings, graduations, sporting events, and special time with a loved one. When we set a date for baptism we show that we realize it is an important step in walking with Jesus and we are more likely to give serious attention to preparing for this special event. Of course if someone is ready before the official date there is usually no reason to delay their baptism until the date.

2. Why have two baptismal dates in a year?

By having two baptismal dates a year there will be many more who are baptized. When a person is baptized they usually think of friends they want to see make the same decision. If there is another baptism already scheduled within the next six months they are often more focused in their outreach efforts. At many baptismal services some watching make a decision for baptism and need to be invited to prepare to be baptized within the next six months or sooner. Some people are ripe for making a decision for baptism now that weren't six months ago.

3. How old is old enough for baptism?

The Bible doesn't give an expected age for baptism. Bible principles make it clear that a person should be old enough and willing to

- Turn from their sins, be converted and surrender their life to Jesus as their Savior and Lord
- Rejoice in a Biblical assurance of salvation because of their living, personal relationship with Jesus Christ
- Give evidence that the Holy Spirit's fruit is showing up in their life
- Have a basic understanding of all Bible truths and embrace them
- Unite with a worldwide movement that is committed to following all Bible truths and taking them to all the world, and
- Commit themselves to be involved in regular ministry of some kind

Children have different levels of experience and understanding so some are ready to make these commitments earlier than others.

As soon as a young person gives evidence of genuine conversion and is ready to make these commitments there should be no delay in baptizing them.

Young people are usually more successful in their baptismal preparation and experience as a newly baptized believer when there is parental encouragement, support and instruction in the process. As young people make decisions for Jesus and His church, parents will often recognize a need to

experience a revival and reformation in their own lives so they can provide more spiritual support for their children. (See *Testimonies vol. 6*, p. 91-95).

4. When a person is baptized do they need to join a church?

Yes. Everyone baptized in the book of Acts either joined a church or helped plant a church. Jesus is the Head and the church is His body. Nowhere in the New Testament do we find the idea of someone being baptized into the Head without becoming a part of the body at the same time. Baptizing someone without bringing them immediately into the church is like saving them from drowning but leaving them in the middle of the ocean alone in a life raft. A believer without a church family is like a baby without a family. Some may be fearful of joining a church because they have seen a warped idea of what God intended. The Book of Revelation (14:6-12; 18:1-4) explains that God's final movement is called out of the confusion of religion that is not faithful to all Bible truth and the faith of Jesus.

5. What role do parents, pastor, church school teachers, Pathfinder and youth leaders play in preparing young people for baptism?

Anyone who loves young people can take the initiative in preparing them for baptism. Enlist the help of others if possible.

6. What if we don't finish the lessons before the Youth Baptismal Sabbath date?

This is not a problem. It is best to meet for several more weeks after the baptism for Bible study and prayer and encouragement anyway. See "Helping Young People Become Strong Leaders for God After Baptism" above for how to make sure your young people are well prepared for baptism even if you haven't completed all the lessons yet.

7. How long does it take to prepare a person for baptism?

That depends on the person. Some grasp things more quickly than others and some are more ready to surrender their lives to Jesus fully than others. It doesn't take long at all once a person surrenders fully to Jesus, grasps the Bible truths and fully embraces them, and is ready to unite with God's worldwide movement. We see examples of this in the Book of Acts— the Ethiopian treasurer (Acts 8:26-39), Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:1-18), Cornelius and his family (Acts 10:1-48) and the Philippian jailer and his family (Acts 16:23-34).

Resources for Baptismal Groups

Many Seventh-day Adventist Churches and Schools keep Baptismal Group resources on hand so they can begin a group whenever the opportunity arises.

The following resources are available from one or more of the following—

- Adventist Book Center (www.adventistbookcenter.com)
- Advent Source Store (www.adventsource.org)
- Amazing Facts (www.amazingfacts.org)
- Seminars Unlimited (www.seminarsunlimited.org)

1. ***Amazing Facts Study Guides***. Set of 14 colorful lessons that cover major Bible truths in a clear, easy-to-read format. Teens and older.
2. ***ChristWise: Discipleship Guide for Juniors***. By Troy Fitzgerald. Teaches juniors (ages 10-12) basic beliefs in preparation for baptism, then it will help them make new friends and witness to them so that they too become disciples for Christ.
3. ***ChristWise: Discipleship Guide for Teens***. By Troy Fitzgerald. Teaches teens (ages 13-15) basic beliefs in preparation for baptism, then it will help them make new friends and witness to them so that they too become disciples for Christ.
4. ***ChristWise: Discipleship Guide for Youth***. By Troy Fitzgerald. Teaches youth (ages 13-15) basic beliefs in preparation for baptism, then it will help them make new friends and witness to them so that they too become disciples for Christ.
5. ***ChristWise: Discipleship Guide for Youth***. By Troy Fitzgerald. Teaches youth (high school and older) basic beliefs in preparation for baptism, then it will help them make new friends and witness to them so that they too become disciples for Christ.
6. ***ChristWise: Leader's Guide for Juniors, Teens, and Youth***. By Troy Fitzgerald. ChristWise is a revolutionary baptismal course. Geared toward a variety of learning styles, it is story-based, Christ-centered, interactive, and age-tailored.
7. ***Faith of Jesus Senior Baptismal Manual (Spanish only)***. One of the most widely used Baptismal Group lessons among Spanish speakers worldwide, "The Faith of Jesus," gives a comprehensive look at the great themes of the Bible, offering a biblical base for all our beliefs. AVAILABLE IN SPANISH ONLY.
8. ***Following Jesus***. By Monte Church. A baptismal workbook for juniors! Filled with illustrations, puzzles, word scrambles, matching games, and fill-in-the-

- blank exercises, this workbook makes preparation for baptism fun for children 9-12. Available in English and Spanish.
9. ***Footprints for Kids***. Part of the Kids in Discipleship (K.I.D.) program designed for families and focused on children. K.I.D. trains parents and caregivers to mentor their children to be empowered disciples of Jesus. This curriculum takes parents and children through a three-step process to equip church congregations to support parents, train parents, and empower families through interaction.
 10. ***G.A.T.E Bible Studies Youth Workbook***. This baptismal guide presents solutions to today's hot topics with a Christ-centered approach. Aimed at kids age 12-15, this program encourages them to discover God's love and helps lead them to decision making and the reinforcement of positive values. In Instructor's Manual is also available.
 11. ***Good News for Today Children's Manual***. By Don and Marjorie Grey. Interesting activity and teaching book to prepare juniors for baptism.
 12. ***Good News for Today Teacher's Manual***. By Don and Marjorie Grey. Interesting activity and teaching book to help leaders prepare juniors for baptism.
 13. ***It's My Choice: Junior Baptismal Guide, Student Workbook***. By Steve Case. Ten studies that help kids understand the 27 fundamental beliefs and 13 baptismal vows of the church-- lessons created specifically for the concrete thinking of 10- to 12-year-olds.
 14. ***It's My Choice: Junior Baptismal Guide, Teacher's Manual***. By Steve Case. Ten studies that help kids understand the 27 fundamental beliefs and 13 baptismal vows of the church, plus special material for pastors and baptismal class leaders.
 15. ***Making Jesus My Best Friend: Baptismal Preparation for Younger Children***. By Claudio and Pamela Consuegra. This baptismal study guide will prepare children age 8-10 for a wonderful walk with Jesus. It offers lessons with activities that parents and children can enjoy together as a bonding experience. The activities include not only fill-in-the-blank but also word games, Bible crossword, and even a maze.
 16. ***A Reason to Believe***. By Chris Blake, editor. The 27 fundamental beliefs have been condensed to just 10 in this youth doctrinal/baptismal course: divinity, rebellion, humanity, revelation, Jesus, response, love, joy, future, and purpose. Whether readers are young of simply young at heart, you'll find these lessons inspiring, creative, challenging, and meaningful.
 17. ***Storacles Bible Lessons***. By Doug Batchelor. Popular lessons that share an interesting Bible story and tie it in to Bible truth that will make a difference in your life. From prophecy, Jesus' second coming, death, diet, and more, these immersive Bible lessons are some of the best you'll find! Teens and older.
 18. ***Studying Together: A Ready-reference Bible Handbook***. By Mark Finley. This small handbook includes Bible studies, practical Bible lessons, and information on other denominations. Use it to study the Bible with friends and neighbors or for youth Bible study.

Inspired Insights on Young People, Baptism & Their Mission

The important role of young people in God's work—

- ^{NIV} **1 Timothy 4:12** Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.
- "...set before the youth of today...The heaven-appointed purpose of giving the gospel to the world in this generation..." {Education p. 262}
- "In the home, in the school, in the church, men, women, and youth are to prepare to give the message to the world..." {Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students p. 548}
- "With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world! How soon might the end come--the end of suffering and sorrow and sin! How soon, in place of a possession here, with its blight of sin and pain, our children might receive their inheritance where "the righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever;" where "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick," and "the voice of weeping shall be no more heard." Psalm 37:29; Isaiah 33:24; 65:19." {Education p. 271}
- See also *Christian Service* pp 30-34 "The Call to Young People"
- See also *Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students* pp 545-555 "Student Missionary Work"

The importance of baptism—

- ^{NIV} **Mark 16:15** He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. ¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.
- "Never allow your children to suppose that they are not children of God until they are old enough to be baptized. Baptism does not make children Christians; neither does it convert them; it is but an outward sign, showing that they are sensible that they should be children of God by acknowledging that they believe in Jesus Christ as their Saviour and will henceforth live for Christ." {*Child Guidance* p. 499}
- "Christ made baptism the entrance to His spiritual kingdom. He made this a positive condition with which all must comply who wish to be acknowledged as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Those who receive the ordinance of baptism thereby make a public declaration that they have renounced the world, and have become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King." {*God's Amazing Grace* p. 143}

- “The dear children of Brother D should plead with Jesus to reveal to them their sinfulness, and then ask Him to reveal Himself as their sin-pardoning Saviour. These precious children must not be deceived and miss eternal life. Except they are converted they cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. They must wash their robes of character in the blood of the Lamb. Jesus invites them to take the steps that sinners must take in order to become His children. He has given them an example in life in submitting to the ordinance of baptism. He is our example in all things.” {*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 42}
- See also *Evangelism* pp 306-321 “Baptism and Church Membership”

The importance of helping young people prepare for baptism—

- ^{NIV} **2 Timothy 3:15** and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.
- “Train the youth, mould the character, educate, educate, educate, for the future, immortal life. Pray often. Plead with God to give you a spirit of supplication. Do not feel that your work as teachers is done unless you can lead your scholars to faith in Jesus and love for him. Let the love of Christ pervade your own souls, and then you will unconsciously teach it to others. When you as instructors commit yourselves unreservedly to Jesus, for him to lead, to guide, to control, you will not fail. Teaching your students to be Christians is the greatest work before you. Go to God; he hears and answers prayers. Put from you questionings, doubts, and unbelief. Let no harshness come into your teaching. Be not too exacting, but cultivate tender sympathy and love. Be cheerful. Do not scold, do not censure too severely; be firm, be broad, be Christlike, pitiful, courteous. “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” {*Christian Education* p. 247}
- From *Testimonies for the Church* volume 6, pages 91-99
 - There is need of a more thorough preparation on the part of candidates for baptism... We are not only to say, “I believe,” but to practice the truth. ...This is the work of the Holy Spirit. ...The line of demarcation will be plain and distinct between those who love God and keep His commandments, and those who love Him not and disregard His precepts.” pp. 91-92
 - Parents whose children desire to be baptized have a work to do, both in self-examination and in giving faithful instruction to their children. Baptism is a most sacred and important ordinance, and there should be a thorough understanding as to its meaning. It means repentance for sin, and the entrance upon a new life in Christ Jesus. p. 93
 - There should be no undue haste to receive the ordinance. Let both parents and children count the cost. In consenting to baptism of their children, parents sacredly pledge themselves to be faithful stewards over these children, to guide them in their character building. They

- pledge themselves to guard with special interest these lambs of the flock, that they may not dishonor the faith they profess p. 93
- Religious instruction should be given to children from their earliest years. It should be given, not in a condemnatory spirit, but in a cheerful, happy spirit. Mothers need to be on the watch constantly, lest temptation shall come to the children in such a form as not to be recognized by them. The parents are to guard their children with wise, pleasant instruction. As the very best friends of these inexperienced ones, they should help them in the work of overcoming, for it means everything to them to be victorious. They should consider that their own dear children who are seeking to do right are younger members of the Lord's family, and they should feel an intense interest in helping them to make straight paths in the King's highway of obedience. With loving interest they should teach them day by day what it means to be children of God and to yield the will in obedience to Him. Teach them that obedience to God involves obedience to their parents. This must be a daily, hourly work. Parents, watch, watch and pray, and make your children your companions. p. 93-94
 - When the happiest period of their life has come, and they in their hearts love Jesus and wish to be baptized, then deal faithfully with them. Before they receive the ordinance, ask them if it is to be their first purpose in life to work for God. Then tell them how to begin. It is the first lessons that mean so much. In simplicity teach them how to do their first service for God. Make the work as easy to be understood as possible. Explain what it means to give up self to the Lord, to do just as His word directs, under the counsel of Christian parents. p. 94
 - After faithful labor, if you are satisfied that your children understand the meaning of conversion and baptism and are truly converted, let them be baptized. But, I repeat, first of all prepare yourselves to act as faithful shepherds in guiding their inexperienced feet in the narrow way of obedience. God must work in the parents that they may give to their children a right example in love, courtesy, and Christian humility, and in an entire giving up of self to Christ. If you consent to the baptism of your children and then leave them to do as they choose, feeling no special duty to keep their feet in the straight path, you yourselves are responsible if they lose faith and courage and interest in the truth. p. 94-95
 - Whenever possible, let baptism be administered in a clear lake or running stream. And give to the occasion all the importance and solemnity that can be brought into it. At such a service angels of God are always present. p. 97
 - The one who administers the ordinance of baptism should seek to make it an occasion of solemn, sacred influence upon all spectators... Nothing is to be made common or cheap, or placed on a level with

common things. ...As ministers conduct the services connected with God's worship, so they are educating and training the people. Little acts that educate and train and discipline the soul for eternity are of vast consequence in the uplifting and sanctifying of the church. p. 97

- In every church, baptismal robes should be provided for the candidates. This should not be regarded as a needless outlay of means. p. 97-98
- The vows which we take upon ourselves in baptism embrace much. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit we are buried in the likeness of Christ's death and raised in the likeness of His resurrection, and we are to live a new life. Our life is to be bound up with the life of Christ. Henceforth the believer is to bear in mind that he is dedicated to God, to Christ, and to the Holy Spirit. He is to make all worldly considerations secondary to this new relation. Publicly he has declared that he will no longer live in pride and self-indulgence. He is no longer to live a careless, indifferent life. He has made a covenant with God. He has died to the world. He is to live to the Lord, to use for Him all his entrusted capabilities, never losing the realization that he bears God's signature, that he is a subject of Christ's kingdom, a partaker of the divine nature. He is to surrender to God all that he is and all that he has, employing all his gifts to His name's glory. p. 98-99
- The obligations in the spiritual agreement entered into at baptism are mutual. As human beings act their part with wholehearted obedience, they have a right to pray: "Let it be known, Lord, that Thou art God in Israel." The fact that you have been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is an assurance that, if you will claim Their help, these powers will help you in every emergency. The Lord will hear and answer the prayers of His sincere followers who wear Christ's yoke and learn in His school His meekness and lowliness... p. 99
- See also *The Desire of Ages* pp 511-517 "Blessing the Children"