



PARENTS **PARKids** CHRONICLE

Growing in Grace at Grandview Park

PREPARING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR BAPTISM

On Sunday, August 24, I had the opportunity to speak during the 6:00pm evening service. I used Pastor Smith's message that morning on Noah's sin (Gen. 9) as a springboard to talk about "hope for failing fathers." We were reminded from Scripture that:

- 1. Being a father is an important job.** Gen. 9-11 reminds us that fathers are important to the continuation of the human race! (Duh!)
- 2. Fathers are to do more than just sire children; they are to "bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." (Eph. 6:4)**
- 3. Fathers are sinners who often fail.** Noah failed (Gen. 9:20-27). In fact, we noticed that many of the fathers in Genesis and throughout Scripture failed at times and had at least one child who refused to follow God's ways.
- 4. Our Heavenly Father is faithful and works through imperfect fathers.** In spite of the failings of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, God was at work in them. He established a relationship with them and with their descendants. And one day God the Father sent forth His Son to live a perfect life and die the death for sin, providing a way of salvation for the human race. Through faith in His death and resurrection, people can be saved and have a relationship with God as their father. And God gives His children grace to grow and become more like Jesus Christ every day. This includes fathers!
- 5. Fathers should rely on the help God provides, such as the Holy Spirit, the Bible, and the Church.**

It is my desire and part of my responsibility as Pastor of Children's Ministries to help parents, including fathers, disciple their children. During the message I took some time to explain one way we hope to improve our ministry to fathers by using the process of preparing young people for baptism as an opportunity to help fathers disciple their own children. I'm

repeating this information in this newsletter in case you were not there on that night so that you can be informed about this change.

PURPOSE

Our purpose in refining the process for preparing young people for baptism is three-fold. We want to:

- *More intentionally call young people to faith in Christ and obedience to His command to be baptized.*
- *More effectively prepare the baptismal candidate for the Deacon interview prior to baptism and the public testimony during baptism.*
- *More purposefully disciple fathers by providing an opportunity and training for them to exercise spiritual leadership in the home and to bring their children up in the training and instruction of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). In order to do this, we will invite fathers to be a part of the baptismal process for their children. Fathers would act as a "mentor" to their son or daughter (the baptismal candidate), leading several one-on-one sessions with the candidate to discuss his or her relationship with Christ, understanding of baptism, and willingness to be baptized.*

This is not something new; parents are already included in the process of preparing their son or daughter for baptism. We are just expanding upon this process.

PROCESS

From now on, here is the process for preparing a young person for baptism:

- 1. Invitation to consider baptism.** Letters are sent out to prospective baptismal candidates. A response card is included that must be filled out by the parents. Parents may also let us know at any time that their son or daughter is interested in baptism.
- 2. Mentor Orientation Meeting.** Every parent whose child has expressed interest in being baptized and who

wishes to be that child's "mentor" is invited to this meeting. It is designed to motivate and equip mentors for their task of guiding their candidate through the baptismal preparation process. The candidates do not attend this meeting.

- 3. Mentor's Individual Sessions with Their Candidate.** Candidates will receive a booklet which requires them to look up Bible verses and answer questions about the topics in each session (sessions are: Getting Started, The Gospel, Assurance of Salvation, Baptism (two parts), and Church Membership). Mentors are encouraged to have at least six separate, one-on-one sessions with their candidate where they review the questions and answers in the candidate's booklet together. Mentors will receive a guide that will assist them in leading the young person through each session. During this time mentors determine if the candidate should continue in the preparation process or encourage the candidate to wait.

- 4. Mentor and Candidate Group Session.** Six to seven weeks after the Mentor Orientation Meeting (in order to allow enough time for the mentor's sessions with the candidate), the Mentors and Candidates will meet together. Pastor Greg will review information regarding baptism and church membership. Candidates will

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share their testimony with the group. At the end of the meeting candidates and mentors turn in response forms indicating they are ready to proceed.

5. *Deacon Interview.* After both the candidate and mentor confirm the candidate's willingness and readiness to move ahead with baptism (and possibly church membership), the candidate will be interviewed by two deacons from the Membership Committee. During this interview the candidate again gives his testimony and responds to informal questions concerning his faith.
6. *Baptism Service.* Candidates, mentors, and the congregation will rejoice together as the candidate expresses his faith in Christ and is baptized!

QUESTIONS

A couple of questions that might come to your mind:

- *Must children wait until they are a certain age to be baptized? We do*

not set an absolute age requirement. We encourage parents to discuss baptism with their son or daughter and determine for themselves when a candidate is ready to begin the process. However, in some cases parents may want to consider waiting for children to approach the teen years before beginning this process. Although we believe without a doubt that children can be saved (Matthew 18:1-6; Mark 10:13-16), it can be difficult in some cases to discern the genuineness of a young child's profession of faith and his motivation for being baptized. Also, as young people approach the teen years they are entering the stage of life where they are beginning to wrestle with issues of faith and their own personal beliefs. This gives them a great opportunity to work through some of these issues under the guidance of their father. In addition, this process for baptism could be an intellectual stretch for younger children and would require some simplification. But again, we do not set an age requirement. If a child desires to be baptized and a parent

consents, they would not necessarily be prevented from beginning the process.

- *Who can be a "mentor"?* If the father is present in the home and is a member of the church, he will be encouraged to assume the role of mentor. If both parents desire to be "co-mentors", we would not prohibit them from doing so, but the father's unique role must be clearly understood (Eph. 6:4). If the father is absent from the home, not a member of the church, or unwilling to act as mentor, then a mother, a grandparent, or another mature believer who has a relationship with the candidate can fill the role of mentor. If the father professes to be a believer but is unsure about being the mentor, we would counsel with him regarding his hesitation.

We hope and pray that this process will be something God uses to help both parents and children "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18). If you have any questions, please contact me at greglong@grandviewparkbaptist.org or at

READ MY QUIPS

BACK TO SCHOOL

American History (according to student bloopers) part 1

Christopher Columbus discovered America while cursing about the Atlantic Ocean. Little did he know that he had just begun history!

His ships were named the Nina, the Pina Colada, and the Sante Fe. Columbus knelt, thanked God, and put the American flag in the ground. Tarzan is a short name for the American flag. Its full name is the Tarzans and Stripes.

Later, Jamestown was discovered by King James the One and named after him. King James persuaded the Queen to give him the land, and he sent a gang of settlers over here in 1607.

The Pilgrims crossed the ocean in hardships. This was called the Pill's Grim Progress. These people always wore old shoes with a big buckle on the top of them. The men wore pants that only came a little ways past their knees, and the girls wore funny bonnets.

The winter of 1620 was a hard one for the settlers. The Pilgrims appointed Thanksgiving, and it soon became a national holiday all over the world.

One of the causes of the Revolutionary War was the English put tacks in their tea. The Boston Tea Party wasn't what we would think of if we thought of a tea party. It was a raid where they threw all the tea into Boston Harbor, which they all drank. Also, the colonists would send their parcels through the post without stamps. Paul Revere's Ride wasn't as famous as some people make it. He had to have the help of Longfellow on it. Mr. Revere started his famous ride in Lexington, which is in Philadelphia, and paddled by canoe to Boston. Then he rode through the streets yelling, "Too warm! Too warm! The Red Colts are coming!"

During the Revolutionary War, the Red Coats and Paul Revere were throwing balls over stone walls. The dogs were barking, and the peacocks crowing. Finally, General Corn Wallace surrendered, and the war was over. When General Burgundy surrendered to Sara's Toga, the colonists won the war and no longer had to pay for taxis. (*to be continued...*)

From *The Bride of Anguished English* by Richard Lederer (NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 11-12.