
*ARE YOU
READY
LEADER'S
GUIDE*

A YOUTH LEADER'S
GUIDE TO TEACHING
STUDENTS ABOUT
BAPTISM, COMMUNION,
AND REPENTANCE



Bethel Grove Publications

Are You Ready Leader's Guide: A Youth Leader's Guide to Teaching Students about Baptism, Communion, and Repentance (PDF Sample)

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[Note: The page number reflect the PDF version only, not the print version]

Introduction

This is a series of books I never expected to write. When I started self-publishing in 2020, I didn't know what kind of books I wanted to write. It wasn't until a little over a year later when some of the girls in my youth ministry small group were asking about baptism that I remembered a workbook my dad had created for older children on the subject. I felt adapting his material was a great idea so that I could have the resource on hand when I needed it in the future. What I didn't expect was that *Are You Ready to Be Baptized* would become my bestselling title. At the time I am writing this, that book has sold over 250 copies, which is rare for most self-published books. It was through the success of that book that I was inspired to write two others on the subjects of communion and repentance.

As the baptism book has become more successful and other books followed, it has become clear how few resources are available for teenagers on these subjects and even fewer that are designed to help youth leaders teach students through these topics. That's where this book comes in.

In this book, I will introduce the overall concepts of each book, give suggestions for how to use it with your students, and then lay out my notes and ideas for teaching through the material of each book. Whether you are working with one student or 100, you will hopefully find the ideas and materials you need to teach through these topics with confidence and in whichever format best meets your needs.

As a fellow youth leader, I am so excited to take you on this journey.

Bethel Grove

PS - If you have any questions, concerns, or issues using any of these studies or this guide, please feel free to email me at contact@bethelgrove.com

Getting Started

When it comes to teaching students about important topics like these, one of the hardest things to figure out is where to start. These studies are designed to take the guesswork out of creating your own materials or avoiding the missteps of using a curriculum that students don't understand. To figure out how you can best utilize this material, then it's probably best to start by giving you a quick review of each study.

What All Three Studies Have in Common

Before I go into summarizing each study, I should probably explain the overlaying elements of all three books.

Each book is divided into 3 or 4 chapters. The first chapter is titled “_____ and the Gospel.” This chapter gives the readers an overview of the gospel story and how the given topic fits into it. Many elements from this gospel presentation are similar or in some cases identical in all three books, while other elements are unique to that topic. These elements remain consistent in all three gospel presentations:

- Everything Started Out Great [in the Garden of Eden]
- Until We Sinned
- We Think We Can Make It, But We Always Fall Short [when we try to jump the gap between us and God]
- God Doesn't Want Us to Be Separated from Him
- God Sent His Son
- Jesus Died to Take Our Sins Away
- Jesus Rose from the Dead to Conquer Death

The wording may vary slightly, but these elements will remain at the core of each gospel presentation and should be the primary focus when teaching the material.

The next chapter (or two chapters in the repentance book) is an FAQ on the given topic, answering many of the common questions that students have about it. This section will mostly be read by the students on their own. Hopefully, this will minimize the number of questions students will ask, especially in a class setting. If they do ask some of these questions during class or a meeting, you can have confidence knowing that you have an answer prepared if you familiarize yourself with the content of those chapters.

The last chapter, titled “Deciding If You Are Ready,” is designed to give students a few tools to help them decide if they are ready to make a decision about the given topic. It explores a few additional Scriptures that give more context for the decision before them and then emphasizes the importance of making this decision for themselves.

Each book includes a study guide of discussion questions at the end of the book, which will also be included in this book. The questions for Chapter 1 of each book are integrated into the chapter as well as listed at the end of the book.

Brief Descriptions

Are You Ready to Be Baptized?

In Chapter 1, the gospel is presented along with the story of how baptism fits into the story of the Bible. It highlights the story of Jesus' baptism and shares two of His motivations for being baptized: to obey the Father and to receive the Holy Spirit. After describing how Jesus died and rose again, as well as emphasizing the necessity of finding salvation in Christ alone, the book presents three steps laid out across the New Testament for accepting Christ's gift of salvation: confessing your faith in Christ, repenting of your sins, and being baptized into Christ.

In Chapter 2, there is a focus on addressing the "who, what, where, and when" of baptism. Covering everything from who a student can ask to baptize them to addressing their fears about being baptized in public, many of their practical questions will be answered. There is also discussion about infant baptism, why some churches have a difference of opinion about baptism, and how to respond if someone disagrees with them about baptism.

In Chapter 3, the heart of the title question of the book is reexamined to instead focus on a question that will help them determine if they are ready: am I ready to obey? This is examined by taking a look at the story of Noah through the lens of 1 Peter 3:21 and the story of Naaman's cure from his leprosy in 2 Kings 5. Through both of these stories, it is illustrated that what matters the most when it comes to this decision is that a person is willing to obey the Lord's instruction once they understand it.

Are You Ready to Take Communion?

In Chapter 1, after setting up God's plan to help His people find their way back to Him, the story shifts to setting up the origins of communion: the Passover feast. After briefly summarizing the story of how Joseph saved his family and brought them to Egypt, as well as the story of Moses' early life, the readers are briefly introduced to the first 9 plagues that God brought on Egypt so that the stage can be set for explaining the last plague and the instructions He gave about the Passover. After God's people were delivered, God gave them instructions about celebrating Passover and seeking forgiveness through the sacrificial system, but unfortunately, the people continued to struggle with their sins. After Jesus is introduced, the story of the Last Supper is presented while providing context for the Passover meal that was being celebrated. It concludes after the death and resurrection of Jesus by reminding readers that the two primary reasons Christians have for celebrating communion are to remember Jesus' sacrifice and to commune with fellow believers.

In Chapter 2, several questions about communion are addressed. After addressing the "what, where, when, and how" of taking communion, some questions dive deep into the significance of the elements Jesus chose, including a question about if it's OK to use wine in communion and how the switch to grape juice was made by most denominations during the Temperance Movement and the Prohibition Era. Some questions address the differences in the traditions surrounding communion

that differ between denominations. There is even a question addressing if there are any appropriate substitutes for the traditional elements.

In Chapter 3, readers take a serious look at what 1 Corinthians 11 says about what it means to take communion in an “unworthy manner.” According to this passage, two problems may qualify as an unworthy manner: if you are distracted from your ability to focus on Christ’s sacrifice or if you are disunified with another believer. If a person can overcome both of these barriers and is a committed believer, they will hopefully conclude that they are ready to take communion. If they are not committed, they are encouraged to determine why they aren’t ready and to consider reading the baptism book as a next step.

Are You Ready to Repent (Again)?

After setting up God’s plan to help us get back to Him, readers are told about God’s first attempts at giving His people a way to repent: the sacrificial system of the Mosaic Law. However, this system did not solve the problem. That would not happen until Jesus. After Jesus is introduced, the readers are also introduced to John the Baptist, the first preacher to call his audience to repentance. Repentance is introduced as a word with a two-fold meaning: expressing regret for something you did and being motivated enough by this regret to make a plan to turn away, and stay away, from that choice. After Jesus’ death and resurrection, readers are presented with questions they can ask to determine if they need to repent and steps they can take once they know they do. These steps include identifying the sin or mistake, asking God’s for forgiveness, asking anyone you sinned against for forgiveness, and turning away from your sin.

In Chapter 2, some common questions about repentance are addressed, including how to overcome guilt if you’ve already confessed and if you are required to confess your sin to others. Chapter 3 introduces the topic of rededication, explaining what it is, why some people choose to do it, and the steps that can be taken if someone wants to do so.

In Chapter 4, there is additional advice given from multiple passages in Scripture that will help students in the repentance process, as well as sharing the story of David’s sin with Bathsheba and his subsequent repentance. The advice for repentance includes don’t avoid conviction, being humble, don’t use repentance as an excuse to keep sinning, and remembering that they are capable of changing. It concludes with sharing Psalm 51 and asking students if they identify with David’s words to help them decide if they need to repent. There is also an emphasis on asking if they have ever committed their life to Christ. If they have not committed, there are encouraged to consider reading the baptism book as a next step.

Three Teaching Methods

For each of the three books, I propose three different methods for utilizing this material.

The first method is for groups settings and involves three steps:

- 1) Teach a group class that primarily focuses on Chapter 1 (aka the gospel presentation).
- 2) Give each student a copy of the book/PDF and encourage them to read the rest on their own (especially the FAQ section).

- 3) Have a follow-up meeting with each student to see if they have any more questions and where they are in response to the material.

The second method is for individual students and involves three steps:

- 1) Teach a class with the student one on one that primarily focuses on Chapter 1 (aka the gospel presentation).
- 2) Give the student a copy of the book/PDF and encourage them to read the rest on their own (especially the FAQ section).
- 3) Have a follow-up meeting with each student to see if they have any more questions and where they are in response to the material.

The third method, also for individual students, only involves two steps:

- 1) Give the interested student a copy of the book/PDF and encourage them to read it.
- 2) Have a follow-up meeting with each student to see if they have any more questions and where they are in response to the material.

The method you choose will primarily depend on how many students you have that are interested in baptism and the dynamics of your ministry. You will receive specific instructions for how to use these methods for all three books, as well as links and QR codes to downloadable resources in each respective section. But for now, here are some tips and suggestions for teaching group classes, follow-up meetings, and one-on-one meetings.

Tips for Teaching Classes

- 1) Make sure to announce your plans to have a class a few weeks before the meeting date.
- 2) Make sure that you have all the books/PDFs, your teaching notes, Bibles or Bible passage printouts, and your slides ready before class starts.
- 3) If you teach either the communion or repentance classes, you may also want to have copies of the baptism book available in case a student tells you that they would like to learn more about committing their life to Christ for the first time.
- 4) Remember that the main focus of this class is the gospel story and how the given topic fits into it. Make sure to cover all of it before you take questions so they don't miss anything important.
- 5) Make sure the students understand that they do not need to make a decision that day. They will need time to finish the book and process the information. If they are serious about making a decision, then you can discuss the details with them at the follow-up meeting.
- 6) If a student has attended the class portion of at least one of these studies and is interested in doing another, they should be warned that many elements of the gospel presentation in all three classes are very similar. It may better suit that student to just read the book of the given study, but the decision should be left to the student.
- 7) Encourage students to bring their friends. Even if they have heard the material before, it will be helpful if their friend gets nervous. It will also hopefully help the committed student learn how to communicate the information to their friends in the future and help them grow in their skills as a student leader.

Tips for Follow-Up Meetings

- 1) Depending on the size of your class and the gender of your students, consider asking some of your other leaders or even mature students to handle the follow-up meetings. It would be wise to ask a leader of the same gender as the student to handle the meeting or to at least be present if you decide to meet with a student of the opposite gender.
- 2) Pick a place that is public and low-key if possible. A coffee shop or a restaurant will do.
- 3) Start the conversation by taking an interest in their personal life to break the ice. Then use the question guide to help you (or the assigned leader) determine where the student is on their journey as far as the given topic is concerned. There will be possible questions to ask for both outcomes (if they answer “Yes” or “No” to the question “Are you ready?”).
- 4) Be supportive regardless of the decision they make. Make sure they understand that this needs to be a personal choice. They need to know that no matter what they decide, you (or the assigned leader) will support and encourage them so they will hopefully stick around.
- 5) If a student attends either the communion or repentance classes and also takes home the baptism book, you may want to use questions for both follow-up meeting documents so that you can ask questions about both books.

Tips for Teaching a Student One-on-One

- 1) If it's a student of the opposite gender, consider asking a leader of the same gender to handle it for you. If not, then you should ask another leader or student to be present.
- 2) Try to meet somewhere that is public but also has some privacy for the sake of discussion. A place like a public park or a coffee shop may work.
- 3) You will have the option of showing the student printouts of the slides if the student needs help understanding the gospel presentation. You can print them out, hole punch them, and put them in a folder or binder.

Are You Ready to Be Baptized?

Teaching about baptism in a way that students can understand can be one of the biggest challenges in youth ministry. Since this is such an important decision for a student, youth leaders want to make sure they are teaching it right. So these different presentations are designed to take the guesswork out of teaching about baptism. Each section will give you the text of the suggested teaching or dialogue. Then there will be a link and QR code to the downloadable files on Google Drive at the end of the chapter. These files will be editable so that all the work you should need to do is customize the aspects of this teaching related to your ministry's methods for handling baptism.

Before diving in, I want to acknowledge that there are many differences of opinion when it comes to the topic of baptism, especially in regards to its role in the salvation process. I did my best to be sensitive to the differences of opinion while also clearing standing on Scriptural truth as I understand it. If you happen to encounter anything within these teachings or the book that you disagree with, it's OK. Just do your best to explain where your ministry's doctrines are different than the opinions expressed by the author and move on.

With this in mind, I'm going to walk you through the three different elements of the two teaching methods in hopes that you can adapt these within the context of your ministry's needs.

Baptism Class

Here's the script for teaching the class based on the baptism book. This presentation will heavily rely on the slides mentioned below, which can be downloaded along with the teaching script using the download links at the end of the chapter. Scriptures are in ***bold italics*** and teaching notes are in [gray brackets].

Hey students. If you don't know who I am, my name is [fill-in-the-blank]. [Introduce yourself if you think they need to get to know you more.]

Today, we are going to take about baptism. Most of you probably have a general idea of what baptism looks like: when someone is pushed under the water and then brought back up. If you're here, you are probably considering if you are ready to make this decision for yourself. To help you figure it out, we're going to walk through the story of the gospel and how baptism came to be a part of it. Then we are going to help you decide if this is the right decision for you. Let's get started.

Slide 1: Everything Started Out Great

When God first created the world in six days, everything started out great. After creating light, the sky, the ocean, the land, and every animal according to their kind, God saved His best creation for last: the first man and woman. When this was done, God saw His creation was "very good" and truly complete.

Can you imagine the perfect world that Adam and Eve got to live in? The garden would have been so beautiful. They would have been in perfect harmony with the creatures all around them. But the best part was that they got to live in complete harmony with God. They walked beside Him in the garden like you would walk with your best friend in a local park.

Slide 2: Until We Sinned

Unfortunately, both Adam and Eve decided to break the one rule God gave them and ate the forbidden fruit after Satan tempted them. When they did this, sin entered the world. Does anyone know what the word “sin” means? [Give them time to answer]

Slide 3: Until We Sinned – Pt 2

Sin is doing something you know to be wrong. Sin can also be avoiding something you know to be right. Either way, sin means that you miss the mark (or the bullseye) of what God wants you to do. Sometimes, our sins completely miss the target altogether. But the truth is, when it comes to this target, if you hit anything but the bullseye, you have missed the mark and have sinned.

When sin entered the picture, it changed everything. God is holy and perfect, but our sin makes us unholy and imperfect. This means that He cannot allow sinful people to be close to Him. When Adam and Eve sinned, they could no longer walk with God and were banished from the Garden of Eden.

Slide 4: Sin Separates Us from God

Because of Adam and Eve’s sin, every human born since then has a tendency to choose sin. This is sometimes called our “sin nature.” And just like Adam and Eve, your sinful nature puts a distance between you and God.

Slide 5: We Think We Can Make It

When most of us realize we are separated from God, we try to make it back to God on our own. Unfortunately, many people try to convince themselves that they are good enough to jump the gap between themselves and God by doing more good than bad. They believe that if they do more good things than bad, or if most of their sins are “small sins”, they will be good enough to make it back to God by themselves. But the truth is that there is no such thing as a small sin. Every sin separates us from God just as much as breaking all of God’s laws at the same time.

Slide 6: But We Always Fall Short

Unfortunately, if you try to jump the gap between you and God by yourself, you will always fall short. No one has ever been good enough to do that on their own. Romans 3:23 says:

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Because we can’t bridge the gap on our own, we know that anyone who doesn’t have their sin accounted for will have to stand before the Lord and answer for every wrong thing they have done. This means you would be spiritually dead and the punishment would be going to hell. In this

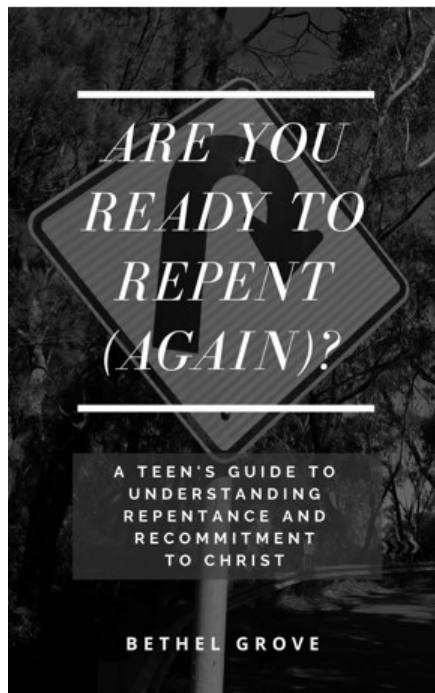
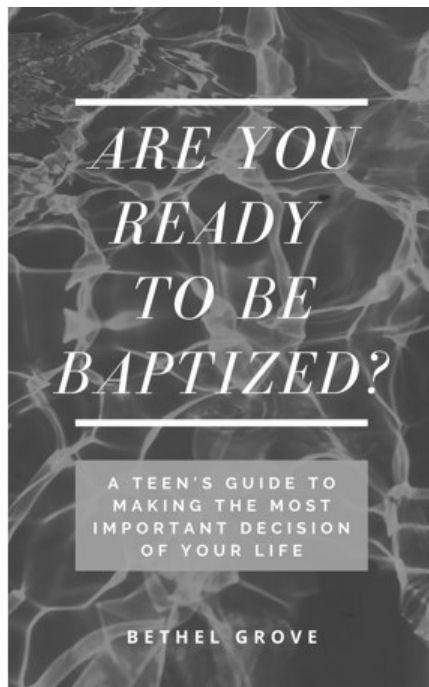
punishment, you would be completely separated from God's presence, lost in both fire and darkness. To prevent this from happening, something has to be done about your sin.

Slide 7: God Didn't Want Us to Be Separated from Him

The good news for us is that God doesn't want us to be separated from Him. Some people think that because hell exists, God is angry, hateful, and unloving. But the Scriptures tell us that the Lord is compassionate, gracious, and slow to anger. However, at the same time, He is also holy and cannot just ignore the problem of our sins. God didn't want us to stay lost in our sins and knew that if He didn't find a way to help us, we would be lost forever. So God started working on the plan, even before Adam and Eve first sinned, to help us find our way back to Him.

To Be Continued

Are you interested in using this curriculum?



Then order your copy of *Are You Ready Leader's Guide* and the other books of this series today!

Learn More: <https://www.bethelgrove.com/ayrleadersguide.html>