

**How Can
I Know
My Children
Have Truly
Accepted Jesus
And Are Ready
For Baptism?**

By Mark Daniel Jones

A resource for  **LIVING**
CHURCH

I. Introduction

A little girl once asked her pastor, *“When can I get advertised?”*

She meant *baptized*—but in a way, she made the right point. Baptism is advertising that you’re a Christian.

There’s a story about a dad, a mom, and their little boy who were scheduled to be baptized. The dad went first. When he came out of the water, he said, *“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.”* Then the mom was baptized. She came out of the water and said, *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”*

Finally, it was their little boy’s turn. He didn’t know any verses from the Bible, so when he came out of the water, he shouted, *“Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!”*

This little guy didn’t know what to say except words of celebration—and I love that!

Baptism is a time of celebration, but when it comes to baptism, especially when children want to be baptized, many parents wonder:

“How can I know my children have truly accepted Jesus and are ready for baptism?”

The Bible gives us the answer.

II. The Answer: When You Observe the Holy Spirit Dwelling in Your Child

The presence of the Holy Spirit living inside a person is the truest evidence that they have accepted and believe Jesus is their Savior through His death and resurrection.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in first-century Rome:

“You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.”

ROMANS 8:9–11

Paul says that if you don’t have the Spirit, you don’t belong to Christ.

So, the evidence—not just for your child, but for anyone—that they truly belong to Jesus is that the Spirit of Christ lives inside them.

This raises another question:

“How can I know if my child has the Holy Spirit living inside them?”

Once again, Scripture gives the answer.

III. The Holy Spirit Brings Conviction of Sin

“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.”

JOHN 16:7–8

You can know your child has the Holy Spirit if you see them feeling conviction—*sorrow for their sin*—not just because they were caught, but because they realize they’ve hurt God.

So what might conviction or remorse for personal sin look like in young children? It’s not an easy question to answer, but here’s a couple examples of what to maybe look for to identify if the remorse or conviction for sin in your child is genuine.

One is to notice if your child is beginning to ask or seek forgiveness of their own will or choosing, not just because mom or dad told them too.

For example, if my son says something mean to one of his younger sisters, and without me having to step in as the parent to tell him what he said was mean and wrong, but later, unprompted, he goes back to his sister to tell her of his own choosing that he was sorry for what he said, that can be a good example of conviction for sin produced by the Spirit living inside your child.

Another example comes from listening to the prayers of your children. When your child, again unprompted by you the parent, in their prayers begins confessing and acknowledging to God specific actions or attitudes of sin they did or felt, and of their own will asks for God’s forgiveness, this can be another indicator of conviction of sin produced by the Spirit.

Seeking forgiveness from God and from others where the seeking or asking is willful and unprompted can be a good indicator of **Spirit-produced conviction**.

IV. The Holy Spirit Produces the Fruit of the Spirit

"But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh... But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

GALATIANS 5:16–24

You can know your child has the Holy Spirit if, over time, their character and choices begin to reflect less of their own selfish desires and more of the Spirit's fruit. When you see them willfully choosing:

Love instead of selfishness

Joy instead of anger

Peace instead of conflict

Patience instead of outbursts

Kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control

You're witnessing the *Spirit's work* within them.



For the *fruit of the Spirit* is:

**Love
Joy
Peace
Patience
Kindness
Goodness
Faithfulness
Gentleness
Self-control**

GALATIANS 5:22-23

V. The Holy Spirit Produces Obedience to God's Word

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

JOHN 14:15

"The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned."

1 CORINTHIANS 2:14

You can know your child has the Holy Spirit when they make choices based on what God says in His Word rather than how they feel—or even what Mom or Dad says.

When your child hears or reads Scripture and shows a genuine desire to want to learn more about God from the Bible, and to obey because *God said it*, that's the Spirit at work.

A Picture of the Spirit's Presence

Think of it this way: *What makes a light bulb shine?*

The electricity flowing through it.

You see the light because of the current inside.

In the same way, when the Holy Spirit lives in your child, you see the evidence—the **light**—of His presence shining through their life.

SUMMARY

Signs the Spirit Lives in Your Child

So, your child wants to be baptized, but you want to be sure they're ready and truly following Jesus. How can you know?

You know when you observe the Holy Spirit dwelling in them. The Spirit's presence is the evidence that someone truly belongs to Jesus (Romans 8:9).

You'll see it when:

- They feel sorrow for sin because it hurts God (*John 16:8*)
- Their character increasingly reflects the fruit of the Spirit (**GALATIANS 5:16–24**)
- Their desires align with what God desires (**GALATIANS 5:24; ROMANS 8:5**)
- They obey God's Word because they love Him (**JOHN 14:15**)

If your child:

- Admits their sin
- Believes Jesus died and rose again for them personally
- Shows evidence of the Holy Spirit's work

...and now wants to be baptized to show their love for Jesus—then what are you waiting for?

It's time for them to get "advertised."

It's time for them to celebrate Jesus through baptism!