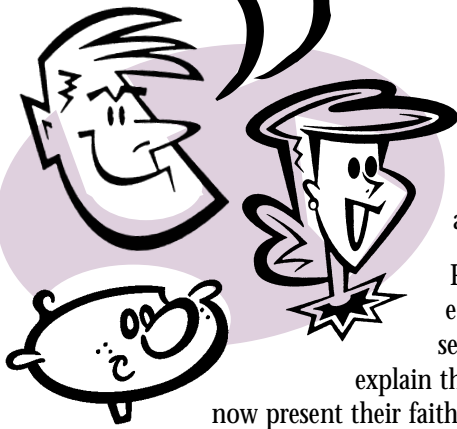


# Families Talking?



The mother was trying to fulfill her responsibility to keep the room quiet for the somber occasion of remembering Christ's death, but of course the child wanted to know if he could have a piece of bread from the food tray being passed around. The more she tried to quiet the child, the more the child insisted on answers to his questions: "Why are they passing that out?" "Is that bread?" "Can I have some?" "What is it for?"

The questioning subsided momentarily, only to resume again when the cup was passed: "What's that for?" "Is that juice?" "I'm thirsty! Can we go home now?"

I wonder why this conversation takes us by surprise? We should expect children to ask about communion. When the Passover was instituted it was expected that children, observing the strange ceremony, would ask, "What is this?" (Exodus 13:14), and parents were trained to give an answer (vs. 14-15). It is parents, after all, who are responsible to answer children's faith questions whenever they arise (v. 16; Deuteronomy 6:6-9; 20-25).

Perhaps, as child educators, our most important task is to equip the most important child educators – parents. As church leaders we can encourage noisy baptism and communion services, with parents presenting the gospel to curious children. Parents should be trained to explain that baptism is for those who have given a clear verbal statement of their faith. These believers now present their faith in the symbolic form of having died and risen again in Christ (Romans 6). Communion is for these believers to remember and announce Christ's bodily death and soon return (1 Corinthians 11:24-26).

With a team approach, church leaders and child educators can help parents in their most important task – sharing faith with their children. My wish: Families talking during communion.

*Richard Emilson, Canadian Theological Seminary, Regina, Saskatchewan*

## challenged

### By Example

*Charlene Eefting, Fellowship Baptist Church  
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**f**ew things are as thrilling to watch as a baptism – but it is especially true for Moms who watch their own children follow God!

My daughters, now 13 and 17, were taught by their Sunday School teachers at the age of 8 about the importance of baptism. They were challenged to take this step of faith and after talking it through as a family, we encouraged them to meet with our Pastor.

The girls were eager about following the command to be baptized, but were nervous about having to actually meet with the Pastor. During this process, the girls completed workbooks on baptism and membership which go hand-in-hand in our church. Our middle daughter was so afraid that she postponed her decision for six months. Then, she was challenged by some of her peers who were following Christ's example to be baptized and she took the plunge.

At the age of 5, my son Caleb began talking about being baptized. Our church had grown and baptisms were a monthly occurrence in our services. Caleb was challenged continually by the stories of how God worked in people's lives and he wanted this experience in his walk with God. We now had a specific plan in place for children who expressed interest in baptism which included teaching, a special breakfast and a meeting with the children's ministry director, who happened to be his mother. As parents, we were thrilled to see the certainty of his desire to show others that he loved Jesus.

Caleb was baptized at the age of 6. He couldn't see over the edge of the tank. The pastor lifted him up to the mike so everyone could hear his profession of faith. The entire group of children came from Jubilation Station to watch and were challenged by Caleb's clear statement that he wanted to follow God and to be obedient to him.

I'm a Mom, a Children's Ministry Director and I've been challenged to obedience by my own three kids. (Grandma, Debbie Palsky, is thrilled and challenged too!)