

Build the Bridge

1 Why do you baptize in Jesus' name?

LISTEN	Are they genuinely curious, or have they been taught that Jesus-name baptism is incorrect?
LOCATE	Curiosity or understanding. Sometimes an objection.
LOOK	Acts 2:38; Acts 8:16; Acts 10:48; Acts 19:5
LEAD	"Let's look at how people were actually baptized in the book of Acts. What pattern do you see?"

2 What about the thief on the cross?

LISTEN	Are they asking, "If the thief was saved without baptism, why would I need to be baptized?"
LOCATE	Objection or understanding.
LOOK	Luke 23:39–43; Hebrews 9:16–17; Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15–16; Acts 2:38
LEAD	"Let's first look at when the thief lived in relation to the death and resurrection of Jesus, and then look at what the apostles preached after the gospel was completed."

3 Does someone have to speak in tongues?

LISTEN	Find out what they mean. Salvation, Spirit baptism, spiritual gifts, or something they have seen?
LOCATE	Understanding, and sometimes a heart question.
LOOK	Acts 2:4; Acts 10:44–46; Acts 19:6
LEAD	"Let's look at what happened when people received the Holy Ghost in Acts."

4 What about Matthew 28:19?

LISTEN	They may believe Matthew 28:19 contradicts baptism in Jesus' name.
LOCATE	Objection.
LOOK	Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:16; Acts 10:48; Acts 19:5
LEAD	"That verse matters. Let's read what Jesus commanded and then look at how the apostles understood and obeyed His command."

5 My pastor taught something different.

LISTEN	There may be loyalty, respect, family history, and emotion behind that statement.
LOCATE	Objection and heart.
LOOK	Acts 17:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:21
LEAD	"I respect that. Let's do what the Bereans did: take what we have been taught and compare it carefully with Scripture."

6 Are you saying my family is lost?

LISTEN	This is almost never merely a theological question. They may be saying, "Are you asking me to condemn the people I love?"
LOCATE	Primarily a heart question.
LOOK	Romans 14:12; John 3:16–17; 2 Peter 3:9; Acts 2:38
LEAD	"I am not sitting here to pronounce judgment on your family. Let's look honestly at what Scripture says and what I should do with the truth God is showing me."

7 Why does your church believe in holiness?

LISTEN	Ask what they mean by holiness. They may be thinking only about outward standards, rules, clothing, or restrictions.
LOCATE	Curiosity or understanding.
LOOK	1 Peter 1:15–16; Hebrews 12:14; Romans 12:1–2; Titus 2:11–12
LEAD	"Let's start with the biblical reason for holiness. God calls His people to become more like Him, and then we can talk about how that affects the way we live."

8 Why is there so much suffering?

LISTEN	Be very careful. They may have experienced deep pain—loss, abuse, illness, or watched someone they love suffer.
LOCATE	Very often a heart question.
LOOK	John 16:33; Romans 8:18; 28; 2 Corinthians 4:17; Psalm 34:18
LEAD	"That is a big question. Can I ask what makes that question important to you?" Listen first, then show them that Scripture reveals a God who is present in suffering and ultimately overcomes it.

9 What translation of the Bible should I use?

LISTEN	They may want something they can understand, or have heard that one translation is the only legitimate Bible.
LOCATE	Curiosity.
LOOK	2 Timothy 3:16–17; Nehemiah 8:8
LEAD	"For our Bible study, let's use the KJV together so we are reading from the same text. If there is a phrase you do not understand, ask about it and we will slow down and study it together."

10 What if I don't believe the Bible?

LISTEN	Ask what they actually mean. Do they reject miracles, distrust religion, or have they never investigated it?
LOCATE	Curiosity, objection, or heart.
LOOK	2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20–21; Hebrews 4:12; John 7:17
LEAD	"Thank you for telling me that. Would you be willing to read it with me and examine what it actually says before deciding what you believe about it?"