

No. 5 Dedication and Baptism (Local elder)

For the 2017 service year, the baptism talk for the first circuit assembly is entitled “**Follow His Steps Closely’—After Baptism.**” The outline “**Never Abandon Your Loyal Love for Jehovah**” will be used for the second circuit assembly.

The elder giving this talk should speak with warmth and enthusiasm. He should strive to reach the hearts of all. His remarks should be directed particularly to those presenting themselves for baptism. (If no one is getting baptized, the speaker should be informed in advance so that he may direct his comments to the entire audience.) Even when the audience is large, the baptism talk should be delivered somewhat differently from other talks presented at an assembly. The speaker needs to reflect personal interest in those who will become Jesus’ “little sheep” as they take this most important step in their lives, that of water baptism in symbol of their dedication to our heavenly Father, Jehovah.—Joh 21:16, 17; 1Pe 3:21.

Toward the conclusion of his talk and after inviting the candidates to stand, the speaker should pause briefly. (*lv* 183 ¶1) He should explain to the candidates that it will be most fitting for them on this special occasion to answer the two questions in a *loud* voice. It may help the candidates to answer in unison if the speaker asks the question and then gestures to the candidates as he says the words, “Your answer, please.” The speaker should thereafter offer a heartfelt prayer in their behalf.

PLEASE NOTE: After the prayer, the speaker will invite the audience to stand and join the candidates in singing song number 34. The session chairman will come to the speaker’s stand *during* the song. When the song is finished, the chairman will specify the arrangements for immersion. He will ask the audience to remain standing until all the candidates have left the auditorium. (Be sure that attendants are present to direct the candidates.) After the attendants have directed the candidates out of the auditorium, the chairman will announce that the session is adjourned and state the time the next session is to begin.