

# Why do we baptize infants?

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## I. THE UNITY OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE PURPOSE

### A. One Bible

- **The OT: The foundation of the NT**
- **The NT: The final chapter of the OT**
- **The NT: The apostolic, Christ-centered exposition of the NT**  
*Acts 28:23, 31* And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. 31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.
- **The important implication for the doctrine of baptism: The NT does not cancel the foundational theology of the OT.**

### B. One Covenant

- **The covenant made with Abraham = the covenant of grace**  
*Gen 17:4-5* As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be **a father of many nations**. 5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for **a father of many nations** have I made thee.  
*Gal 3:16-17* Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made.... 17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ...
- **The new covenant: The new, unbloody administration of the covenant of grace**
- **God's covenantal dealings with man are the same in the OT & NT**  
*Mal 3:6* For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.  
*Heb 13:8* Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.
- **The important implication for the doctrine of baptism: The foundational theology of the covenant is unchanged.**

### C. One Church

- **The church of the OT = the church of the NT (The olive tree of Rom. 11)**  
*Acts 7:37-38* A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. 38 This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness...  
*Eph 2:19-20* Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;
- **The fundamental structure of the church is identical in OT & NT**
- **The important implication for the doctrine of baptism: Church membership begins @ birth and is affirmed by circumcision/baptism.**

## **D. One Sacrament**

- **The difference between circumcision and baptism: bloody vs. unbloody**
- **The unity of circumcision and baptism: They symbolize regeneration**  
*Deu 30:6* And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.  
*Col 2:11–13* In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: 12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;
- **Baptism = the circumcision of Christ!**

## **II. GOD’S UNCHANGING REVEALED WILL**

### **A. God is the God of the Families of Israel**

- **A reflection of God’s character**  
*Jer 31:1* At the same time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.
- **An unchanging truth regarding the structure of God’s church**

### **B. Children Are Members of His Church from Infancy**

- **God’s revealed will regarding children born into the covenant community**
- **God’s revelation of the gospel regarding children who need salvation from the moment of their conception**

### **C. Suffer Little Children to Come unto Me**

*Mat 19:14* But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. (Cf. Mark 10:14; Luke 18:16–17)

### **D. The NT: Not a Regression of Privileges!**

## **III. NT BAPTISM: THE REPLACEMENT OF OT CIRCUMCISION**

### **A. John’s Baptism: NOT NT baptism!**

- **John: the last prophet of the Old Testament**  
*Luke 7:28* For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.
- **John’s baptism: the administration of a priestly rite**  
*John 1:24–26, 31* And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. 25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? 26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not....31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.
- **John’s baptism: NOT administered in the Name of the Triune God!**
- **Confirmed by Acts 19:1–5**  
*Acts 19:1–5* And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, 2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John’s baptism. 4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with **the baptism of repentance**, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

## **B. Commissioned by Christ Prior to His ascension**

- **Prior to Matthew 28:19–20, NT baptism had never been administered**  
*Mat 28:19–20* Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.
- **The only command (imperative) to baptize in the entire NT!**
- **A command that has the nations (= families of the earth) as its object**

## **C. Baptism: Administered for the First Time on the Day of Pentecost!**

- **The remarkable parallel between Gen. 17:7 & Acts 2:39**  
*Gen 17:7* And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.  
*Acts 2:39* For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.
- **Peter repeats the foundational covenant promise of Gen. 17:7**
- **The important implication: If the promise is to us and our children, baptism is for us and our children**

## **D. Baptism: Symbolic of the Regenerating Work of the Holy Spirit**

- **Circumcision of the flesh symbolizes the circumcision of the heart**
- **Baptism with water symbolizes being baptized with the Holy Spirit**
- **Affirmed in Col. 2:11–13**  
*Col 2:11–13* In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: 12 Buried with him in baptism... 13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;
- **An important conclusion: Baptism = the circumcision of Christ**

## **E. Baptism Administered to Entire Households**

- **Consistent with the teaching of the OT—the Bible of the Apostles**  
*Exo 12:48–49* And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. 49 One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.
- **Consistent with God being the God of the families (= households) of Israel**

# **IV. BAPTISM: A SACRAMENT—A VISIBLE REVELATION OF THE GOSPEL**

## **A. God makes a statement about Himself**

## **B. The mode of sprinkling: A graphic illustration of the application (!) of God's grace!**

*Ezek. 36:25–26* Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

## **C. The basis for baptism: God's objective (!) command**

## **V. BAPTIST OBJECTIONS TO INFANT BAPTISM**

### **A. *In the NT, We Only Read of the Baptism of Believers***

- **We also read of the baptism of entire households—Lydia, Jailer, Crispus**  
*Acts 16:31, 33* *And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house...33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.*
- **There are no instances of children of believers being baptized as adults**

### **B. *There Is No Command to Baptize Infants***

- **The entire OT—the Bible of Christ & the apostles! —demands the inclusion of children**
- **Nothing in the NT suggests that God’s will regarding the inclusion of children has been abrogated**

### **C. *Jesus Was Baptized by John the Baptist as an Adult***

- **John’s baptism was NOT NT baptism! (Acts 19:1–5)**
- **Jesus submitted Himself to the three-fold requirement of the Ceremonial Law**
  - **30 years of age**
  - **Submission to a ceremonial rite of cleansing (an OT “baptism”)**
  - **Being anointed with oil (symbolic of the Holy Spirit)**
- **Jesus’s baptism marked the official beginning of His public and priestly ministry**

### **D. *Baptism Does Not Replace Circumcision***

- **Circumcision was the OT sacrament of the covenant of grace—NOT a mere marker of ethnic identity**
- **Circumcision and Baptism both symbolize regeneration**
- **Circumcision and Baptism are identical theologically and functionally**

### **E. *Circumcision Was Administered Only to Boys—Baptism to Both Male and Female***

- **The nature of circumcision precludes the inclusion of girls**
- **Circumcision was a sacrament in which God affirmed His covenant to both males and females**