

Does My Baby Need to Be Baptized?

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us" (1 Peter 3:21a). A question that has concerned parents for hundreds of years is that of whether or not to have their babies baptized. Well meaning and concerned people for centuries have wrestled with this doctrine. Many, having been taught the alleged necessity of such action, have with good and clear consciences allowed various "clergy" to perform various ceremonies upon their children. They did so with the hope that they were "doing right by the child." Many have done so out of fear motivation, hoping to secure their infant son or daughter from the fires of Hell or what is falsely called "purgatory." Others have by their own admission allowed such ceremonies to be conducted in order to salve their own conscience which is hurting from their own sinful life...a sort of penance by proxy. If you are wrestling with this question, or are wondering about having already allowed

your child to be "baptized," or are concerned about your own infant "baptism," please know at the outset: this is a practice built solely upon the doctrines of men and **not** the doctrine of Christ revealed in the Bible.

We would like to answer the question of infant baptism from two points of view. First, let us consider what the Bible **does not** say regarding this question. There is **no explicit mention nor command** within the Bible so stating the necessity for infants or young children to be baptized. Likewise, there are **no practices** which would indicate, illustrate nor imply that any such thing was ever considered, let alone demanded. Further, to teach the necessity of infant baptism would cause one to be guilty of "going beyond the things written" (1 Corinthians 4:6), for such things **are not written** within God's word. To teach "infant baptism" would make one guilty of not "speaking as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11), for God's oracle, the Bible, **does not speak** of any such doctrine nor practice.

Second, let us examine what the Bible **does teach** regarding baptism, its purpose and design, and who is in need of it. Of the twenty-two references to baptism and the seven references to the word "baptize" in the New Testament, each and every one speaks of or to **adults** and only those adults who are rational and responsible for their own actions. In its action or administration, baptism is spoken of as a **burial** in water, an immersion. The word "baptism" is a transliterated Greek term meaning to "dip, plunge, immerse or submerge." Consequently, nearly every case of "infant baptism" is not actually a baptism (immersion), but merely a sprinkling. To sprinkle is not to immerse. I say "nearly every case" because there are some denominations which do actually immerse infants, but their reasons for so doing do not exist within Scripture.

Additionally, in every instance of baptism within the New Testament, there are prerequisite actions and attitudes which qualify one for baptism. These are: hearing and understanding

the gospel of Christ (Acts 18:8); believing that message (Acts 8:12; Mark 16:16); repenting or turning from sins (Acts 2:38); making confession of one's faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God (Acts 8:35-37; Romans 10:9,10). Now, which of these can a baby do?

Finally, those being baptized did so for an urgent reason: to have their sins forgiven, washed away in the blood of Christ. Read and consider these passages: Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; Romans 6:3-11. What sin does a baby have? Sin is transgression of God's Law (1 John 3:4). What law has an infant transgressed? Sin is unrighteousness (wrong doing; failure to do right, 1 John 5:17). How has a baby done so?

Let us conclude in this way: babies are not subject to God's command for baptism because no command was given to them, they could not understand the need nor meaning, they could not comply (perform the necessary actions nor hold the proper attitudes) and they have no sin to be washed away. One cannot obey God by

proxy; no parent can obey God for a child; no child can make peace with God for a parent (Ezekiel 18:4,20).

Rest assured, young parents, you have no need to have your baby baptized. Your innocent, precious baby has no sins, and thus no need for God's plan for salvation. Our babies are safe in the arms of Jesus, if they pass from our loving hands into eternity.

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