

Baptism

A Biblical Examination

Part 3- Perversions of Water Baptism

Infant Baptism

After all these years of history since the Reformation, it is high time to strip off the tradition and return to the simple New Testament design for Baptism. It is my own personal conviction that the Reformation is ongoing and therefore, is not finished. And that consideration should force the argument about this issue to be purely a Scriptural argument. I'm really not interested in arguing about Baptism on any other level than the Biblical one.

There is nothing to gain by looking at Baptism from an *historical* perspective because in the 16th Century, history turned *against* tradition at the Reformation- and we should be grateful for that. Many times, history has had to periodically make significant turns against wrong traditions and human initiated teachings. And we live in a time when history needs to reexamine tradition again with the issue of Baptism.

There are five main reasons why *every* believer should completely reject Infant Baptism as being a Biblical Baptism:

1. Infant Baptism is not Taught in Scripture.
2. Infant Baptism is not New Testament Baptism.
3. Infant Baptism is not a Replacement for Circumcision.
4. Infant Baptism is not Consistent with the Nature of the Church.
5. Infant Baptism is not Consistent with Reformational Soteriology.

Let's examine each of these arguments.

1. Infant Baptism is Not Taught in Scripture

In this first point, we will examine six key arguments that those who affirm and promote Infant Baptism use to justify their position. Those arguments are:

- A. Sola Scriptura
- B. The Argument From Biblical Silence
- C. The "Jesus Received Children" Argument
- D. The "Household" Argument
- E. The "Acts 2" Argument
- F. The "1Corinthians 7" Argument

Let's examine each one.

A. Sola Scriptura

The Truth is that Scripture nowhere advocates, commands, or records a single Infant Baptism. It is therefore *impossible* to directly prove or support this rite from the Bible. The great German Reformed Theologian, Schlermaker wrote,

“All traces of infant baptism which one has *asserted* to be found in the New Testament must first be *inserted* there,”

And a whole host of German and front-rank theologues and scholars, including those of the Church of England, have united basically to affirm not only the *absence* of infant baptism from the New Testament but also from apostolic and post-apostolic times.

Infant Baptism first arose in the second or third Century. The Lutheran Theologian, Kurt Allen- who has written on this after intensive study of Infant Baptism concluded:

“There is no definite proof of practice [of Infant Baptism] until after the third century.”

A Roman Catholic professor of theology, Haggelbacher writes,

“The controversy has shown that it is not possible to bring in absolute proof of infant baptism by basing one's argument on the Bible without the help of tradition.”

And even the notable B.B. Warfield affirmed the absence of Infant Baptism from the Scripture. This would be a good place to apply the Calvinistic Regulative Principle which says,

“If Scripture doesn't command it, it is forbidden.”

Given the “Sola Scriptura” commitment of the Reformation, given the fact that the Reformation was completely built on that commitment, and given the Bible as the singular and therefore supreme and only Authority in the matters of Faith, one might assume that the discussion about Infant Baptism would be over at this point.

But in spite of all such testimony, Infant Baptism is still defended and practiced by many in the 21st Century as though it were Biblical. Now we should expect Rome to engage in such practices. We expect them to defend essential “rites” and “dogmas” that are not in the Bible because that is what they do. They have a Mass and a Magisterium and a tradition that is patently unbiblical. And they do these things because they believe and teach that the Church continues to be the unique recipient of post-Biblical Revelation which carries equal weight with Scripture.

In fact, the Roman Catholic Church not only asserts that it is the ongoing recipient of Divine Revelation- but that it is also the only infallible interpreter of all Revelation- both Biblical and traditional. So, from that perspective, Church history- in one sense- could be viewed to be Rome's hermeneutic.

But it is *not* the hermeneutic of Reformed theology. In fact, history itself is not a hermeneutic at all. The Bible is not interpreted by history. God is not interpreting the Bible by or through history. If that were true, we would have to ask, "*Which* history or *whose* history?"

Practices and Doctrines are true- *not* because some Church said they were true and *not* because some Counsel said they were true and *not* because they have been traditionally affirmed as being true, but only and solely because the Scriptures affirm their validity. And so only an honest hermeneutic based in exegesis can yield the true meaning of Scripture. So, we must conclude that simply reading traditional history back into the Scripture is *not* a legitimate way to interpret the Word of God. In "Alabama English", if it isn't in the Bible, why teach or practice it?

B. The Argument from Biblical Silence

Now in their defense- it is also true that Scripture nowhere *forbids* Infant Baptism. That is a true statement. But we must acknowledge that the only reason *why* this is true is because the Scriptures do not discuss Infant Baptism at all. But no serious Bible Student would use that "argument from silence" to justify any position, even though, against all logic, there are many in the modern Church who would argue for Infant Baptism based on nothing more than that the Bible doesn't specifically forbid it. Their warped logic is that since the Bible doesn't specifically forbid it, that somehow that means that God condones and approves of it to the point of the thing that the Bible does not teach or record becoming a *requirement* for the Church.

But to believe or teach that the sprinkling of babies is the Divine Will of God for no other reason other than it is not specifically forbidden in Scripture would open the door to allow several other ceremonies to be taught and promoted and standardized with the imprint of Divine Authority which are also not in the Bible. And where does that end? What other rituals and ceremonies and dogmas and teachings would flood into the Church for no other reason that they too are not specifically forbidden in Scripture?

And remember that we are not talking about an issue that believers are called to simply *endure* or *tolerate*. Infant Baptism is something that has become *standardized* and supposedly infused with Grace and Efficacy. All based on nothing more than the silence of Scripture.

History records that it was just such traditions concocted beyond the pages of Scripture and carried out without any Scriptural support and warrant that Luther had in mind when he himself drew the line in the sand and said this,

"The church needs to rid itself of all false glories that torture Scripture by inserting

personal conceits into the Scripture which lend it to their own sense. No. Scripture, Scripture, Scripture for me- constrain, press, compel me with God's Word,"

C. The "Jesus Received Children" Argument

Those who advocate Infant Baptism want to advocate it from the Word of God and so they use Scriptures in which Infant Baptism is not mentioned to support it because that's all they have. And that is not a criticism- that's a fact. If it's not there, then you have to use what's not there to make the point. For example, in **Matthew 18:3** we read the Words of Jesus that say,

3 and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

4 "Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 "And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me;

6 but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

And some have taught that what you have here is evidence that children are in the Kingdom. But if you put the Synoptic Gospels (**Matthew, Mark, Luke**) together and see the scene in context, Jesus is in Capernaum and He may well be in Peter's house and He has in His lap an infant. And He picks up a little child because the disciples are debating about which one of them will be the greatest in the Kingdom and that debate had reached a fever pitch.

And we know how serious this debate was because John and James had gone to the extent of enlisting their mother to go plead for them to be at the right and the left hand of Jesus in the Kingdom. And it was in the middle of that debate that Jesus put a little baby in His lap and said,

3 ... "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

4 "Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

... and then Jesus proceeded to preach a great sermon, one of the great discourses in **Matthew** on the childlikeness of the believer. And in that Chapter, He was not talking about babies. He was talking about childlike believers. And that is pretty clear because in verse 6 Jesus said,

... these little ones who believe in Me...

So, the context of this Passage is that Jesus was talking about how we treat each other as believers. So, this is *not* a Scripture that deals with actual children and their role in the Kingdom, but rather using a child as an illustration of the

necessity of entering His Kingdom as a child would.

And what does that mean? Entering into God's Kingdom with no achievement and no accomplishment, having done nothing, learned nothing, gained nothing, accumulated nothing, bringing nothing to bear upon that entrance. Jesus is simply saying, "*All who enter into My Kingdom must come the way a child comes*". And a child has nothing to offer, having achieved nothing, to come bare and naked with no accomplishment and no achievement and you come totally dependent. *That* is the issue that Jesus was talking about here- offering nothing to commend yourself to God and realizing your utter bankruptcy- not Infant Baptism.

Then you have another passage which is often used in the next Chapter of **Matthew**- verse 14,

Matthew 19:14

But Jesus said, "Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

So, is Jesus saying something here about Infant Baptism? No. What He is saying is that God cares for children. God has a special care for children. You never see Jesus gather a bunch of unregenerate adults and bless them. That never happened. But Jesus did gather these little ones. God has a special care for children, and not just children of *believing* parents. There's nothing to indicate that these children were children of believing parents or unbelieving parents. There's nothing to indicate whether in fact there might have been a few Gentile children of Roman soldiers splattered in there who hadn't even been circumcised in this passage. There's nothing to indicate whether or not they were children of true Israelites who had had their heart circumcised or whether they were those of just the nominal Pharisaic legalists who seem to dominate the society.

But what we *do* know from this passage is that Jesus did not baptize these children Himself nor did He command others to baptize them. So, this is a "dry" verse, and so is **Matthew 18**. There's no Baptism in either place. All that Jesus was doing in both **Matthew 18 & 19** was to show that children are precious and dear to God and that God has special care and concern for them. That's all.

Now some people make a strange connection between the word "hinder" here in **Matthew 19** and the word "hinder" (prevent) in the book of **The Acts 8** where the eunuch is saved and wants to be baptized and says,

Look! Water! What prevents (hinder) me from being baptized?

... but that is taking this word completely out of context.

D. The "Household" Argument

Another logic that is used are the list of passages with regard to "household baptisms" in the books of **The Acts** and **1 Corinthians**. There is a total of five "households" that are mentioned to have been baptized. Some would say that babies

were baptized with those households as an act of family solidarity. However, a careful study of Scripture reveals that none of those Scriptures mentions any babies being baptized. Not a single one. One Baptist Theologian said,

“We have as much right to say in the case of the Philippian jailer that there was nobody in the family under sixteen as somebody has a right to say there was somebody in the family who was a baby. In other words, there’s purely no basis for concluding that there was any infant baptism going on there because it doesn’t say there was. The idea that a father served as a surrogate for the faith of the children might be something you believe but you can’t find any such children for whom surrogate faith may have been exercised in those household baptism since none are mentioned anywhere in the Bible.”¹

If you look carefully at all of the “household” passages- you find interesting facts such as:

- ✓ In Cornelius’ home (**The Acts 10**) it says, “**All heard the Word, the Spirit fell on all and all were baptized.**” (the word, “**all**” is defined as those who heard the Word and upon whom the Spirit fell which *demand*s cognition and faith *before* baptism.)
- ✓ In the jailer’s case (**The Acts 16**) it says, “**All heard the gospel and all were baptized,**” (again the “**all**” is defined as those who *heard*.)
- ✓ In the case of the house of Crispus (**The Acts 18**)- all *believed* and all were baptized.
- ✓ In the accounts of Lydia and Stephanas (**The Acts 16; 1 Corinthians 1**) where you have less information given, we must understand the same thing as in the more explicit texts. All *hear* the gospel; all *believe*; all *receive* the Holy Spirit; and *then* all were baptized.

Every single “Household” of the New Testament are collectively defined as those capable of:

- Hearing the Gospel
- Understanding the Gospel
- Believing the Gospel
- Confessing Sin
- Repenting of Sin
- Receiving the Holy Spirit
- Being Fully Immersed in Water

And two things are categorically and undeniably true about Infants and these verses in the New Testament concerning “Households”:

A. No Infants are Mentioned

¹ Al Mohler, *Baptist Teaching on Baptism*

B. Infants *Cannot* Accomplish Any of the Above Conditions

Further in the case of Stephanas' household, the Bible says that all of those who were baptized were also devoted to the ministry of the saints:

1Corinthians 16:15

Now I urge you, brethren (you know the household of Stephanas, that they were the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves for ministry to the saints),

... which is *impossible* for infants and children. In the case of Lydia, the Bible reveals that she's the hostess, she invites men into her home, and she is a traveling woman who went as far as three hundred miles away. All of this would lead us to conclude that Lydia was unmarried or her husband would be the host in the home and would do the inviting if men were to be invited in.

Also, it would be completely foreign to the custom of that day for a woman to travel in the course of business if she had nursing children in the home. The more likely scenario is that Lydia is a single woman with no small infants in the home. There is just no reason to assume from the Scriptures that Lydia had any small children in that kind of environment.

The text of **John 4:53** says,

So the father knew that *it was* at that hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives**"; and he himself believed and his whole household.**

And again, a careful analysis of the word "household" in this verse doesn't refer to babies or infants but to those who were capable of "believing". In addition, there is no mention here of *any* Baptism being performed or carried out. So, as we see the term, "household" in the New Testament, we must allow for that word to be used in every single case with those who were cognizant (and willing) to "believe" which will always *exclude* infants.

E. The "Acts 2" Argument

38Peter *said* to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

39"For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself."

Another text that is used many times in an attempt to justify Infant Baptism is **The Acts 2:38&39**. Some try to make the connection with Peter's statement:

... For the promise is for you and your children...

... as being representative of infants in the family. However, from the Greek construction of this Passage we must conclude that all that Peter was saying is that

the condition by which you have received the Holy Spirit will be the very same condition by which your offspring will receive the Holy Spirit- repentance and faith. In other words, Salvation is for your generation and every other generation.

And Peter is speaking to Jews at this point and then He adds, “*As well as the Gentiles,*”

.. who are defined in this Passage as:

“those who are afar off”

So, what you have in this Passage is a very generic statement about the fact that there’s going to be one basic means by which everyone comes into a genuine relationship with God- and that is by hearing the Gospel; responding to the Gospel in repentance and faith- which are human responses to the gift of the Holy Spirit coming to that individual and dwelling within him.

And Peter is saying here that this one single means of being saved is going to be the very same for all the generations that come out of your loins. And that one single Way of Salvation will never change. And Peter is saying here that all people- both Jew and Gentile- are called to the very same Salvation which will be appropriated to everyone the very same way and will contain the very same blessings.

F. The “1Corinthians 7” Argument

1Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman.

2But because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband.

3The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

4The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband *does*; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife *does*.

5Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

6But this I say by way of concession, not of command.

7Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am. However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner, and another in that.

8But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I.

9But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn *with passion*.

10But to the married I give instructions, not I, but the Lord, that the wife should not leave her husband

11(but if she does leave, she must remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband),

and that the husband should not divorce his wife.

12But to the rest I say, not the Lord, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he must not divorce her.

13And a woman who has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to live with her, she must not send her husband away.

14For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband; for otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy.

First of all, the context of **1Corinthians 7** is about Marriage- not Baptism. And the underlying problem was that in the Corinthian Church of the 1st Century, both Jews and Gentiles were coming to Christ and they were having problems trying to sort out what to do if they had been married to an unregenerate person before they were saved.

The new believers were concerned about being married to an unbeliever. They wanted to know if their marriage to these unbelievers constituted them being “aligned with Satan” and being “unequally yoked”. So, this was a real concern about spiritual compromise. The saved Jews wanted to know if God was going to require them to do what Ezra did back in **Ezra 10** when he said,

Ezra 10:10-12

10Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, "You have been unfaithful and have married foreign wives adding to the guilt of Israel.

11"Now therefore, make confession to the LORD God of your fathers and do His will; and separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign wives."

12Then all the assembly replied with a loud voice, "That's right! As you have said, so it is our duty to do.

So, these new believers in the Corinthians Church were wondering what their attitude should be concerning their unbelieving spouses. That is the context of this entire Passage- not Baptism.

And we should know that this is also not a passage about children. In fact, children are only mentioned in one place. The main issue of this passage is:

Should a new believer leave their unconverted spouse?

And in verses 12 &13 the Apostle Paul teaches,

12 ...if any brother (a saved man/a brother in Christ) has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he must not divorce her.

13And a woman who has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to live with her, she must not send her husband away (divorce him).

So, the superior New Covenant teaching about this issue is:

Do not divorce your unconverted spouse.

Paul teaches that believers are to stay married to unbelievers as long as there is consent. Now why is that? Why would a believer do that?

1Corinthians 7:14

14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband; for otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy.

But in what sense can an unbeliever ever be sanctified? In a very limited way because the unbelieving spouse certainly is not saved. So, from the fact that we are talking about an unbeliever, we know that Paul is not meaning “Sanctification” as we normally understand it as that lifelong process by which truly saved people are increasingly conformed to the Image of Jesus Christ by the Work of the Spirit of God. That is *not* what Paul is addressing here.

Paul is using this word in its most narrow way- as it means:

Set Apart

So, all that Paul is saying here is that the unbelieving husband is “set apart” by the faith of the believing wife and the unbelieving wife is “set apart” by the faith of the believing husband.

In other words, the unbelieving spouse is “set apart” from the full force of ungodly results. They’ve been set apart. Saved people are completely set apart due to their relationship with Jesus and Paul is teaching here that even though the unbelieving spouse is not saved and will go to hell at death, that during the time of the marriage, the unbelieving spouse is spared the full force of the Wrath of God against his sins by the fact that he is married to one whom the Lord has set His Love upon.

In this setting, the unbelieving spouse is in an environment where God’s Grace is being poured out on their most intimate companion. And the “spillover” of that marvelous Grace allows even the unbeliever some measure of earthly comfort and the betterment of life *temporally* until his ultimate damnation.

And there is *always* the possibility that the unbelieving spouse will eventually come to Salvation through this godly influence.

1 Peter 3:1-9

1In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any *of them* are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives,

2as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.

3Your adornment must not be *merely* external — braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses;

4but *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.

5For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands;

6just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

7You husbands in the same way, live with *your wives* in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

8To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit;

9not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

So, the “spillover” of blessing on godly conduct in a marriage between a believer and a non-believer may well influence that individual, not only for the betterment of this temporal life, but also toward genuine faith for Salvation.

1Corinthians 7:14b

... for otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy.

The word that was translated into English here as “holy” is the very same Greek word that was translated as “sanctified” in this same verse. And even though there are some who would invent several very strange doctrines using this word in this verse, the truth is all that Paul is teaching here is that the children of such a marriage, where one spouse is saved and the other is not, are also “set apart”.

So, what happens is that in a home where you have only one believing spouse, God pours out His Grace, not only on the believing spouse, but also on the unbelieving spouse and the children. So, God is simply blessing the believing spouse and being good to His Own child and because they are married to an unbeliever and have children, a *portion* of that Divine Blessing and that Divine Goodness *mitigates* or *lessens* the full blast and the full force of worldly, godless, Christless influences that would normally come upon the unbeliever and in that sense of the word. The unbelieving spouse as well as the children of that marriage are “set apart” or “sanctified” or “holy”.

So, Paul is teaching here that the believer is not to divorce their unbelieving spouse because both the unbelieving spouse and the children of that home will have *some* degree of the Goodness of the Grace of God upon them. But in any event, this is a “dry” passage and has absolutely *nothing* to do with Water Baptism- Infant or Believer.

But if we are to argue that this passage contains some secret message about Infant Baptism, then it must be also a mandate for the Baptism of that unbelieving spouse as an adult because you can’t have one without the other using this Passage. But the truth is that absolutely nothing is said about *anybody* being baptized in

1Corinthians 7. The phraseology used here is a passing comment with regard to the influence of godliness on a divided household which is why Paul teaches they should stay together and not divorce.

Summary of Point One

So according to the main logic of the Reformation, the full Counsel of God about Baptism or any other subject must be either *expressly* set forth in the readable text of Scriptures that are crystal clear or it has to be necessarily, compellingly, and inescapably deduced *from* the Scriptures that are not as clear by good and logical reason or we *should not* believe it and we *cannot* teach it.

But when a particular text of Scripture is *not* crystal clear, that subject *must* be:

1. Necessary
2. Compelling
3. Inescapable

- such as **The Doctrine of the Trinity**. And the Truth is that Infant Baptism simply does not meet the high Standard that the Reformers (led by God) *imposed* on the Church- that the Principal of “Sola Scriptura” may be preserved and the Church will only believe and teach that which Scripture declares.

And so, based on that indisputable fact, we may rightly conclude that Infant Baptism is *not* taught in the Scriptures and thus we should not believe it and we must not teach it.

2. Infant Baptism is *Not* New Testament Baptism.

While the Bible is absolutely silent on the matter of Infant Baptism, it speaks clearly and repeatedly and precisely on the matter of adult Believer’s Baptism. In every instance where Baptism is mentioned in the New Testament, it describes a ceremony in which a believer was placed into water and taken up out of that water as an outward sign of their Salvation.

As stated earlier in this Study, there are only two Greek verbs that express the reality of Water Baptism:

1. Bapto
2. Baptizo

... which both mean *to immerse* or *to dip into* and they are the same words from which we get our English word “drown”. The Greek noun, “*baptismos*” is used in **The Book of the Acts** to *always* refer to a believer being immersed fully into water. The Latin equivalents of *baptismos* are *immersio* and *submersio*. The Greek language has a completely different word for sprinkle, *rhantizo*.

Every New Testament use of the “*bapto*” family requires or permits full body immersion. The great Reformer and Theologian, John Calvin said,

“The word baptize means to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the early church.”

Once you go down the road to alter or change what the New Testament teaches that Baptism really is, and you make it something different than an adult being fully immersed in water, you do great damage to the portrait of what **Romans 6** means about believers being fully immersed into Christ *spiritually*. And this confuses the meaning of what is the heart and soul of the Christian Gospel- that the unworthy sinner comes into a union with Jesus Christ by way of Justification.

Romans 5:19-21;6:1-7

19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.

20 The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

21 so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6:1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?

2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His resurrection,

6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;

7 for he who has died is freed from sin.

The Ordinance of Water Baptism was designed by God the Father and conveyed to us by God the Holy Spirit in Scripture using the inspired Words of His Own sovereign choosing to fit the exact symbolism that God intended. Water immersion, which is commanded of every believer, is a picture and an object lesson and a symbol and a visual analogy of the spiritual Truth of Eternal Conversion.

Just as Marriage is the visible, tangible, and literal representation of the great Mystery of the relationship between Christ and His Church, so too Baptism is the visible, tangible, and literal representation of the great Mystery between Christ and the believer- in the believer's death to sin and his new life in Christ.

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

The symbolism in **Romans** and **Galatians** is the way God has Sovereignly designed to teach the Truth about Salvation- using the elements of adult believers being fully immersed in water in Baptism.

And all throughout the New Testament, adult Baptism by full immersion is presented as a picture of the Central Spiritual Truth of Salvation. And that Central Spiritual Truth about Salvation is this- that one who was an unworthy sinner is now IN Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul taught that believers are so fully immersed into Jesus Christ (Baptism) that he really didn't know where he himself ended and Jesus begins. **Romans 6** clearly teaches that the believer and Jesus have been united through Christ's Life, Death, and Resurrection. **Romans 6** is talking about a spiritual reality in which God places us spiritually into Christ and that we die in Him and we rise to walk in newness of life.

And the symbolism that he uses to make that point is adult water Baptism by full immersion- not infant Baptism or Infant Sprinkling. And this symbolism is so strong that water baptism and spiritual regeneration is almost inseparable. This is also what the Apostle taught in **Galatians 3** and **Colossians 2**.

Galatians 3:27

For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Colossians 2:6-15

6 Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk in Him,

7 having been firmly rooted *and now* being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, *and* overflowing with gratitude.

8 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,

10 and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;

11 and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;

12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

13 When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,

14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

15 When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.

To be placed into a true and ongoing union with Christ- that is the “baptism that saves.”

1Peter 3:21

Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you — not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience — through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

To be spiritually immersed into Christ- this is the “washing of regeneration.”

Titus 3:5-6

He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,

This is the “washing away of sin.”

The Acts 22:16

Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.

So, full immersion into water by thinking and believing people was then and is now the unmistakable outward sign of the reality of that spiritual union. And it's the only outward sign that is able to depict all the elements of Christ's Ministry that are clearly defined in **Romans 6**:

- ✓ Christ's Sinless Life
- ✓ Christ's Death
- ✓ Christ's Burial
- ✓ Christ's Resurrection

And Water Baptism like this (with believers) becomes synonymous with Salvation itself, not that the water can cleanse us from sin, but in so far as Jesus used this term instead of the word for Salvation when He said,

Matthew 28:19

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...

The verb used here by Jesus that was translated as “**make**” is the substantive verb in this verse and the two following verbs are only *participles* that define that first verb by answering the question: *How* do I “make disciples of all nations?” And Jesus answered that by giving us the only two ways that the Church is Authorized to “**Go... and make disciples**”:

- A. Baptizing
- B. Teaching

Now some Bible scholars say that according to the literal Greek, those two words *should* be “converting” and “teaching”. But Baptism had become so synonymous as the outward sign of the inward reality of true Conversion that not only could Jesus use it as if it referred to genuine Salvation (because it did) but the Apostle Paul could also use it in **Ephesians 4** to say:

Ephesians 4:4-6

4 *There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling;*
5 *one Lord, one faith, one baptism,*
6 *one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.*

And so, Water Baptism by believers through full immersion and the Lord’s Table become the two solemn Acts which the Lord appoints for His Church. Both give to the believer opportunity to proclaim the Death of the Lord- Who has died for us and with Whom we have died so as to walk with Him in a new life. Both of these two Acts depict that.

Summary of Point Two

The Church has had the sacred duty to preserve and administer those precious institutions and legacies of the Lord with conscientious faithfulness and according to the meaning of their founder. But sadly, the church has not done that faithfully. She has introduced arbitrary changes into both the Communion and Baptism Ordinances and in the course of time has surrendered the privileges of the saints to the whole world and even forced these arbitrary and unbiblical changes on the people of God.

The sacred documents of primitive Christianity, the New Testament, is clear about this issue and so Water Baptism today must have the very same elements and significance that it had as the New Covenant Scriptures were being received by the Church.

3. Infant Baptism Did Not Replace Circumcision

A third point is that Infant Baptism is *not* a replacement for the Abrahamic sign of circumcision. Scripture simply never makes that connection. And nowhere does the New Testament ever say or teach that Infant Baptism replaces circumcision. Nevertheless, Paedo-Baptists (those who baptize infants) claim some *inferential* evidence connected to Old Testament circumcision without any specific statements from Scripture. And the argument goes something like this:

Point A: Circumcision was the Old Covenant sign of faith

Point B: Water Baptism is the New Covenant sign of faith

Therefore: Since the Old Covenant sign of faith was applicable not only to adults, but primarily and eventually *exclusively* to children, the same should be true of the New Covenant sign and we should then baptize infants.

The reasoning here is understandable but the logic simply doesn't hold. The fact that the Abrahamic Covenant serves as a foundation of faith in which all who are in Christ participate should not be disputed. All genuinely saved people are *spiritual* children of Abraham by faith though we are not all Israelites. We are not a *natural* Jew but a *spiritual* one.

Romans 2:28&29

28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.

29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

Therefore, all genuinely saved people are children of Abraham, but only in the sense that we follow his faith (do his deeds).

John 8:37-39

37 "I know that you are Abraham's descendants; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.

38 "I speak the things which I have seen with My Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard from *your* father."

39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "**If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham.**"

But the argument that takes this truth and goes on to say that physical circumcision was a sign of personal faith we must categorically reject. Old Testament circumcision was *not* a sign of personal faith for the simple reason that many of the Jews who were circumcised did *not* genuinely believe and were damned by God,

Hebrews 3:16-19

16 For who provoked *Him* when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt *led* by Moses?

17 And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?

18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient?

19 *So* we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

In **Joshua 5**, we see that the man who replaced Moses circumcised only the people who had been born in the wilderness during their wandering because those who came out of Egypt had been circumcised by Moses *before* they journeyed.

Joshua 5:2-8

2 At that time the Lord said to Joshua, "Make for yourself flint knives and circumcise again the sons of Israel the second time."

3 So Joshua made himself flint knives and circumcised the sons of Israel at Gibeath-haaraloth.

4 This is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: all the people who came out of Egypt who were males, all the men of war, died in the wilderness along the way after they came out of Egypt.

5 For all the people who came out were circumcised, but all the people who were born in the wilderness along the way as they came out of Egypt had not been circumcised.

6 For the sons of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, until all the nation, *that is*, the men of war who came out of Egypt, perished because they did not listen to the voice of the Lord, to whom the Lord had sworn that He would not let them see the land which the Lord had sworn to their fathers to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey.

7 Their children whom He raised up in their place, Joshua circumcised; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them along the way.

8 Now when they had finished circumcising all the nation, they remained in their places in the camp until they were healed.

So those men who died in the wilderness had been circumcised and yet they did not believe and God did not allow them to go into the Promised Land. If circumcision was a sign of personal faith, then those Jews who died would have proved that by believing and they would have been allowed to enter in. So, the fact that they all died in the wilderness, even though they had been circumcised, proves that physical circumcision was not a sign of individual faith.

The Need for Cleansing

Old Testament circumcision was not a sign of personal faith- but rather a sign of the need for personal cleansing. The truth about Old Testament circumcision is that there were some people who were circumcised as adults who had faith and there were others who were equally circumcised as adults who showed absolutely no faith at all.

Many people were circumcised back then for no other reason than to join the nation of Israel- for a variety of reasons. We are told over and over in Scripture that as human beings we are never certain about the condition of another person's heart. So, we are not to judge anyone based on outward appearances.

1Samuel 16:7

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature,

because I have rejected him; for God *sees* not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

John 7:24

Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

So, while the outward sign of physical circumcision should *not* be seen as a sign of individual faith. It *should* be looked on as being an outward sign of the desperate depravity of man and his great *need* for Salvation and cleansing.

If there could be a single way to visibly identify the total depravity of fallen man, what would that way be? What would be the decisive evidence of man's complete depravity; the endemic issue of Utter Iniquity and the single best way to show that this fallenness of humankind runs deep and wide?

Some would suggest that we could find that proof in the speech of that individual. Yet some people are dumb and can't talk at all. Yet aren't they also depraved? And some people guard their speech fairly well. The Pharisees did. Somebody else might suggest that we could find the proof of total depravity in the way that human beings live their lives. But some people guard what they do fairly well- like Mormons- who have an outward morality that is notable.

No, if you want to know how deep and endemic and systemic and profound man's depravity really is, you don't look at what they say or even at what they do. You look at what they *produce*. An outside observer may not be able to see my own utter depravity. I'm pretty good at covering it up. But my own life is controlled and surrounded by studying and preaching and teaching the Word of God. But I have four living children, and they are all completely depraved. Not only that, but this fallen condition didn't stop with them, and I have seven utterly reprobate grandchildren. So, if you want an unmistakable way to see how depraved man is, simply look at the progeny.

And through the circumcision of the male reproductive organ, Almighty God was showing us the profound need for both forgiveness and cleansing. Now as a side note, there was also great health benefits from circumcision as medical research along with archeology have proven that Jewish women had the lowest rate of cervical cancer of all the female groups of the Old Testament period.

But the real and the profound issue is that physical circumcision was a visible and outward sign for the need of deep cleansing and that God, through the fulfillment of the Promise of the New Covenant, would provide that cleansing by His mercy and grace through Jesus Christ.

In addition, not only did circumcision *not* show any act of personal faith, it also didn't apply to the females in any sense- either physical or spiritual. Women were completely outside the prevue of physical circumcision from *any* aspect. And simply from this single point, that women were entirely excluded from physical circumcision, we can conclude that it was not a normative thing that was somehow tied to anyone's faith.

Entire Households Were Circumcised

When Abraham was circumcised, so were all the adults in his entire family- including the Gentile slaves.

Genesis 17:12&13

12 "And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a *servant* who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants.

13 "A *servant* who is born in your house or who is bought with your money shall surely be circumcised; thus shall My covenant be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

So, if it is true that physical circumcision was an outward sign of true faith- and it is also true that Water Baptism has now replaced circumcision, then the logic would hold true that today the entire household of new converts would have to be *forced* to be baptized immediately upon the conversion of the father. But again, no such connection or instruction is made in the Scriptures.

Under the Old Covenant, physical circumcision was a sign of ethnic identity. It was an outward sign that an individual was a Jew and was participating in *physical* and the *temporary* features of the Abrahamic Covenant, *not* the spiritual ones.

Deuteronomy 10:15-16

15 "Yet on your fathers did the Lord set His affection to love them, and He chose their descendants after them, *even* you above all peoples, as *it is* this day.

16 "So circumcise your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer.

Romans 9:6-8

6 But *it is* not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are *descended* from Israel;

7 nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: "*THROUGH ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS WILL BE NAMED.*"

8 That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.

The spiritual promises and realities of the Abrahamic Covenant were only efficacious to those who later truly believed. There can be no efficacy at the initial point of circumcision- that was purely an entrance into the ethnic, social, and earthly participation in temporal features by which God blessed or in some cases cursed Israel. And if you were in the nation itself, you got them both- regardless of whether you were truly saved or not. In fact, you got more curses than blessings.

New Testament References to Circumcision

In terms of New Testament references to circumcision, the Apostle Paul was both crystal clear and brutal.

Galatians 5:6

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.

Galatians 6:15

For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

Philippians 3:1-11

3 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things *again* is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you.

2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision;

3 for we are the *true* circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh,

4 although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more:

5 circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee;

6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.

7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,

9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith,

10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Ethnic identity and participation in an earthly covenant did not provide the Apostle Paul with the Righteousness of God which you may only receive by faith in Jesus Christ. And when he finally understood this, he called it “rubbish” (manure). And what we can take from this is that a person who was born in Israel of the Abrahamic Covenant seed was physically related to the temporary and external blessings and nothing more.

The infinitely superior New Covenant changed this dramatically. Under the New Covenant, there is no such thing as a physical participant in temporary and earthly features attached to any geographical land or any race of people. The New Covenant knows *nothing* of physical or temporary limitations to its promises. All of the promises of the New Covenant are eternal. For example, the Scriptures do not refer to a “remnant of the faithful” within the New Covenant- only for the Jews. There’s no such thing as a “Doctrine of the Remnant” *anywhere* in the New

Testament. You don't have a large group of "covenant people" among whom there's a small believing "remnant" in the New Testament like you do in the Old.

Jeremiah 31:31-34

31 "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the Lord.

33 "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

34 "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the Lord, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Unlike under the inferior Old or First Covenant, everyone who is "in the camp" will be believers and verse 34 will come to pass which says,

"They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the Lord, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

So, the very Essence of the New Covenant- which makes it infinitely superior to the Old, is precisely on the point that the Prophet Jeremiah makes here. Under the First Covenant, every male was circumcised- even Gentile slaves- but that didn't mean that everyone was a true believer. Manifestly they were not. But under the New Covenant, *everyone* who is circumcised in heart is saved- all of them- even the women!

This is the significant distinction between belonging to the Abrahamic Covenant *ethnically* and belonging to the New Covenant *savingly*. And so, a sign that suited an *ethnic* covenant is *not* parallel to a sign that suits a *saving* covenant. And so, Water Baptism must be held distinct from physical circumcision.

John's Baptism

Unlike Infant Baptism, there is a much better argument to be made with the Baptism of John the Baptist. If *anything* serves as transitional from the Old to the New Covenant this does. You find in the Baptism of John a clear pattern of Baptism of genuine "heart repentance" and a preparation for the coming Messiah. And John was absolutely brutal against those leaders of Israel- who came out to join

in with John but who had not truly repented- and John called them “snakes” and asked them what in the world they were doing by the river?

So, if you want an Old Testament parallel with New Testament Baptism, you’re on much safer ground with the Baptism of John because it was a Baptism of repentance and because it is a Baptism of immersion which can prefigure and demonstrate the death and resurrection of Christ, and it is a Baptism in which Jesus Himself participated not only to fulfill all righteousness but also to fill it with the meaning that Christian Baptism would eventually have.

But it should be crystal clear to us that John the Baptist did *not* regard membership in the “Messianic community” (through physical circumcision) as a matter of genuine Salvation because he categorically refused to baptize those Jews who were not repentant even though they had been circumcised.

4. Infant Baptism is not Consistent with the Nature of the Church

What has happened as a result of Infant Baptism being carried out is that there is now much confusion as to the identity of the Christian Church. And that confusion stems from the failure to distinguish between the visible *local* Church- including unbelievers and the invisible *universal* Church which consists only of believers.

In fact, those who espouse Paedo-baptism (Infant Baptism) are left to explain just who is a member. Are babies who are baptized members of the Church or not? If so, how is Church discipline exercised on people who are too young and immature to know “Right” from “Wrong”? And precisely how does the Holy Spirit engage in ongoing Sanctification on babies? Further confusion lies in the failure to differentiate clearly between what it means to be a “little member of the Covenant” as a baptized baby and what it means to be a true believing child of God.

We must acknowledge that the Scriptures teach that the one true Church is made up of only believers. The Church in the Bible is fully regenerate. Unbelievers may physically attend the Church services, but they are not members of the Body of Jesus Christ. And that fact is fundamentally distinct from the Israel of the Old Testament.

All other human beings, who may physically attend the Church services apart from genuine believers- whether baptized or not baptized and whether confirmed or not confirmed- do *not* belong to the redeemed Church. They are at best “tares” that will one day be burned. They are at best fruitless “branches” that will be cut off and burned.

This confusion is compounded because in our day you have legions of people, both Catholics and Protestants, who have been baptized as babies. From whom range anywhere from the hypocritically religious, to the apostate religious, to the unconcerned and indifferent, to the outright godless, Christ-rejecting and blasphemous.

And the question that Infant Baptism forces on us is: are these people in the

Church or out of the Church? And if they're *not* a part of the true Church, precisely *when* did they get out of it because they were baptized in the Church as infants?

Keeping Up with Rome

The truth is that Infant Baptism is simply a holdover from the absolutist State/Church system in Europe that began with Rome and which sadly crept over into some Reformed circles. During the Reformation, it was important that Rome had more numbers so they could influence the Government in their direction. So, they baptized as many children as they could. And as the Protestants saw their side losing ground *politically*, some of them regretfully adopted the same unbiblical technique.

So, Infant Baptism stood as evidence of an incomplete Reformation which sentenced that new redeemed community (The Reformers) in Europe to the terrible death that it died- the death of which we can see even today.

The truth is that unless you have a fully regenerate Church, you have chaos. But as the Reformers saw the power that was concentrated in the absolute "church system" through the national sovereign church of Rome, they desired to dilute that control and attempted to counter Rome.

So, while it is true that Luther started out with the good intention of "freedom of the conscience" many of the Reformers started imposing *everything* on the people and they *forced* Infant Baptism back in which allowed them to have a power base from which to fight against not only each other (the Lutheran fought the Reformed), but also the Roman States as well.

We have to be clear that "State Christendom" in *every* form- Catholic, Protestant, Lutheran or Reformed- totally misunderstands and brings great confusion to the concept of the New Testament Church. And it's very sad to think that Luther abandoned his original lofty idealism where he contended for a Christianity of freedom and renouncing force and living by the Word and the Spirit and "backed up" into a State/Church perspective.

But as he failed in this, Luther nevertheless said this- which is perhaps the truest expression of his heart about this issue,

"I say that God wants no compulsory service. I say it a hundred thousand times, God wants no compulsory service. No one can or ought to be compelled to believe for the soul of man is an eternal thing above all that is temporal. Therefore, only by an eternal Word must it be governed and grasped"

It is simply insulting to govern in God's Presence with human law and long custom. Neither the Pope, nor a Bishop, nor any other Man has the right to decree a single syllable concerning a Christian man apart from his consent. All that comes to pass otherwise comes to pass in the spirit of tyranny.

Sadly however, Luther eventually allowed and promoted what he hated, which only serves to teach us that good men can fail horribly. So, in looking back at

the Reformation, there is no greater tragedy than that the true Church was crushed and hidden underneath the massive weight of the State/Church system.

We must remember that there is no such thing as a “Doctrine of the Remnant” taught anywhere in the New Testament. The infinitely superior New Covenant proclaims a saved Church with regenerate members. But with the obscuring of Reformation light, the Church became secularized and the very thing that Constantine had brought in and which the early teachings of the Reformation sought to remove were eventually allowed back in and then formalized.

And today, modern Protestant Europe is just as dark and cold as old Catholic Europe ever was. Any concept that promotes a State/Church model will always be at odds with Biblical Christianity and the one will war against the other.

The true Church over which Christ is Head is not of this world and does not incorporate the unconverted. Infant Baptism served the State/Church system well for a time, but it horribly confuses the manifestation of the one true Church.

5. Infant Baptism is not Consistent with Reformational Soteriology

As we all struggle in our day to “get the Gospel right” and we wade through all the hype and emotionalism and the myriad of opinions and the designer relationships that typifies the modern Church, which have much more to do with human psychology than Biblical Christianity, the clarity of the Gospel becomes paramount. If it is true (and it is) that no one is saved unless and until they hear and believe the Gospel, then knowing and preaching and proclaiming and obeying that Gospel consumes the efforts of ministry.

And as one spends hours studying so that he can be certain that what he believes and teaches about salvation is indeed what Scripture says, it becomes increasing difficult to understand what contribution that Infant Baptism brings to that effort other than complete confusion.

There is no faith in the child, there is no comprehension of the Gospel, and there is no repentance in the child. So, precisely what is it and what do we have as a result? Some who espouse this unbiblical practice will say, “*You have a “peremptory election act” or a “peremptory salvation act” in the child.*” Which is just words without meaning- sheer nonsense. And you can find all sorts of strange comments that people make, as they engage in *spiritual gymnastics* struggling to put this “square peg” (Infant Baptism) into a “round hole” (Biblical Soteriology), but you simply cannot “get there from here”.

So, while they all agree that Infant Baptism doesn’t actually “save” the child, they still affirm that it puts the infant in some “place” where they are somehow more fortunate than the unbaptized and more likely to be blessed by God. But when you really analyze those statements, it’s no different a place than *any* child would have- baptized or unbaptized- who is blessed to live in a godly environment- which is the *only* point of **1Corinthians 7**.

So, Infant Baptism is a needless thing to do because:

- ✓ It ministers no saving grace to the child
- ✓ It guarantees no future salvation to the child

But on the other hand, Infant Baptism is not neutral because it perpetuates a terrible and confusing misconception in the mind of the parents that, against all Biblical or Historical evidence, this child is “somewhat saved” or “kinda-sorta saved” or “almost saved but not quite” because of some unexplained event that supposedly occurred at their Baptism.

Luther finally had to teach that the infant who is baptized has something called, “unconscious faith” because Luther knew good and well that Salvation was by faith alone but he tried to make the truth about Salvation fit in with Infant Baptism.

But the reality is that children are children and they do not understand therefore they *cannot* believe. So, what is the purpose of convoluting the purity and the clarity of The Doctrine of Justification by Grace through Faith alone to the one who comes and repents of sin and embraces Jesus Christ with this unbiblical act which admittedly:

- Has no saving efficacy
- Delivers no redeeming grace
- Infers no faith
- Is not symbolic of any union with Christ

So, what is left with Infant Baptism? Only to confound the person about what it actually means and to confound the Church with an unregenerate membership and to confound the lost world about who truly represents the Lord.

Why not simply defer the sign until the reality of saving faith is made evident? Nothing is lost. It certainly doesn’t change election and it doesn’t change anything about the child. But by engaging in something that the Bible doesn’t teach, the child’s and the Church’s and the lost world’s understanding of true salvation becomes complicated and clouded.

By baptizing only those who are mentally able to make a cognizant difference between that which is holy and that which is profane would break no Law of God it would hinder no one’s faith. Yet, the confusion in the Church would be greatly reduced while the Church itself would be instantly purged. Christ would be greatly honored if there weren’t millions of people outside of genuine salvation running around with a false security and bearing an untrue symbol of an unreal condition. So, this is a way in which we could actually finish The Reformation in our day.

Infant Baptism embodies dead, lifeless ritualism, confuses Salvation, and produces a Church with both saved and lost members. Believer’s Baptism affirms a salvation by faith alone, upholds the Glory of the Cross and the Resurrection, and preserves the true identity of the Redeemed Church. We must remember that the cry that ignited the Reformation and a glorious return to Scripture was not,

“Tradition, Tradition, Tradition” it was not, *“The Fathers, the Fathers, the Fathers”*. The cry was not, *“History, History, History”*, but it was, *“Scripture, Scripture, Scripture!”* Amen.

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