

Why Infant Baptism Is Wrong



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Introduction

Many groups of Christians sprinkle, pour and/or immerse infants and call it baptism. Some teach it is necessary to save a child from hell if he dies in infancy. Others see it only as a dedication to God and a way to add to the “covenant” community.

There are many good Biblical reasons why infant baptism is wrong.

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It is Unncessary

Many feel that if infants die without baptism they will go to hell and therefore baptism is the means to remove original sin and save them from hell.

It is true that infants come into this world with a sin nature. This is clearly manifest by the fact that infants do not need to be taught to do wrong. That comes naturally because they are born with a nature inclined toward evil. Every parent has witnessed this inclination to evil. Hence, they are born with a sinful nature and need to be born again.

However, does baptism provide anything to resolve the problem of original sin? If that were the case then why do those who are baptized as infants need to be later “confirmed” in personal faith? Apparently, after baptism they still possess a sinful nature, they still sin and they still die, all of which is due to original sin. Moreover, what about children who die in the womb or still born or aborted? Do they go to hell since they too have original sin?

More importantly, the Scriptures furnish no evidence whatsoever that dying infants are in danger of hell. When God cast Korah and all of his family into “hell” He preserved Korah’s children from that penalty. What a clear picture we have in the preservation of Korah’s children.

*And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up together with Korah, when that company died, what time the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men: and they became a sign. **Notwithstanding the children of Korah died not.** - Numb. 26:10-11*

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When David's infant son born in adultery died he clearly expressed hope to see him again.

*But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? **I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.** - 2 Sam. 12:23*

At his death, David did not go into mourning but washed up and ate and rejoiced because he knew where his son went and where it was that he would "go to him":

*Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and **afterward receive me to glory.** Whom have I **in heaven** but thee?*
- Psa. 73:24-25

The Bible clearly teaches that God does not punish children for the sins of their fathers but only for their own sins (Ezek. 18:4).¹

Jesus said that those who are "blind" or not capable of discerning between right and wrong, they are not held accountable for sin:

*Jesus said unto them, **If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.** - Jn. 9:41*

Infants have no "light" or ability to rationally discriminate and choose between right and wrong. Remember what God said to Jonah:

¹ He must clearly be speaking about eternal punishment because the Bible does teach that children up to the fourth generation do suffer the temporal consequences of sins of their fathers.

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And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle? - Jonah 4:11

Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it. - Deut. 1:39

Therefore, according to Jesus they will have no sin held against them if they die in that state.

Also Jesus spoke of “little children” populating heaven:

*But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: **for of such is the kingdom of God.** - Lk. 18:16*

Moreover, those who are cast into hell are said to be judged “*according to their own works.*”

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. - Rev. 20:12-13

Eternal punishment in the Lake of fire is the consequence of personal sin done in your own body. Infants have not

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committed any sin in their own body.

Hence, Scripture is completely silent about eternal punishment of infants, but it is not silent about God's preservation of infants from "sheol" as in the case of Korah's children or in the case of David's illegitimate child. Neither is the Scripture silent about the basis for eternal punishment.

If baptism were necessary to procure the eternal safety of our infants from hell we should not only find clear and unambiguous commands in scripture for parents to baptize their children but we should find many examples. What can be more urgent and appealing to the hearts of parents than to procure the safety of their own children? Yet, when we look at the Scriptures there is not one single example of the baptism of infants nor is there one single command to baptize infants.

So what happens when an infant dies? The fact they die prove they are subject to death in Adam as death is "passed" down from Adam to his descendents (Rom. 5:12) due to his disobedience (Rom. 5:19).

Those who go to heaven must come through Christ as there is no salvation outside of Christ. Yet, dying infants have no ability or opportunity in life to repent and believe in Christ. Hence, there is no individual personal basis that can be found in works performed in their own personal bodies for either damnation or salvation.

The answer is that they are saved just as they were condemned. They were condemned by one man's disobedience and they are saved by one man's obedience (Rom. 5:19) without exercising individual choice or works in their own bodies.

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Those in hell will not outnumber those in heaven because where abounded, grace sin did much more abound:

But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: - Rom. 5:20

The precise means of infant salvation is not clearly stated in scriptures except by inferences. I base my view of salvation of infants and all who are born and die in a state of inability to discern right from wrong on three scriptural inferences.

First, John the Baptist was filled with the Spirit from his mother's womb and leaped for joy while still in the womb upon hearing the announcement by Mary the mother of Jesus. This infers that God can enable infants while still in the womb to hear and understand and respond in joy to truth.

Second, the essence of salvation is the revelation of the truth of the gospel directly in the heart as a creative act of God (2 Cor. 4:6; Jn. 17:3; Mt. 16:17; Gal. 1:16). This infers that God can directly quicken infants in the womb by direct revelation of the gospel.

Third, Lazerus was carried to paradise by angels. Angels can preach the gospel (Rev. 14:6; Gal. 1:8-9) or God can directly preach the gospel as He did to Abraham (Gal. 3:8). This infers the messenger of the gospel does not have to be human but angelic.

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Therefore, I believe at the moment of death God is able by His Spirit to quicken them to the knowledge of the gospel and may do that without human messengers but by angelic messengers.

Conclusion: The Scriptures provide no evidence that dying infants go to hell, whether they are baptized or unbaptized. The Scriptures do indicate that dying infants are not subject to the eternal wrath of God.

Therefore, those who die in infancy or those who have been born in a state of mental incapability and die later are safe. They have no individual choices or deeds performed in their own body to be judged. Baptism does no good for the aborted infant or miscarried infant, or the infant that is full term and dies at birth any more than baptism saves anyone in regard to original sin.

Therefore, infant baptism is unnecessary unless you can find it commanded and/or examples of it in the Scriptures.

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It is Unbiblical

There is not one verse in Scripture that commands infants to be baptized. There is not one example in Scripture where infants are baptized.

Some imagine or suppose infants may have been included in the “household” baptisms in the book of Acts. However, do the Scriptures say that? No! This is based purely upon speculation. One can just as easily suppose no infants were baptized in these cases and be more in keeping with what the Bible does tell us about such household baptisms. For example, we do find in each case that all the baptized were capable of fearing God and believing in Him:

1. The Household of Cornelius:

A devout man, and one that feared God WITH all his house... – Acts 10:2

2. The Household of the Philippian Jailor:

Believing in God WITH all of his house. – Acts 16:34

3. The Household of Crispus:

And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord WITH all his house – Acts 18:8

Even the household of Lydia included “brethren” which could be younger brothers or older children:

...she was baptized, and her household...And they went

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out of the prison, and entered the household of Lydia: and when they had seen THE BRETHREN, they comforted them, and departed – Acts 16:50,40

If we are going to imagine anything about these household baptisms there is far more evidence to reject infant baptism than to justify it.

Some believe that Matthew 18 where Jesus commanded to let little children come to him supports infant baptism. However, this is a dry text, as there is no mention of water or baptism in it. Moreover, these “little” children were sufficiently old enough to come to him by their own choice, as the disciples were attempting to keep them away from the Master.

Some argue that baptism is like circumcision, as circumcision under the Old Covenant was performed on infants. Therefore, some reason that infants should be baptized under the New Covenant.

However, we are not under the Old Covenant. Moreover, there is a vast difference between the “old” and “new” covenants. The Bible is very clear that all who are under the New Covenant, from “*the least to the greatest*” do not need any human being to catechize them in the knowledge of the Lord, because under the New Covenant all know the Lord by direct revelation through the new birth and conversion.

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, KNOW

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the Lord: for they shall ALL KNOW ME, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. – Jer. 31:33-34

This very same scripture is quoted in Hebrews 8 and Hebrews 10 and called the “new” covenant that we as Christians are under.

The New Covenant community is made up of only those whom God has directly performed a work of grace in their minds and hearts that reveals Himself to them directly.

Babies do not have this inward capability, and that is precisely why those who baptize infants have to catechize them and confirm them when they grow older.

Furthermore, the Old Covenant was an external TYPE of the New Covenant. Physical infants were physically circumcised at eight days old which provides a type of regeneration of all “children” of God under the New Covenant.

Finally, circumcision was only for male infants. Female infants were without circumcision and that shows the limitations of types.

Conclusion: Hence, baptism of infants is unnecessary and it is wholly unbiblical. Those who practice have no command or illustration provided in Scriptures.

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It is Anti-Biblical

It is not merely that it is absent from Scriptures, but it is contrary to the express teaching of Scriptures. It distorts the Biblical picture of baptism, as well as the Biblical mode of baptism. But more importantly it repudiates the very gospel of Jesus Christ.

Distorts the Picture of Baptism

Baptism is designed to symbolically identify the believer with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Scripture identifies baptism with the burial of Jesus Christ in regard to the putting away of our sins.

“...*buried with him by baptism.*” - Rom. 6:4

“*Buried with him in baptism*” - Col. 2:12

The only mode of baptism that can convey this identification with the burial of Christ is immersion and that is the historical meaning and usage of the Greek term translated baptism in the New Testament.

The Greek New Testament has words for “sprinkle” (rantizo) and “pouring” (epicheo) but these terms are never used in the New Testament for this ordinance.

Some try to avert the strong evidence for immersion in Romans 6:4-5 and Colossians 2:12 by suggesting these texts use the term metaphorically rather than for literal baptism. However, that only strengthens the immersion argument as it demonstrates that even when the term is used metaphorically it

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still associates with a burial.

Not only does baptism identify with a burial but with a resurrection from being buried. Peter says that baptism is a “*like figure*” with Noah’s ark when the ark was lifted up by the water to picture the “*resurrection of Jesus Christ*” (1 Pet. 3:21). Immersion is the only mode that in “figure” can publicly identify the believer with a resurrection, as one is raised up out of the water when immersed.

In the country of Greece where everyone knows the true meaning of the Greek terms translated “Baptism, baptized, baptize” all denominations that baptize infants must do it by immersion.

With the exception of the Orthodox Catholic Church all other Pedobaptist practice sprinkling and pouring of infants and only offer immersion to adults as an option.

The Baptism of Jesus

John the Baptist administered baptism by immersion only. He baptized people “in Jordan” rather than with Jordan. Jesus was baptized by John.

And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him. - Mk. 1:10

The only mode of baptism where a person comes up out of the water so that they can see “the heavens opened” is immersion. All other modes have the person kneeling in a lower position than the administrator looking downward.

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Conclusion: Infant baptism perverts everything that baptism is designed to publicly identify the candidate with. It distorts the primary characteristic of the new covenant people of God. It perverts and denies pictorial identification with Christ's burial and resurrection. It violates the historical meaning and usage of the Greek term translated baptism.

Not only is infant baptism unnecessary, unscriptural, but it is anti-scriptural and therefore it is wrong for any professed Christian submit their infants to it.

It Preaches Another Gospel

Both baptism and the Lord's Supper are symbolic ordinances that provide a public picture and identification with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Lord's Supper emphasizes his death and broken body and shed blood while baptism emphasizes his death and resurrection.

What is significant about a Biblical symbol? Its only significance is found in its visible form as that form is designed to convey a certain truth. When the visible form of a type is perverted, so is the truth that the visible form was designed to portray. In this case, we are talking about the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ which Paul says summarizes the gospel of Christ:

*Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you **the gospel** which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;*

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By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

*For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, **how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;***

***And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:** - 1 Cor. 15:1-4*

How does the baptism of infants pervert the gospel of Jesus Christ? It does so in many ways.

First, it identifies the gospel of Jesus Christ with someone who has not personally repented of sins and believed in Christ. It identifies the gospel with someone who is still a sinner by practice. Thus it provides a picture of unbelievers in Christ. Therefore, it distorts the proper candidate for baptism - a born again believer who “walks in newness of life” (Rom. 6:5).

Second, it distorts the very essence of Christ’s death, burial and resurrection as it omits any burial and resurrection in its mode. Therefore the symbol is completely distorted. Some at Corinth rejected the literal resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:10-18) and Paul claimed that such a denial invalidated any hope of salvation altogether. Sprinkling and pouring preach the same false hope as these modes eliminate any pictorial form of Christ’s burial or resurrection.

When the symbols of the gospel are perverted and distorted, so is the truth that the symbolic form was designed to convey.

How serious is it to preach another gospel?

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have

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preached unto you, let him be accursed - Gal. 1:8

Conclusion: Infant baptism is not only (1) unnecessary; (2) unbiblical; (3) Anti-Biblical; but to administer it to infants is (4) to symbolically “preach another gospel” and that is a serious error.

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It Unchurches all Who Practice It

There is one truth that nearly all denominations agree with. Where there is no scriptural baptism there can be no scriptural church gathered or constituted.

Why? None were received into the membership of churches in the New Testament who were not baptized. Hence, a true congregation of Christ cannot exist apart from a baptized membership. This places all Pedobaptist congregations in serious question.

Significantly, no Pedobaptist denomination rejects Baptist baptism or discounts it as unscriptural. Hence, none can deny that Baptist congregations are unbaptized congregations.

On the other hand, the scriptures clearly demonstrate that infant baptism is unnecessary, unscriptural, antiBiblical and preaches another gospel and therefore cannot be regarded as scriptural baptism by any stretch of the imagination.

Therefore, any group of professing Christians that practice and/or accept infant baptism or who administer baptism by any other mode than immersion cannot be recognized as true New Testament congregations of Christ. This does not mean they are all lost nor does it mean they are insincere or bad people. It simply means they are sincerely wrong and are no more a congregation of Christ than the Masonic lodge and who are still unbaptized and in need of scriptural baptism. They need to seek scriptural baptism and be constituted into a scriptural church after having received baptism.

Look at the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20 and its

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first application in Acts 2:40-41. Where does assembling or congregating occur within the Great Commission? Before faith or after faith? Before or after baptism? It occurs after faith and baptism not before. Hence, no congregation can be formed of unbaptized unbelievers. However, that is precisely how all Pedobaptist congregations are formed. They are formed by unbaptized believers and unbaptized unbelieving infants.

Conclusion: If you are a member of such a church and/or were baptized as an infant, and/or were poured or sprinkled, then you simply got wet and need scriptural baptism by a scriptural New Testament congregation.

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It Identifies You with Persecutors of Christians

The very first record of any infant baptism occurs nearly 200 years after the writing of the New Testament. Every church council prior to the council of Nicea in 325 A.D. either forbid or restricted the practice of infant baptism.

Significantly, this idea arose as the consequence of another ancient false doctrine - baptismal regeneration. Baptismal regeneration is the idea that regeneration and remission of sins occurs in the act of baptism.

The Western and Eastern Catholic Churches are the primary proponents of baptismal regeneration.

Paul repudiates the idea that regeneration and remission of sins occur in the act or in the necessary relationship with divine external ordinances (Rom. 4:11).

More significantly, it is Pedobaptist (infant baptizers) who have been the chief persecutors of Christians throughout church history all the way up to the declaration of independence in America.

Pedobaptism is not only an evil thing in and of itself, but it identifies you historically with the persecutors of God's people - thus the enemies of God's people.

True Christianity is characterized in the New Testament as those who are the persecuted but never as the persecutors:

They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the

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time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. - Jn. 16:2-3

Churches composed of baptized infants are by definition a congregation comprised primarily of unbelievers. If infant baptism provided a regenerate condition that removed the inclination or desire to sin then confirmation would be unnecessary, and if infant baptism did not provide such then confirmation certainly can do no better.

Infant baptism comes from the Roman and Orthodox Catholic Churches who have killed and persecuted more Christians over the issue of baptism than all world wars combined. It is estimated that in the Dark Ages alone that nearly 50 million professing Christians were killed by Roman Catholicism.

Lutheranism and Presbyterianism also persecuted and killed Christians in the name of Christ during the Reformation period.

The Church of England or Episcopalian church has killed scores of Christians (Methodist, Nazarenes come originate from them).

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Conclusion

Infant baptism is a “tradition of men” that is contrary to the Word of God. It is a tradition which causes those who administer it and submit to it make the Word of God non-effect.

Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. - Mt.15:6

Infant baptism is unnecessary, unscriptural, antiBiblical, perverts the gospel, unchurches those who practice it, and identifies one with the historical religious persecutors of God's people.

All of these reasons are good and solid reasons why any true sincere believer should depart from a Pedobaptist congregation and seek scriptural baptism and membership in a New Testament congregation where the gospel is preached both from the pulpit and in the ordinances.

If you are a Pedobaptist, you simply got wet but are still in need of baptism. If you are a member of a Pedobaptist congregation, you are not a member of any of Christ's congregations as a Pedobaptist congregation is no more a congregation of Christ than a Masonic Lodge is a congregation of Christ.