

# Baptism

## *Our Need and God's Forgiveness!*

### Baptism Summary:

- The Bible teaches that God the Father works through water and His word, by the Holy Spirit, to clothe people in the righteousness of Christ and impart the forgiveness of sins (Titus 3:4-7; Galatians 3:27; Acts 2:38-39).
- Infants and young children are baptized first, thus given God's gifts before they can even understand; then, as they grow up, they are taught about what they have received (Matthew 28:19-20).
- For youth and adults, they are taught first; then, having been brought to faith in Christ by the work of the Spirit and learned about baptism, they desire to be baptized, to receive the in indwelling of the Spirit (Acts 8:26-39).

## Our Need for Forgiveness

### All people inherit sin from their parents:

1. "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me" (Psalm 51:5 NIV).
2. "...just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned" (Romans 5:12 NIV).

### No one can accomplish what God requires:

3. "...be holy, because I am holy" (Leviticus 11:45 NIV).
4. "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48 NIV).
5. "...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23 NIV).

## **God's Work to Provide Us with Forgiveness**

### God sent His Son to save us from our sins:

1. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16 NIV).
2. "Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation" (Colossians 1:21-22 NIV).
3. "For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God" (1 Peter 3:18 NIV).

### Salvation is not our work but God's gift to us:

4. "...God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved" (Ephesians 2:4-5 NIV).
5. "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV).
6. "For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law" (Romans 3:28 NIV).

## **God's Work to Give Us His Forgiveness**

### All are helpless to save themselves:

1. "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14 NIV).
2. "...you were dead in your transgressions and sins" (Ephesians 2:1 NIV).
3. "...the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so" (Romans 8:7 NIV).

God works through baptism to give us the benefits of Jesus' work:

4. "Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off--for all whom the Lord our God will call'" (Acts 2:38-39 NIV).
5. "...he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5).
6. "...for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (Galatians 3:27 NIV).

## Luther's Small Catechism – Questions and Answers

**The Nature of Baptism – First:** What is Baptism? Baptism is not just plain water, but it is the water included in God's command and combined with God's word.

Which is that word of God? Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Matthew: "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19 NIV).

*More Information:* The Catechism Explanation, pages 204-208.

**The Blessings of Baptism – Second:** What benefits does Baptism give? It works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.

Which are these words and promises of God? Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Mark: "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16 NIV).

*More Information:* The Catechism Explanation, pages 208-212.

**The Power of Baptism – Third:** How can water do such great things? Certainly not just water, but the word of God in and with the water does these things, along with the faith which trusts this word of God in the water. For without God's word the water is plain water and no Baptism. But with the word of God it is a Baptism, that is, a life-giving water, rich in grace, and a washing of the new birth in the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul says in Titus, chapter three: “He saved us... through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying” (Titus 3:5-8a NIV).

*More Information:* The Catechism Explanation, pages 212-213.

**What Baptism Indicates – Fourth:** What does such baptizing with water indicate? It indicates that the Old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Where is this written? St. Paul writes in Romans chapter six: “We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life” (Romans 6:4 NIV).

*More Information:* The Catechism Explanation, pages 214-216.

### **Other Baptism Resources:**

Brochure: Baptism, Importance and Procedure

Brochure: Baptism, Study the Topic

Paper: Bible Passages, The Sacraments in General, The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

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**Pastor** – Robert Green → Cell: 440-292-5915 ♦ E-Mail: [RevRLGreen@aol.com](mailto:RevRLGreen@aol.com)