

Baptism for Youth and Adults

What was the Biblical Practice?

The LORD sent Philip to teach a man about Jesus: “So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, ‘Do you understand what you are reading?’ And he said, ‘How can I, unless someone guides me?’ And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this: ‘Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.’ And the [man] said to Philip, ‘About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?’ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the [man] said, ‘See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?’ And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him” (Acts 8:30-38 ESV). As soon as the man believed, *he was baptized!* Then, as noted earlier, further instruction was given.

Infant and Child Procedure

1. Pickup and read through a “Holy Baptism Information Packet” – *In the rack by our main entrance.*

2. Choose sponsors / godparents (*not required but encouraged*): Note: *Sponsors promise to have a strong Christian influence upon the child!*
 - a. It is important that sponsors:
 - i. Are *professing, practicing, Bible-believing* Christians.
 - ii. Confess the faith expressed in the Apostles’ Creed and taught in the Small Catechism (*see the enclosed catechism*).
 - b. Give the sponsors *their own* “Holy Baptism Information Packet” to read and work through.
3. Both parents and sponsors should follow the six simple steps noted in the packet.

Youth and Adult Procedure

1. All youth and adults who are interested in baptism should speak to the pastor.
2. He is glad to work with anyone who is interested in receiving God’s eternal blessings through Word and Sacrament.

Connect and Benefit

- Website:** BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com
Location: 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134
(Just South of Pleasant Valley Road)
Schedule: See our “Join Us” brochure
Facebook: “Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma”
Podcast: “Benefit from the Bible”
Contact: 440-845-2230; pastor@blc7500.com

(Last Update: 4-17)

Baptism

Importance and Procedure

For Infants & Children



For Youth & Adults



Introduction

Dear Friends: All have done wrong against God, *all have sinned*, so GOD works through baptism to “**wash away [our] sins**” (Acts 22:16 ESV) and clothe us with Jesus, *our robe of righteousness!* Jesus is God’s own Son who lived, suffered, and died to remove our sins and open the way to heaven!

Why Does Everyone Need Jesus?

Yes! God works through the Bible to show us that we *are spiritually dead and deserve eternal punishment*: "...you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world... among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath..." (Eph. 2:1-3 ESV).

But God made us, loves us, and wants us to be with Him forever, so He sent His Son to be our perfect substitute – *to live without sin*; then *to receive all sins and all eternal punishment*; then, *from His cross*, Jesus declared, "**It is finished**" (John 19:30 ESV). In other words, *He paid our debt in full*; now heaven is open *to all who believe in Jesus!*

Can Baptism Be Fully Understood?

No! Baptism is a sacrament, so it is a mystery: *A truth that unknowable except by Divine revelation!* Therefore, God's work through baptism is *believed* more than it is *fully understood*. The LORD said, "**For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts**" (Isaiah 55:9 NAS).

Nevertheless, *through our confidence in God's Holy Word*, we know that God is at work through baptism to save us!

Why Is Baptism Necessary?

Baptism is God's action to *remove our sins!* The Bible says that "[God] **saved us**, [How?] **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**" (Titus 3:5 NAS).

What is the Direction of Baptism?

From **Us**↑ to **God** or From **God**↓ to **Us**

If baptism were something that we did toward God, it would have no extraordinary power. However, *the Bible teaches that GOD is at work through baptism to wash away our sins – something that ONLY GOD can do!* So the direction is from God to us!

Since all people have inherited sin and death, *everyone needs GOD to make them spiritually alive!* The Bible teaches that "**Baptism now saves you**" (1 Peter 3:21 NAS).

Is Baptism for All Ages?

Yes! Since baptism is something GOD does for sinners – *and since all people are sinners from the time of conception* (Psalm 51:5), God wants to work through baptism to eternally bless *all people!* The Bible says:

- ♥ "**Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. The promise is for you and your children...**" (Acts 2:38-39 NIV).
- ♥ "**Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations** [Jesus did not exclude any

person of any age or any nation], **baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,** ²⁰ **teaching them to observe all that I commanded you...**" (Matthew 28:19-20 NAS).

When Are Baptized People Taught?

Children: They should be baptized right after birth; then they should be taught the Bible more and more as they are able to understand.

Youth and Adults: God works through His Word to show Youth and adults their sins, make them fearful of God's wrath, and give them faith to believe in Jesus; then they are baptized; then they are taught more about God's Word and how to live for Jesus.

Baptism for Infants and Children

Should I Let My Child Decide?

No! The Bible says that all people are *spiritually blind* (2 Cor. 2:14), *spiritually dead* (Eph. 2:1), and *spiritual enemies* (Rom. 8:7) of God! Therefore, GOD has chosen to work through Baptism to *give spiritual life!*

As loving parents make many important decisions for their children, so parents – *once they better understand their child's need and the great blessings God is offering* – will gladly say "Yes!"

As soon as possible after being born, *children should be baptized into Christ!* I encourage all parents to make plans prior to birth; see the procedure later in this folder.