



# BAPTISM

## AN INTRODUCTION + SERVICE

ALL  
SAINTS  
CHURCH

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## Introduction to Baptism

Baptism is a rite that publicly declares a person to be a Christian and part of Christ's Church (Mt. 28:18-20; Gal. 3:27).

### *The Baptismal Pictures of the Old Testament*

The water God provides for refreshment and cleansing is a theme throughout all of the Bible. From Eden flowed rivers. There are springs in the patriarch narratives, the laver in the synagogue, the ocean and basins on chariots in the temple, and finally the rivers of water in the new covenant temple (Zec. 14:8). Following the Fall, the pure waters of rivers flowing out, become rivers of purification which one must cross in order to go back to Eden. This is why crossing the Red Sea is called baptism (1Cor. 10:2). Similar language is used of crossing the Jordan (Ps. 114) which explains why John the Baptist went to the Jordan to renew Israel (Mk. 1:5). John's baptism involved the renewal of Israel in crossing the Jordan (e.g., Israel, Elijah, Elisha) in order to "manifest" (John 1:31) the Anointed One, "Christ." John's baptism was more about "crossing into" than dunking, pouring, or sprinkling. In the Exodus, Israel "passed (Heb. *avar*) through the midst of the sea into the wilderness" (Num. 33:8). Under Joshua, Israel was commanded to "cross (*avar*) this Jordan, to go in to possess the land" (Josh. 1:11), which "crossing" was replayed when, "Elijah took his mantle and folded it together and struck the waters, and they were divided here and there, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground" (2 Kgs. 2:8). John came in the "spirit and power of Elijah" (Lk. 1:17) which is precisely why his baptism was at the Jordan.

### *The Baptism of Jesus*

The Baptism of our Lord combines two kinds of rites: crossing the river and priestly ordination. Ordination required a washing, an anointing, and being clothed (Lev. 8; Ex. 4:12-14). At Jesus' baptism, he was washed through the waters of the Jordan, then He was anointed with the (oil of the) Spirit (Luke 3:21), and then the Father clothed Him in the declaration, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased" (Mark 1:11). He was thus ordained as the Melchizedekian High Priest over all the world (Heb. 5:6, 10). Baptism takes a person through the water and back to the Garden of God (e.g., the waters above into heaven, the red sea, the Jordan to enter the land, Elijah, Elisha, cf. 1Cor 10). This is why all Old Testament worship settings (tabernacle, temple, etc.) are stylized as the Garden of Eden in which there is a unity between God and Man. Christ, the last "Man/Adam" said of the Spirit's reality: "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water'" (Jn. 7:38; cf. Is. 58:11; Zec. 13:11). This is surely the image of the new covenant spiritual reality pictured by Ezekiel's temple (Ez. 47:1-3). The water flows out from the temple and gets deeper and deeper. This is a prophecy of the baptism of the nations (Mt. 28:19-20).

### *Baptism is a Covenantal Rite*

Baptism is similar to other faith rites in the Old Testament. These rites involve a symbolic act and a covenant promise affirmed. Biblical covenants include signs to visibly represent the realities behind the promises. The recipients also make vows and participate in the visible vow (sign and seal of the covenant). For example, in the case of the Ethiopian Eunuch, Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may [be baptized]." Then the Ethiopian affirmed: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:37-38).

Covenant (Administration)	Visible Sign	Descendants Included
Creation/Adamic	Tree of Life	yes
Noahic	Rainbow	yes
Abrahamic (Other Patriarchs)	Circumcision Sacrifices/Meals	yes yes
Mosaic	Passover (blood, then meal)	yes
Davidic	Throne*	yes
New Covenant	Baptism (entrance) Lord's Supper (continuance)	yes

### *The Baptismal Examples of the New Testament*

Therefore, in the New Testament fulfillment of these biblical themes, we find waters flowing out of Jerusalem. The outline of Acts is drenched with this flowing river—the gospel began in Jerusalem, flowed to all of Judea and Samaria, and then to the remotest part of the earth (Acts 1:8). After the Samaritan baptisms, we have the baptism of the Eunuch, something prophesied from Isaiah (56:3ff), the baptism of Saul (Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles), then the gospel crossed to Gentile territory. Beginning with Cornelius every baptism passage is a household baptism passage—except where we are expressly told that those present were “twelve men”(Acts 19:7). The Gentile households of Cornelius, Lydia, the Jailer, Stephanas, and possibly Gaius were all baptized.

Outline of Acts The Gospel Goes To...	Baptisms Follow This Outline
Jerusalem, Judea	3000 Men at Pentecost
Samaria (Acts 8)	Samaritans & Simon
Ends of the Earth Transition: Apostle Paul (Acts 9) First Gentile: Cornelius (Acts 10) God-fearer: Lydia (Acts 16) New Convert Gentiles: The Jailer (Acts 16), Corinthians (Acts 18)	Eunuch (Acts 8:26ff) Saul (apostle to Gentiles) Cornelius' Household Lydia's Household Jailer's Household Corinthians: Crispus Household Stephanus Household Gaius, 12 Men in Ephesus

From the New Testament examples, then, adults professed their allegiance to Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God and they with their households were baptized (if they had a household). Therefore covenantal household baptism has an explicit basis. *By extension then, children born into such believing households are also to be baptized.* The beautiful truth is that our children are included in the new covenant (Dt. 30:6, Jer. 31:36-37). Not only that, we are to count our children as part of the Church (Eph. 1:1/6:1-4, Col. 1:2/3:20, 1Cor. 7:14), and within the very kingdom of our Lord (Mt. 19:14, Mk. 10:14, Lk. 18:16).

### *How Do We Raise Covenant Children?*

All of this being true, *how should we then live?* You are to bring your child to Christ as a covenantal obligation, now you must obey what the Lord requires as a parent. Our father Abraham was told, “For I have chosen him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice; in order that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him” (Gen. 18:19). We must heed that ancient command, “You

shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up” (Dt. 6:7). Do you intend to command your children to keep the way of the Lord? Do you intend to teach them diligently to love the Lord their God (Dt. 6:4)? Without the reality of leading one’s home to Christ, in Christ, and for Christ, the water of baptism is worse than useless, it is the flood water of judgment.

When the first new covenant (Gentile) households were given the sign of covenant membership, they were commanded to bring their children “up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). An elder in the church is one who “manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity” (1Tim. 3:4). Joshua nobly said, “As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (Josh. 24:15). A baptized child should be a child being brought up in the discipline and admonition of the Lord, whose parents vow, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” Every person that grows up in a Christian home should be taught God’s Word from their earliest times. Just like Timothy, each Christian child should be exhorted to “continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them; and that from childhood (*brephos* - infancy) you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2Tim. 3:14-15).

Therefore, the covenantal baptism of a Christian’s child has a rich Biblical basis, and commands tremendous responsibilities on the part of parents. It imparts a hope of the sealed blessings of the gospel of grace. In what follows, you will see an outline of the Baptismal Service of All Saints Church. This service is a rite of consecration fulfilling all those deep Biblical types of cleansing and consecration in one simple action according to God’s Word.

## Baptismal Service at All Saints Church

### *Proclamation of the Promises of God*

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. (Deuteronomy 6:4-7). The mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children, To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them (Psalm 103:17-18). For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call (Acts 2:39).

DEARLY BELOVED, the sacrament of baptism is of divine ordinance. Our Triune God who has redeemed us by the sacrifice of Christ, has given us this sign and seal of our cleansing, of our ingrafting into Christ, and of our welcome in the household of God. Those that are outside of the Church are to profess their faith prior to baptism and the children of those who members of the Church are to be baptized as covenant members, since they belong with us who believe, to the membership of the new covenant Church. Jesus Christ said "Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them" and "Allow the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." "Whoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

### *Baptismal Prayer: The Great Flood Prayer of Martin Luther*

Almighty and eternal God, who through the flood, according to your righteous judgment, condemned the unfaithful world, and according to your great mercy, saved faithful Noah and his household, yet drowned hard-hearted Pharaoh with all his army in the Red Sea, and has led your people Israel dry through it, thereby prefiguring this bath of your holy baptism, and through the baptism of your dear children, our Lord Jesus Christ, has sanctified and set apart the Jordan and all water for a saving flood, and an ample washing away of sins: we pray that through your same infinite mercy you would graciously look down upon these, and bless them child with a right faith in the spirit, so that through this saving flood all that was born in this child from Adam and all which they have added thereto might be drowned and submerged; and that they may be separated from the unfaithful, and preserved in the holy ark of Christendom dry and safe, and may be ever fervent in spirit and joyful in hope to serve your name, and with all the faithful may be worthy to inherit your promise of eternal life, through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

### *Baptismal Vows*

Since, we have such great promises, these vows are to be taken:

#### **For those who can profess faith:**

1. Do you acknowledge your need of the only Savior, Jesus Christ and that you were born in sin and worthy of God's judgment and wrath, apart from the God's free grace through gospel of Jesus?
2. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the Gospel?

3. Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as a disciple of Christ?

**For covenant children:**

To the Head of Household: *Who is your only Lord and Savior?*

*Vows for the Parents* (Head of Household to affirm)

1. Do you acknowledge your need of the only Savior, Jesus Christ and that you and your child [ ] was born in sin and each person in your family is worthy of God's judgment and wrath, apart from the God's free grace through gospel of Jesus?
2. Do you believe God's covenant promises, and do you believe what Jesus promised about your family, stated by St. Paul in the words: believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your household?
3. Do you now fully commit to Christ, trusting in God's grace to live as disciples of Christ as a family? Which includes loving one another, serious prayer, listening to the whole counsel of God's Word, hungering at the Table of the Lord for peace with Christ and His people, and with thanksgiving, sharing with the brethren and the needy?
4. So, do you commit to fully to strive and work, by all the means of God provides, to lead your family in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

**To the Congregation**

Congregation, as fellow households united together in love, do you also commit to assist these parents in their covenantal nurture of this child in Christ? "AMEN"

*The Baptism with Water in the Name of the Triune God*

What is this child's name?

"[\_\_\_\_\_], I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. May the blessings of the Triune God be with you always."

*Declaration for Covenant Children*

This child, being thus baptized, is a member of the household of faith; committed to the care and instruction of these parents and this congregation, to the end that this child may mature as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, and serve in the royal priesthood of God's elect from every tribe and tongue and nation. Jesus said, "Whoever receives one such little child in my name, receives Me."