

BAPTISM

WHAT WE
PREACH, TEACH, AND CONFESS

Word of Life Fellowship
The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod



The Bible Consistently Teaches That Baptism:

1. Is Instituted by Jesus: Matthew 28:18–20

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them..."

Making disciples includes baptizing.

Baptism is for "all nations."

Baptism is performed into the name (singular) of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

2. Gives Forgiveness of Sins and the Holy Spirit: Acts 2:38

Peter's Pentecost sermon:

"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 apostolic sequence is:

- Baptism
- Forgiveness
- Gift of the Holy Spirit

The apostles see baptism as one of God's appointed means for giving the Spirit.

3. Is for Adults and Children: Acts 2:39

Immediately after promising baptismal forgiveness:

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

Peter intentionally includes children in the scope of the promise. The pattern continues throughout Acts with household baptisms:

Lydia and her household (Acts 16:15); The Philippian jailer and all his household (Acts 16:33); Crispus and his household (Acts 18:8).

The apostles never exclude children from baptism.

4. Washes Away Sins: Acts 22:16

Ananias to Saul: "Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name."

The apostolic language associates Baptism with:

- washing away sins
- calling on Christ

Meaning: Baptism is not merely symbolic remembrance.

5. Unites Us to Christ's Death and Resurrection:

Romans 6:3–4

"All of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death."

And: "We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death."

Paul teaches that baptism joins a sinner to Christ's saving work.

Through baptism:

- united with Christ's death
- buried with Christ
- raised with Christ

The apostolic view is participation, not just illustration.



“JESUS DIED FOR ME”

BAPTISM IS WHAT MAKES THIS STATEMENT
UNEQUIVOCALLY TRUE.



6. Is a Means of Putting on Christ: Galatians 3:26-27

"For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

The apostolic logic:

sons through faith → baptized into Christ → clothed with Christ

Faith and baptism are not competitors. Baptism is one of the ways God delivers faith.

7. Is the Circumcision of the New Covenant: Colossians 2:11-12

Paul links:

- circumcision
- burial with Christ
- baptism

"having been buried with him in baptism..."

The apostle presents baptism as the New Covenant counterpart to circumcision. Since circumcision was given to infants, this text became foundational in the early Church's understanding of infant baptism.

8. Saves You: 1 Peter 3:20-21

"Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you..."

Peter compares Noah's flood to baptism, then clarifies, "not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." The power is not in water alone.

The power is:

- Christ's resurrection
- God's promise
- a conscience cleansed before God

Yet Peter plainly says, "Baptism now saves you."

9. Is a Washing of Regeneration: Titus 3:5-6

"He saved us... by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit."

Historically, Christians from the earliest centuries understood this "washing" as baptism.

Notice the elements:

- salvation
- washing
- regeneration
- Holy Spirit

All tied together.

Lutheran Teaching

Article 9 of the Augsburg Confession states:

"Concerning Baptism, our churches teach that Baptism is necessary, that grace is offered through it, and that children are to be baptized. Being offered to God through Baptism, they are received into God's grace. [Our churches] condemn the Anabaptists, who reject the baptism of children and say that children are saved without Baptism."

Notice the claims:

- Grace is offered through Baptism.
- Children need the grace baptism confers.
- Baptized children are received into God's grace.
- The denial of infant baptism is rejected.





SUMMARY

- ★ **Jesus instituted baptism for “all nations”.**
- ★ **Baptism is God’s work, not man’s.**
- ★ **Baptism’s promise is not separate from faith:**
As such, you can reject it - but you cannot earn, will, or deserve it. Because it is God’s work, it is something to be believed.
- ★ **Why?**
It unites you to Jesus’ death and resurrection
- ★ **It provides certainty:**
Are you born again?
“Yes! I am baptized!”

Talk to Your Family About Baptism

Godparents (or, “sponsors”) witness that those who receive this sacrament of baptism have been properly baptized. They also pray for them and in the case of children, help with their Christian upbringing, especially if they should lose their parents.

While private baptisms are increasingly normal, public baptism has been the norm for centuries. The reason why is simple: more witnesses. More witnesses ensure that, as the baptized child grows, they can be reminded and assured that the benefits and promises of Jesus’ death and resurrection have been made theirs!


Since that is the purpose of baptism, there is no need for intellectual understanding. Who can fully comprehend God’s wonderful gifts? But as the child grows, there is opportunity to formalize and confess this gift of faith as their own through the Rite of Confirmation. This usually takes place in middle school after a period of instruction and preparation.

Below are some ideas for how to make baptism a part of your family traditions and remembrances.



Celebrate “Baptism Birthdays” every year

Provide faith-building opportunities for Godparents



Trace a cross on your child’s heart after bedtime prayers

Make baptism part of your family’s forgiveness and reconciliation

Your faith may shake. Your love may flicker.

But your baptism stands, because God's promise stands.

HOW TO AT WORD OF LIFE

01

Tell a pastor you're interested in baptism

02

Meet to discuss further and set a date

03

Godparents meet briefly with pastor

04

Baptism!

TAKE THE FIRST STEP

Talk to a pastor on Sunday morning, or call:
(210) 566-2237

You can also email our pastors and office at:

Pastor Ken - ken@wordoflife4u.com

Pastor Phil - philip@wordoflife4u.com

Office - admin@wordoflife4u.com

