

FORM FOR THE HOLY BAPTISM OF CHILDREN



The principle of the doctrine of the holy baptism is summarised in the following three points:

- Sin** Firstly: We and our children have been conceived and born into sin and are, therefore, under the wrath of God unable to enter God's kingdom unless we are born again. This is taught to us by the immersion in and sprinkling of water that reveals to us the impurity of our souls. We ought to, therefore, be displeased with ourselves, humble ourselves before God and seek our sanctification and salvation outside ourselves.
- Redemption** Second: The holy baptism signifies and seals of the washing away of sin through Jesus Christ. Therefore, we are baptized in the Name of God: the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- When we are baptized in the name of God the Father, He assures us that He makes an eternal covenant of grace with us and adopts us as His children and heirs and therefore, cares for us with all that is good and protects us from all evil or works it for our good.
- When we are baptized in the name of the Son, the Son assures us that He washes away all our sins in His blood. We are thereby grafted into Christ that we may share in His death and resurrection. In this way Christ liberates us from our sins that we may be regarded as righteous before God.
- Similarly, when we are baptized in the Name of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit assures us with this holy sacrament that He wills to dwell in us and sanctify us as members of Christ. This He does by imparting in our lives what we have in Christ, namely the washing away of our sins and the daily renewing of our life, until we are finally presented without stain in the assembly of the elect in eternal life.
- Gratitude** Third: Since all covenants consist of two parts, through baptism God also calls and commands us to a new obedience: we must follow, trust and love this one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind and all our strength. We must forsake this world, put to death our old nature, and live in complete devotion to God. If in weakness we fall into sin, we must not despair of God's grace, nor continue in sin. Baptism is a seal and incontestable witness of our eternal covenant with God.
- Infant baptism** Though our children do not yet understand this, they should not be excluded from the sacrament of baptism, since without their knowledge, our children not only share in Adam's condemnation, but are also, without their knowledge received into God's grace, in Christ. As God said to Abraham, the father of all believers, He also assures us and our children: "I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you" (Gen. 17:7). The apostle Peter also testifies to this with these words: "The promise is for you and your children and for all that are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:39). Therefore God formerly commanded that children be circumcised as a seal of the covenant

and as a declaration that righteousness comes by faith. Christ also embraced them, laid His hands on them, and blessed them (Mark 10:16).

Since baptism has replaced circumcision, our children should be baptized as heirs of God's kingdom and of His covenant. Parents must, therefore, teach their children more fully about baptism as they grow up.

Beloved of God, receive this child(ren) as members of God's covenant and the body of Christ. Love these child(ren), pray for him/her/them and set the example of a life in Christ.

To administer this holy sacrament of God to His glory, our comfort and the building up of the congregation, let us call on His holy Name:

Prayer

O, almighty, eternal God,

According to Your righteous judgement, You punished an unbelieving and unrepentant world with the Great Flood. In Your great mercy, You saved and preserved the faithful Noah and his family – a mere eight souls. You drowned the unyielding Pharaoh and all his men in the Red Sea and brought Your people Israel through the sea on dry ground, as sign of baptism,

We pray that in Your boundless mercy, You look upon these Your children (this Your child) with favour and graft them (him/her), through Your Holy Spirit, into Your Son, Jesus Christ that they (he/she) may be buried with Him in His death and be raised with Him to a new life. Give them (him/her) true faith, steadfast hope and burning love so that they (he/she) may joyfully bear their (his/her) cross as they (he/she) follow(s) Christ each day of this life of constant struggle against sin that they may leave this life, which is no more than a continuous death, in assurance of Your grace to stand before the judgement seat of Christ, Your Son, without fear.

We pray this through Him, our Lord Jesus Christ who, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one only God, lives and reigns forever. Amen.

The parents are now called to answer the following questions

Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, you have heard that baptism was instituted by God as a sign and seal of His covenant with us and our children. We must, therefore, use the sacrament for this purpose and not out of custom or superstition. To show that this is your testimony, you are asked to give an honest answer to the following questions

First: Do you confess that although our children were conceived and born into sin and, therefore, subject to all misery, even the condemnation of God, they are nevertheless sanctified in Christ and ought therefore to be baptized as members of His congregation?

Secondly: Do you confess that the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments, summarised in the Creeds of the church and taught in this Christian church, is the true and complete doctrine of salvation?

Third: Do you promise to do all you can to teach these children (this child), of whom you are the father and/or mother, and to have them (him/her) taught and be taught this doctrine.

Answer:

Yes.

Then the minister says as follows upon administering the baptism:

Baptism

N, I baptize you in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Almighty, merciful God and Father, You have forgiven our and our children's sins through the blood of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ. You have, through Your Holy Spirit, adopted us as members of Your only-begotten Son and thereby as Your children, which You seal and confirm with the sacrament of baptism – for this we thank and praise You.

We also pray that in Him, your beloved Son, that You will always govern these children (this child) by Your Holy Spirit that he/she/they may be raised in the Christian faith and in complete devotion to You and grow and mature in the Lord Jesus Christ. Help them/he/she confess the fatherly goodness and mercy that You have shown him/her/they and us all to live and boldly fight against and conquer sin, the devil and his kingdom in all righteousness before our only Teacher, King and High Priest, Jesus Christ. May he/she/they in all eternity worship and praise You and Your Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, the only true God.
Amen.

Trial Translation