

everyone in the household individually believed the message (i.e., John 4:53; Acts 16:31-34; 18:8; Titus 1:6), or implied such (compare Acts 10:2,44,47-48 with 11:14; compare 1 Cor. 1:16 with 16:15). Only one text is totally silent about the faith of the remaining household members who were baptized (Acts 16:14-15).

2) To conclude that the baptism of whole households *must* have included infants (or others who had not yet believed themselves) is an assumption and an argument from silence, not a stated fact. Texts that do not specifically say that unbelieving infants were baptized are weak support for infant baptism.

c. Baptism signifies the benefits of salvation, none of which are yet conferred upon the baptized infant apart from saving faith.

For these reasons, and in an effort to keep the gospel clear, we do not baptize infants.

4. What do you believe regarding infant baptism, and why?

Absolutely necessary. Apart from this an infant cannot be saved should they die.

While baptism does not save the infant, it signifies the child is within the covenant community, awaiting saving faith.

Both baby baptism and baby dedication are really about the parents committing to raise this child to trust Christ.

Absolutely prohibited. Only believers may be baptized.

**Let's Pray:**

Enrique and Becky Fernandez - Reach Global ProMETA  
Pray for the on-line ministry of training pastors (54 students)

# Sermon Notes

"Baptism: What does it Symbolize?"

Various Texts  
April 26, 2015

**Introduction:**

1. Water baptism is a symbol. (Matthew 3:1-11)
2. What does it symbolize?
  - a. Washing away our sins. (Titus 3:4-6)
  - b. Identified with Jesus in his death, burial, and resurrection. (Romans 6:1-6)

c. Our \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ . (1 Cor. 12:13)

d. \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ . (Romans 8:9)

Conclusion:

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of 4-26-15

## Digging Deeper:

Discussions about water baptism usually involve two questions: How should it be done (mode) and on whom should it be performed (believers only or also infants).

1. Advocates of other modes of water baptism point to biblical texts for support (i.e., pouring [Acts 10:45; Titus 3:6; etc.], sprinkling [Ezek. 36:25; Heb. 10:22; etc.]), and also point out how pouring or sprinkling water on the top of the head better illustrates the Spirit's coming upon a person. However, we prefer and practice immersion (except in cases when medical reasons would prevent that). Here is why:
  - a. The verb *baptize* in Greek means to dip, sink, plunge, immerse, or submerge.
  - b. The descriptions of baptisms in the New Testament suggest that people went down into the water to be immersed rather than having water brought to them in a container to be poured or sprinkled. What clues do you detect in the following texts that immersion is implied? (Matt. 3:6; Mark 1:10; John 3:23; Acts 8:38)
  - c. Immersion best portrays the symbolism of being buried with Christ and raised up with him (Romans 6:1-4; Col. 2:12).

2. How important do you feel mode of baptism is (insisting on immersion, pouring, or sprinkling), and why?

Man looks at outward appearance, but God looks at the heart. Mode does not matter.

I think all modes are equally acceptable, so long as you're baptized.

I prefer immersion (or pouring, or sprinkling), but can accept other modes too.

Absolutely crucial. How dare we call it baptism if it doesn't match what Jesus had in mind?

3. The debate between baptizing believers only and baptizing infants has continued in the Church for centuries. Not everyone at this church agrees on this, and that's OK! However, it is important to understand why we practice believer's baptism only, and do not baptize infants. Here is why:
  - a. The overwhelmingly clear sequence in scripture is that repentance/belief precedes baptism. Look up the following verses and note what the individuals did *before* they were baptized. (Acts 2:41; 8:12; 16:14-15; 18:8; 19:5). Note this same order in the following preaching and commissioning texts (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). Saving faith comes from hearing and understanding the preached word of Christ (Rom. 10:8-17). Those who are incapable of exercising saving faith yet are therefore not eligible for baptism.
  - b. There are no clear, undisputed cases of baptism of infants recorded in the Bible.
    - 1) It is often assumed that baptisms of entire households would certainly have included infants. However, most of these texts explicitly clarify that