

Baptism Policy

Approved on September 14, 2010

I – Definition

- 1) Baptism is a worship ceremony created and commanded by the Lord Jesus for His Church.¹
- 2) It proclaims, through the physical sign of water, the divine promise of forgiveness through the good news of Jesus Christ and admission into the visible church.²
- 3) The Old Testament ceremony of circumcision foreshadows the covenant relationship found in baptism.³

II – Description

- 1) Baptism, when coupled with the Word (i.e. the verbal proclamation of the Gospel), represents . . .⁴
 - a) Through the sign of water, the promise of the Gospel and the benefits of belonging to the new covenant in Christ.
 - b) Being buried with Christ and the promise of the washing away of our sins in Christ.
 - c) The authority and guarantee of God’s promises.
 - d) The admission of the baptisand into the visible universal church.
- 2) By partaking in Christian baptism, by faith alone, Christians . . .⁵
 - a) Are reminded of what Christ has done for them and are strengthened in their faith.
 - b) Publicly proclaim, and submit to Christ as their Lord, Savior and God.
- 3) For those who believe in infant baptism, these benefits are also applied to their children, since God promises good to those who trust in Him and their children.⁶
- 4) Baptism is not . . .⁷
 - a) Magical. Any benefit given from being baptized is received by grace alone.
 - b) Required for salvation, though it is a sin to neglect it.
- 5) The act of water baptism by itself offers no certainty of salvation, though it points to the certainty of the promises we have in Christ through faith alone.⁸

¹ Matt 28:19; Acts 2:38; 10:48; 22:16.

² Matt 28:19; Acts 2:38,41; 8:12-13,35-38; 9:18; 16:15,33; 18:8,36,38; 19:5; 22:16; 1Cor 12:13.

³ Acts 8:12; 10:45-48; (1Cor 10:2); Col 2:11-13.

⁴ Ezek 36:25-27; Matt 28:19; Mark 16:16*; John 3:5; Acts 2:38,41; 8:12-13,35-38; 9:18; 16:15,33; 18:8; 36,38; 19:5; 22:16; Rom 6:3-4; 1Cor 6:11; 12:13; Gal 3:27; Eph 5:26; Titus 3:5; Heb 10:22; 1Pet 3:21.

⁵ Matt 28:19; Acts 2:38,41; 8:12-13,16,35-38; 8:13; 10:48; 18:8; 19:5; 22:16; Rom 6:3-4; 1Cor 12:13; Gal 3:27-28; Eph 4:5; John 6:28-29; Acts 13:39; 15:11; Rom 1:16-17; 3:20-21,28; 4:16-22; 10:10; Gal 2:16; 3:11; Eph 2:8-9; 3:12; 2Tim 1:9; Heb 4:16; 10:38; 11:1,7-10; 1Pet 1:5.

⁶ Gen 17:7-8; Acts 2:38-39; 16:15,33; 18:8; 1Cor 7:14; Col 2:11-13.

⁷ John 4:2; Acts 8:16; 1Cor 1:16-17; 1Pet 3:21.

⁸ John 4:2; Acts 8:16; Rom 6:3-4; 1Cor 1:16-17; 13; Gal 3:27-28; Eph 4:5; 1Pet 3:21.

III – Administration

- 1) The outward element to be used in all baptisms is water in the name of the Triune God.⁹
- 2) Since this church is a federation of Congregationalist and Baptist traditions, both infant and profession of faith baptisms are permitted.
- 3) Baptism is to be given only once in a Christian's life.¹⁰
 - a) All those who have been baptized with water in the name of the Triune God have received Christian baptism.
 - b) Those who come to Baptist convictions, and who have previously received infant baptism, may request to be baptized, since they believe they have never truly received baptism.
 - i) The pastor(s) of the church, however, has freedom of conscience not to personally perform this baptism if he believes it is in fact re-baptism. In such case the Diaconate will find someone else to perform that baptism.
 - ii) Likewise a pastor of Baptist convictions is not required to baptize infants. In such case the Diaconate will find someone else to perform that baptism.
- 4) Though there are standards for baptism in the New Testament, there is also a liberality as befitting the Gospel.
 - a) Before granting baptism under normal circumstances this church asks for the following from the one being baptized or a parent or guardian:
 - i) Meet with the pastor to discuss the meaning of baptism, give testimony acknowledging his sin and repentance, thereof proclaim faith in Christ and His Gospel, and make a commitment to the local church.
 - ii) Commit to the local church as witnessed by being active in the worship life of this church for at least 2 months.
 - b) The pastor(s) can perform emergency baptisms upon his (their) discretion.
- 5) Sponsors are not required.
- 6) Normally, all baptisms will be done during a public worship service on the Lord's Day by the pastor, or someone appointed by the deacons.
- 7) The mode of water baptism (sprinkling or immersion) is up to the conscience of the individual being baptized or parent/guardian and the pastor.

⁹ Matt 28:19; Acts 8:36,38.

¹⁰ Eph 4:5; Col 2:12 (Heb 9:26-28).

Baptism Policy

Approved by the Diaconate on
September 9, 2009

ANOTAINTED Annotated

I Definition

- 1) Baptism is the sacrament of admission into the visible church commanded by Christ.

Matthew 28:19 – “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,”

II Description

- 1) Baptism is . . .
 - a) For the admission of the baptisand into the visible universal church.
 - b) A sign representing God’s promise of the Gospel and the benefits of belonging to the new covenant in Christ. Rom 3:1-4; 9:4-5; 1Cor 10:1-4
 - c) A representation of being buried with Christ and the promise of the washing away of our sins in Christ. (Rom 6:3-4)
 - d) A seal representing the authority and guarantee of God’s promises.
 - e) A means of grace, by which our faith is strengthened in Christ.
 - f) A public statement of our faith in Christ.
 - g) A reminder of our service to God.
- 2) Though baptism is very important and a sin to neglect it, it is not required for salvation. (John 4:2; 1Cor 1:14,17)
- 3) The act of water baptism by itself offers no certainty of salvation, though it points to the certainty of the promises we have in Christ through faith. (Rom 6:3-4)
- 4) The effectiveness of baptism is not dependent on the ritual itself.
 - a) Baptism is only effective by the grace given by the Holy Spirit, which produces saving faith.
 - b) The effectiveness of baptism is not necessarily related to the time of its administration.

III Administration

- 1) The outward element to be used in all baptisms is water in the name of the Triune God.
- 2) Since this church is a federation of Congregationalist and Baptist traditions both infant and profession of faith baptisms are permitted.
- 3) Baptism is to be given only once in a Christian’s life.
 - a) All those who have been baptized with water in the name of the Triune God have received Christian baptism.
 - b) Those who come to Baptist convictions, and who have previously received infant baptism, may request to be baptized, since they believe they have never truly received baptism.

- i) The pastor(s) of the church, however, has freedom of conscience not to personally perform this baptism if he believes it is in fact re-baptism. In such case the church will find someone else to perform that baptism.
 - ii) Likewise a pastor of Baptist convictions is not required to baptize infants. In such case the church will find someone else to perform that baptism.
- 4) Though there are standards for baptism in the New Testament (Acts 10:47-48; 1Cor 1:14,17), there is also a liberality as befitting the Gospel (Acts 2:41; 8:36; 22:16).
 - a) Before granting baptism under normal circumstances this church asks for the following from the one being baptized or a parent or guardian:
 - i) Meet with the pastor to discuss the meaning of the baptism and give their testimony.
 - ii) Acknowledge of one's sin before a holy God, repentance and faith in Christ and His Gospel and commitment to the local church.
 - iii) Commit to the local church as witnessed by being active in the worship life of this church for at least 2 months.
 - b) The pastor(s) can perform emergency baptisms upon his discretion.
- 5) Sponsors are not required.
- 6) Normally, all baptisms will be done during a public worship service on the Lord's Day by the pastor, or someone appointed by the deacons.
- 7) The mode of water baptism (sprinkling or immersion) is up to the conscience of the individual being baptized or parent/guardian and the pastor.

Greetings in Christ,

Below is the new Baptism Policy approved by the Diaconate on September 9, 2009. I hope you will study this statement and if you have any questions, comments, concerns or joys please contact me. I will be preaching on this policy on Sunday, October 4, 2009.

I would like to thank all the Deacons for their labors, I think they did a great job on this policy.

God's grace to you.
In Christ,
Pastor Doug

Baptism Biblical References & Allusions

Admission: Matt 28:19; Acts 8:13; 9:18; 16:15,33; 18:8; 22:16; 1Cor 12:13

Buried with Christ: Rom 6:3-4; Col 2:12

Children: Gen 17:7-8; Acts 2:38-39; 16:15,33; 18:8; 1Cor 7:14; Col 2:11-13;

Circumcision, tied to: Acts 8:12; 10:45-48; (1Cor 10:2); Col 2:11-13;

Commanded: Matt 28:19; Acts 2:38; 10:48; 22:16

Covenant: Rom 3:1-2; 9:4-5; Eph 2:12-13

Faith, tied to: Acts 2:38,41; 8:13,35-38; 18:8

Forgiveness, tied to: Acts 2:38

Holy Spirit: Matt 3:11; John 1:33; Acts 2:38; 10:47; 11:16; 1Cor 12:13

Household: Acts 16:15,33; 18:8

In the name of the Trinity: Matt 28:19

In the name of Jesus: Acts 2:38; 8:12,16; 10:48; 19:5

Into Christ: Rom 6:3-4; Gal 3:27

Into Christ's death: Rom 6:3-4

New birth: Titus 3:5

Not magical: John 4:2; Acts 8:16; 1Cor 1:16-17; 1Pet 3:21

Only once: Eph 4:5; Col 2:12 (Heb 9:26-28)

Preaching, tied to it: Acts 2:38,41; 8:12,35-38; 18:8; 19:5

Repentance, tied to: Acts 2:38

Salvation, tied to: Mark 16:16*; 1Pet 3:21

Sin to neglect: Luke 7:30

Sprinkling: Mark 7:4; Acts 2:41; Heb 9:10,19-22

Unity: 1Cor 12:13; Gal 3:27-28; Eph 4:5

Washing: Ezek 36:25-27; John 3:5; Acts 22:16; 1Cor 6:11; Eph 5:26; Titus 3:5; Heb 10:22

Water: Acts 8:36,38

