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UNDERSTANDING  
FOUR  
VIEWS  
ON

# BAPTISM



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**A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK**

ZONDERVAN

*Understanding Four Views on Baptism*

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Requests for information should be addressed to:

Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49530

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Nettles, Tom J.

Understanding four views on baptism / Thomas J. Nettles, Richard L. Pratt Jr., Robert Kolb.

p. cm. — (Counterpoints)

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

ISBN 978-0-310-26267-1

1. Baptism—History of doctrines. I. Pratt, Richards L., 1953– II. Kolb, Robert.

III. Title.

BV811.3.N48 2006

234'.161—dc22

2006026525

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*Printed in the United States of America*

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Chapter Three

LUTHERAN VIEW

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A CHRISTIAN CHURCHES/  
CHURCHES OF CHRIST RESPONSE

SPECTRUM OF HOW BAPTISM FUNCTIONS

|                                                            | Sacrament as channel of grace<br>working apart from a recipient's faith | Sacrament as agent of God's<br>(re)creative preached Word | Ordinance as occasion and<br>ceremony marking formal allegiance | Sacrament as mystery, a sign and<br>seal of the confirmation of the Spirit<br>placing one within the visible church | Symbol and pledge of one's prior<br>and saving faith | No function at all |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Roman Catholic, Eastern<br>Orthodox                        | X                                                                       |                                                           |                                                                 |                                                                                                                     |                                                      |                    |
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| Christian Churches/<br>Churches of Christ                  |                                                                         |                                                           | X                                                               |                                                                                                                     |                                                      |                    |
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# **APPENDIX 1:**

## **ALL INSTANCES OF THE WORDS FOR BAPTISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

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### **BAPTŌ ("DIP," "DIPPED," "DIPPING")**

So he called to him, "Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire."

*Luke 16:24*

Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon.

*John 13:26 (twice)*

He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.

*Revelation 19:13*

### **BAPTISTĒS ("BAPTIST")**

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea.

*Matthew 3:1*

"I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

*Matthew 11:11*

"From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it."

*Matthew 11:12*

[Herod] said to his attendants, "This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead! That is why miraculous powers are at work in him."

*Matthew 14:2*

Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." *Matthew 14:8*

[Jesus' disciples] replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." *Matthew 16:14*

Then the disciples understood that [Jesus] was talking to them about John the Baptist. *Matthew 17:13*

At once the girl hurried in to the king with the request: "I want you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a platter." *Mark 6:25*

[Jesus' disciples] replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." *Mark 8:28*

When the men came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?'" *Luke 7:20*

"For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon!'" *Luke 7:33*

[Jesus' disciples] replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life." *Luke 9:19*

### **BAPTISMA** **("BAPTISM," "BAPTIZED," "BAPTIZING")**

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?" *Matthew 3:7*

"John's baptism—where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or from men?"

They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?'" *Matthew 21:25*

And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. *Mark 1:4*

"You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said. "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?" *Mark 10:38*

"We can," [James and John] answered. Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with." *Mark 10:39*

"John's baptism — was it from heaven, or from men? Tell me!" *Mark 11:30*

[John] went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. *Luke 3:3*

"But I [Jesus] have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed!" *Luke 12:50*

"John's baptism — was it from heaven, or from men?" *Luke 20:4*

"beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection." *Acts 1:22*

"You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached —" *Acts 10:37*

"Before the coming of Jesus, John preached repentance and baptism to all the people of Israel." *Acts 13:24*

[Apollos] had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. *Acts 18:25*

So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?"  
"John's baptism," [the Ephesian disciples] replied. *Acts 19:3*

Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus." *Acts 19:4*

We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the

dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. *Romans 6:4*

one Lord, one faith, one baptism; *Ephesians 4:5*

and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, *1 Peter 3:21*

### **BAPTISMOS (“BAPTISM,” “BAPTISMS,” “CEREMONIAL WASHINGS,” “WASHING”)**

When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.

*Mark 7:4*

having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. *Colossians 2:12*

instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

*Hebrews 6:2*

They are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings—external regulations applying until the time of the new order. *Hebrews 9:10*

### **BAPTIZŌ (“BAPTIZED,” “BAPTIZE,” “BAPTIZING,” “BAPTIST,” “WASH,” “BAPTISM”)**

Confessing their sins, [the people] were baptized by [John] in the Jordan River. *Matthew 3:6*

“I [John] baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.” *Matthew 3:11*

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. *Matthew 3:13*

But John tried to deter [Jesus], saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” *Matthew 3:14*

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.

*Matthew 3:16*

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

*Matthew 28:19*

And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

*Mark 1:4*

The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to [John]. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

*Mark 1:5*

"I [John] baptize you with water, but [Jesus] will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

*Mark 1:8 (twice)*

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

*Mark 1:9*

King Herod heard about this, for Jesus' name had become well known. Some were saying, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him."

*Mark 6:14*

She went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask for?"

"The head of John the Baptist," she answered.

*Mark 6:24*

When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.

*Mark 7:4*

"You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said. "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?"

*Mark 10:38 (twice)*

"We can," they answered.

Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with."

*Mark 10:39 (twice)*

"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

*Mark 16:16*

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?"

*Luke 3:7*

Tax collectors also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?"

*Luke 3:12*

John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."

*Luke 3:16 (twice)*

When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened.

*Luke 3:21 (twice)*

All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus' words, acknowledged that God's way was right, because they had been baptized by John.

*Luke 7:29*

But the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John.

*Luke 7:30*

But the Pharisee, noticing that Jesus did not first wash before the meal, was surprised.

*Luke 11:38*

[Some Pharisees] questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

*John 1:25*

"I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know."

*John 1:26*

This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

*John 1:28*

"I [John] myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

*John 1:31*

"I [John] would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'"

*John 1:33 (twice)*

After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and baptized. *John 3:22*

Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptized. *John 3:23*

[John's disciples] came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—well, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him." *John 3:26*

The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John, *John 4:1*

although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. *John 4:2*

Then Jesus went back across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing in the early days. Here he stayed. *John 10:40*

"For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." *Acts 1:5 (twice)*

Peter replied, "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." *Acts 2:38*

Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. *Acts 2:41*

But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. *Acts 8:12*

Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw. *Acts 8:13*

because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. *Acts 8:16*

As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" *Acts 8:36*

And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. *Acts 8:38*

Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized. *Acts 9:18*

"Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." *Acts 10:47*

So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days. *Acts 10:48*

"Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'" *Acts 11:16 (twice)*

When [Lydia] and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us. *Acts 16:15*

At that hour of the night the jailer took [Paul and Silas] and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. *Acts 16:33*

Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized. *Acts 18:8*

On hearing this, [the Ephesian disciples] were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. *Acts 19:5*

"And now [Saul] what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on [Jesus'] name." *Acts 22:16*

Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? *Romans 6:3 (twice)*

Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul? *1 Corinthians 1:13*

I am thankful that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius. *1 Corinthians 1:14*

so no one can say that you were baptized into my name. *1 Corinthians 1:15*

(Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.)

*1 Corinthians 1:16 (twice)*

For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. *1 Corinthians 1:17*

They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. *1 Corinthians 10:2*

For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

*1 Corinthians 12:13*

Now if there is no resurrection, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized for them?

*1 Corinthians 15:29 (twice)*

For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

*Galatians 3:27*

## **APPENDIX 2: STATEMENTS ON BAPTISM IN CREEDS, CONFESSIONS, AND CATECHISMS**

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### *THE DIDACHE*

Concerning baptism, thus shall ye baptize. Having first recited all these things, baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

### **THE NICENE-CONSTANTINOPOLITAN CREED (AD 381)**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### **THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION (1530; LUTHERAN)**

#### **Article IX**

It is taught among us that baptism is necessary and that grace is offered through it. Children, too, should be baptized, for in baptism they are committed to God and become acceptable to him.

On this account the Anabaptists who teach that infant baptism is not right are rejected.

## LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM (1529)

### Part IV: The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

Q. What is baptism?

A. Baptism is not simply common water, but it is the water comprehended in God's command, and connected with God's Word.

Q. What is that Word of God?

A. It is that which our Lord Christ speaks in the last chapter of Matthew [28:19].

Q. What does baptism give, or of what use is it?

A. It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe, as the Word and promise of God declare.

Q. Where are such words and promises of God?

A. Those which our Lord Christ speaks in the last chapter of Mark: "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned."

Q. How can water do such things?

A. It is not water, indeed, that does it, but the Word of God which is with and in the water, and faith, which trusts in the Word of God in the water. For without the Word of God the water is nothing but water, and no baptism; but with the Word of God it is a baptism—that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost, as St. Paul says, Titus, third chapter [3:5–7].

Q. What does such baptizing with water signify?

A. It signifies that the old Adam in us is to be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance, and perish with all sins and evil lusts; and that the new man should daily come forth again and rise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Q. Where is it so written?

A. St. Paul in the 6th chapter of Romans says, "We are buried with Christ by baptism into death; that like as he was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

**THE FRENCH CONFESSION OF FAITH (1559;  
PREPARED BY JOHN CALVIN)**

**Article XXXV**

We confess only two sacraments common to the whole church, of which the first, baptism, is given as a pledge of our adoption; for by it we are grafted into the body of Christ, so as to be washed and cleansed by his blood, and then renewed in purity of life by his Holy Spirit. We hold, also, that although we are baptized only once, yet the gain that it symbolizes to us reaches over our whole lives and to our death, so that we have a lasting witness that Jesus Christ will always be our justification and sanctification. Nevertheless, although it is a sacrament of faith and penitence, yet as God receives little children into the church with their fathers, we say, upon the authority of Jesus Christ, that the children of believing parents should be baptized.

**THE BELGIC CONFESSION (1561; REFORMED)**

**Article XXXIV: Holy Baptism**

We believe and confess that Jesus Christ, who is the end of the law, has made an end, by the shedding of his blood, of all other sheddings of blood which men could or would make as a propitiation or satisfaction for sin; and that he, having abolished circumcision, which was done with blood, has instituted the sacrament of baptism instead thereof, by which we are received into the church of God, and separated from all other people and strange religions, that we may wholly belong to him whose ensign and banner we bear, and which serves as a testimony unto us that he will forever be our gracious God and father.

Therefore he has commanded all those who are his to be baptized with pure water, into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: thereby signifying to us, that as water washes away the filth of the body when poured upon it, and is seen on the body of the baptized when sprinkled upon him, so does the blood of Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, internally sprinkle the soul, cleanse it from its sins, and regenerate us from children of wrath unto children of God. Not that this is effected by the external water, but by the sprinkling of the precious blood of the Son of God; who is our Red Sea, through

which we must pass to escape the tyranny of Pharaoh, that is, the devil, and to enter into the spiritual land of Canaan.

Therefore, the ministers, on their part, administer the sacrament and that which is visible, but our Lord gives that which is signified by the sacrament, namely, the gifts and invisible grace; washing, cleansing, and purging our souls of all filth and unrighteousness; renewing our hearts and filling them with all comfort; giving unto us a true assurance of his fatherly goodness; putting on us the new man, and putting off the old man with all his deeds.

Therefore, we believe that every man who is earnestly studious of obtaining life eternal ought to be but once baptized with this only baptism, without ever repeating the same, since we can not be born twice. Neither does this baptism avail us only at the time when the water is poured upon us and received by us, but also through the whole course of our life.

Therefore we detest the error of the Anabaptists, who are not content with the one only baptism they have once received, and moreover condemn the baptism of the infants of believers, who, we believe ought to be baptized and sealed with the sign of the covenant, as the children in Israel formerly were circumcised upon the same promises which are made unto our children. And indeed Christ shed his blood no less for the washing of the children of the faithful than for adult persons; and therefore they ought to receive the sign and sacrament of that which Christ has done for them; as the Lord commanded in the law that they should be made partakers of the sacrament of Christ's suffering and death shortly after they were born, by offering for them a lamb, which was a sacrament of Jesus Christ. Moreover, what circumcision was to the Jews, baptism is to our children. And for this reason Paul calls baptism the circumcision of Christ.

## **THE SECOND HELVETIC CONFESSION OF FAITH (1566; REFORMED; PREPARED BY HEINRICH BULLINGER)**

### **Chapter XIX: Of the Sacraments of the Church of Christ**

But the principal thing which God promises in all sacraments and to which all the godly in all ages direct their attention (some call it the substance and matter of sacraments) is Christ

the Savior—that only sacrifice (Heb. 10:12), and that Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8); that rock, also, from which all our fathers drank (1 Cor. 10:4), by whom all the elect are circumcised without hands through the Holy Spirit (Col. 2:11–12), and are washed from all their sins (Rev. 1:5), and are nourished with the very body and blood of Christ unto eternal life (John 6:54).

## **Chapter XX: Of Holy Baptism**

Baptism was instituted and consecrated by God; and the first that baptized was John, who dipped Christ in the water in Jordan. From him it came to the apostles, who also baptized with water. The Lord expressly commanded them to preach the Gospel and to baptize “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19). And in Acts, Peter said to the Jews who inquired what they ought to do: “Be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). Hence baptism is called by some a sign of initiation for God’s people, since by it the elect of God are consecrated unto God.

There is but one baptism in the Church of God; and it is sufficient to be once baptized or consecrated unto God. For baptism once received continues for all of life, and is a perpetual sealing of our adoption.

Now to be baptized in the name of Christ is to be enrolled, entered, and received into the covenant and family, and so into the inheritance of the sons of God; yes, and in this life to be called after the name of God; that is to say, to be called a son of God; to be purged also from the filthiness of sins, and to be granted the manifold grace of God, in order to lead a new and innocent life. Baptism, therefore, calls to mind and renews the great benefit of God performed to mankind. For we are all born into pollution of sin and are the children of wrath. But God, who is rich in mercy, freely purges us from our sins by the blood of his Son, and in him adopts us to be his sons, and by a holy covenant joins us to himself, and enriches us with various gifts, that we might live a new life. All these things are sealed up unto us in baptism. For inwardly we are regenerated, purified, and renewed by God through the Holy Spirit; and outwardly we

receive the sealing of most notable gifts by the water, by which also those great benefits are represented, and, as it were, set before our eyes to be looked upon.

And therefore are we baptized, that is, washed or sprinkled with visible water. For the water makes clean that which is filthy, and refreshes and cools the bodies that fail or faint. And the grace of God deals in like manner with the soul; and does so invisibly and spiritually.

Moreover, by the sacrament of baptism God separates us from all other religions and nations, and consecrates us a peculiar people to himself. We, therefore, by being baptized, confess our faith and are bound to give unto God obedience, mortification of the flesh, and newness of life; yes, and we are soldiers enlisted for the holy warfare of Christ, that all our life long we should fight against the world, Satan, and our own flesh. Moreover, we are baptized into one body of the Church, that we might well agree with all the members of the Church in the one religion and mutual duties.

We believe that the most perfect form of baptism is that by which Christ was baptized, and by which the apostles baptized. Those things, therefore, which by man's device were added afterwards and used in the Church we do not consider necessary to the perfection of baptism. Of this kind is exorcism, the use of lights, oil, spittle, and such other things; as, namely, that baptism is twice every year consecrated with a multitude of ceremonies. But we believe that the baptism of the Church, which is but one, was sanctified in God's first institution of it, and is consecrated by the Word, and is also effectual today in virtue of God's first blessing.

We teach that baptism should not be administered in the Church by women or midwives. For Paul secludes women from ecclesiastical callings; and baptism belongs to ecclesiastical offices.

We condemn the Anabaptists, who deny that young infants, born of faithful parents, are to be baptized. For, according to the doctrine of the Gospel, "theirs is the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:16), and they are written in the covenant of God (Acts 3:25). Why, then, should not the sign of the covenant of God be given to them? Why should they not be consecrated by holy baptism, who are God's peculiar people and are in the Church of God? We condemn also the Anabaptists in the rest of their peculiar

opinions which they hold against the Word of God. We therefore are not Anabaptists and have nothing in common with them.

## **THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH (1646; PRESBYTERIAN)**

### **Chapter XXVII: Of the Sacraments**

Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted by God, to represent Christ and his benefits, and to confirm our interest in him: as also to put a visible difference between those that belong unto the Church and the rest of the world; and solemnly to engage them to the service of God in Christ, according to his Word.

There is in every sacrament a spiritual relation or sacramental union between the sign and the thing signified; whence it comes to pass that the names and effects of the one are attributed to the other.

The grace which is exhibited in or by the sacraments, rightly used, is not conferred by any power in them; neither does the efficacy of a sacrament depend upon the piety or intention of him that administers it, but upon the work of the Spirit and the word of institution, which contains, together with a precept authorizing the use thereof, a promise of benefit to worthy receivers.

There are only two sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord in the gospel, that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord: neither of which may be dispensed by any but by a minister of the Word lawfully ordained.

The sacraments of the Old Testament, in regard of the spiritual things thereby signified and exhibited, were, for substance, the same with those of the New.

### **Chapter XXVIII: Of Baptism**

Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible Church, but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God through Jesus Christ to walk in newness of life: which sacrament is, by Christ's own appointment, to be continued in his Church until the end of the world.

The outward element to be used in this sacrament is water, wherewith the party is to be baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit by a minister of the gospel lawfully called thereunto.

Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person.

Not only those who do actually profess faith in and obedience unto Christ but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized.

Although it is a great sin to condemn or neglect this ordinance, yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it, as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it, or that all who are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated.

The efficacy of baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered; yet, notwithstanding, by the right use of this ordinance the grace promised is not only offered but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Spirit to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongs unto, according to the counsel of God's own will, in his appointed time.

The sacrament of baptism is but once to be administered to any person.

## **THE CONFESSION OF THE WALDENSES (1655; FROM CALVINISTS IN ITALY)**

### **Article XXVIII**

That God does not only instruct us by his Word, but has also ordained certain sacraments to be joined with it, as means to unite us to Jesus Christ, and to make us partakers of his benefits; and that there are only two of them belonging in common to all the members of the Church under the New Testament—to wit, baptism and the Lord's Supper.

### **Article XXIX**

That Christ has instituted the sacrament of baptism to be a testimony of our adoption, and that therein we are cleansed from our sins by the blood of Jesus Christ, and renewed in holiness of life.

## **THE THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES (1563; ANGLICAN)**

### **XXVII: Of Baptism**

Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened, but it is also a sign of regeneration or new birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism rightly are grafted into the Church; the promises of the forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Spirit, are visibly signed and sealed; faith is confirmed, and grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God.

The baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ.

### **THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM (1563; REFORMED; PREPARED BY ZACHARIAS URSINUS AND CASPAR OLEVIANUS)**

#### **Lord's Day 25**

Q. 65. It is by faith alone that we share in Christ and all his blessings: where then does that faith come from?

A. The Holy Spirit produces it in our heart by the preaching of the holy gospel, and confirms it by the use of the holy sacraments.

Q. 66. What are sacraments?

A. Sacraments are holy signs and seals for us to see. They were instituted by God so that by our use of them he might make us understand more clearly the promise of the gospel, and might put his seal on that promise.

And this is God's gospel promise: to forgive our sins and give us eternal life by grace alone because of Christ's one sacrifice finished on the cross.

Q. 67. Are both the word and the sacraments then intended to focus our faith on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as the only ground of our salvation?

A. Right!

In the gospel the Holy Spirit teaches us and through the holy sacraments he assures us that our entire salvation rests on Christ's one sacrifice for us on the cross.

Q. 68. How many sacraments did Christ institute in the New Testament?

A. Two: baptism and the Lord's Supper.

### Lord's Day 26

Q. 69. How does baptism remind you and assure you that Christ's one sacrifice on the cross is for you personally?

A. In this way: Christ instituted this outward washing and with it gave the promise that, as surely as water washes away the dirt from the body, so certainly his blood and his Spirit wash away my soul's impurity, in other words, all my sins.

Q. 70. What does it mean to be washed with Christ's blood and Spirit?

A. To be washed with Christ's blood means that God, by grace, has forgiven my sins because of Christ's blood poured out for me in his sacrifice on the cross.

To be washed with Christ's Spirit means that the Holy Spirit has renewed me and set me apart to be a member of Christ so that more and more I become dead to sin and increasingly live a holy and blameless life.

Q. 71. Where does Christ promise that we are washed with his blood and Spirit as surely as we are washed with the water of baptism?

A. In the institution of baptism where he says:

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

This promise is repeated when Scripture calls baptism the washing of rebirth and the washing away of sins.

Q. 72. Does this outward washing with water itself wash away sins?

A. No, only Jesus Christ's blood and the Holy Spirit cleanse us from all sins.

Q. 73. Why then does the Holy Spirit call baptism the washing of rebirth and the washing away of sins?

- A. God has good reasons for these words. He wants to teach us that the blood and Spirit of Christ wash away our sins just as water washes away dirt from our bodies.

But more important, he wants to assure us, by this divine pledge and sign, that the washing away of our sins spiritually is as real as physical washing with water.

Q. 74. Should infants, too, be baptized?

- A. Yes. Infants as well as adults are in God's covenant and are his people. They, no less than adults, are promised the forgiveness of sin through Christ's blood and the Holy Spirit who produces faith.

Therefore, by baptism, the mark of the covenant, infants should be received into the Christian church and should be distinguished from the children of unbelievers. This was done in the Old Testament by circumcision, which was replaced in the New Testament by baptism.

## **THE DORDRECHT CONFESSION (1632; MENNONITE)**

### **Article VII: Of Holy Baptism**

Regarding baptism, we confess that all penitent believers, who through faith, the new birth, and renewal of the Holy Spirit, have become united with God, and whose names are recorded in heaven, must on such Scriptural confession of their faith, and renewal of life, be baptized with water, in the most worthy name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, according to the command of Christ, and the teaching, example, and practice of the apostles, to the burying of their sins, and thus be incorporated into the communion of the saints; whereupon they must learn to observe all things whatsoever the Son of God taught, left on record, and commanded his followers to do.

## **THE FIRST LONDON CONFESSION OF FAITH (1646; BAPTIST)**

### **Article XXXIX**

Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, given by Christ, to be dispensed upon persons professing faith, or that are made disciples; who upon profession of faith, ought to be baptized, and after to partake of the Lord's Supper.

## **Article XL**

That the way and manner of dispensing this ordinance, is dipping or plunging the body under water; it being a sign, must answer the things signified, which is, that interest the saints have in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ: And that as certainly as the body is buried under water, and risen again, so certainly shall the bodies of the saints be raised by the power of Christ, in the day of the resurrection, to reign with Christ.

## **Article XLI**

The person designed by Christ to dispense baptism, the Scripture holds forth to be a disciple; it being nowhere tied to a particular church officer, or person extraordinarily sent the commission enjoining the administration, being given to them as considered disciples, being men able to preach the gospel.

## **THE PHILADELPHIA CONFESSION OF FAITH (1742; BAPTIST)**

### **Chapter XXIX: Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of positive and sovereign institution, appointed by the Lord Jesus, the only lawgiver, to be continued in his church to the end of the world.

These holy appointments are to be administered by those only who are qualified and thereunto called, according to the commission of Christ.

### **Chapter XXX: Of Baptism**

Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, to be unto the party baptized, a sign of his fellowship with him in his death and resurrection; of his being engrafted into him; of remission of sins; and of his giving up into God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life.

Those who do actually profess repentance towards God, faith in, and obedience to our Lord Jesus, are the only proper subjects of this ordinance.

The outward element to be used in this ordinance is water, wherein the party is to be baptized, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Immersion, or dipping of the person in water, is necessary to the due administration of this ordinance.

## **THE ARTICLES OF RELIGION (1784; METHODIST)**

### **XVI: Of the Sacraments**

Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's goodwill toward us, by the which he works invisibly in us, and not only quickens, but also strengthens and confirms our faith in him.

There are two sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the gospel; that is to say, baptism and the Supper of the Lord.

Those five commonly called sacraments, that is to say, confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction, are not to be counted for sacraments of the gospel, being such as have partly grown out of the corrupt following of the apostles; and partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures, but yet have not the like nature of baptism and the Lord's Supper, because they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.

The sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about, but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation; but they that receive them unworthily purchase to themselves condemnation, as St. Paul says, [in] 1 Corinthians 11:29.

### **XVII: Of Baptism**

Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the Church.

**CONFESSION OF THE EVANGELICAL  
FREE CHURCH OF GENEVA (1848)**

**Article XVI**

We believe that the Savior has instituted baptism and the Lord's Supper as symbols and pledges of the salvation which he has acquired for us: baptism, which is the sign of the purification by the blood and spirit of Jesus Christ; the Eucharist, in which we receive by faith his body and blood, and announce his death until his coming.

## **APPENDIX 3: QUOTATIONS ON BAPTISM**

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### **QUOTATIONS FROM MARTIN LUTHER ON BAPTISM**

#### **Luther's Small Catechism**

Baptism signifies that the old Adam in us is to be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance, and perish with all sins and evil lusts; and that the new man should daily come forth again and rise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

It is not the water that produces these effects, but the Word of God connected with the water, and our faith which relies on the Word of God connected with the water. For without the Word of God the water is merely water and no baptism.

#### **Luther's Large Catechism**

We are not to regard [baptism] as an indifferent matter, then, like putting on a new red coat. It is of the greatest importance that we regard baptism as excellent, glorious, and exalted. It is the chief cause of our contentions and battles because the world now is full of sects who proclaim that baptism is an external thing and that external things are of no use. But no matter how external it may be, here stand God's Word and command which have instituted, established, and confirmed baptism. What God institutes and commands cannot be useless. It is a most precious thing, even though to all appearances it may not be worth a straw.

To be baptized in God's name is to be baptized not by men but by God himself. Although it is performed by men's hands, it is nevertheless truly God's act. From this fact everyone can easily conclude that it is of much greater value than the work of any man or saint. For what work can man do that is greater than God's work?

[Baptism] is nothing else than divine water, not that the water in itself is nobler than other water but that God's Word and commandment are added to it.

Note this distinction then: baptism is a very different thing from all other water, not by virtue of the natural substance but because here something nobler is added. God himself stakes his honor, his power, and his might on it. Therefore it is not simply a natural water, but a divine, heavenly, holy, and blessed water—praise it in any other terms you can—all by virtue of the Word, which is a heavenly, holy Word which no one can sufficiently extol, for it contains and conveys all the fullness of God. From the Word it derives its nature as a sacrament, as St. Augustine taught: "*Acedat verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum.*" This means that when the Word is added to the element or the natural substance, it becomes a sacrament, that is, a holy, divine thing and sign.

I therefore admonish you again that these two, the Word and the water, must by no means be separated from each other. For where the Word is separated from the water, the water is no different from that which the maid cooks with and could indeed be called a bathkeeper's baptism. But when the Word is present according to God's ordinance, baptism is a sacrament, and it is called Christ's baptism. This is the first point to be emphasized: the nature and dignity of this holy sacrament.

Since we have learned the great benefit and power of baptism, let us observe further who receives these gifts and benefits of baptism. This again is most beautifully and clearly expressed in these same words, "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved," that is, faith alone makes the person worthy to receive the salutary divine water profitably. Since these blessings are offered

and promised in the word which accompany the water, they cannot be received unless we believe them wholeheartedly. Without faith baptism is of no use, although in itself it is an infinite divine treasure.

Thus you plainly see that baptism is not a work which we do but is a treasure which God gives and faith grasps, just as the Lord Christ upon the cross is not a work but a treasure comprehended and offered to us in the Word and received by faith.

## **QUOTATIONS FROM JOHN CALVIN ON BAPTISM**

### **Calvin's Commentaries**

Whoever, having neglected baptism, feigns himself to be contented with the bare promise, tramples as much as in him lies, upon the blood of Christ, or at least does not suffer it to flow for the washing of his own children. Therefore just punishment follows the contempt of the sign, in the privation of grace; because ... the covenant of God is violated (Commentary on Genesis, 1:458).

Baptism [is] a pledge of eternal life before God ... an outward sign of faith before men (Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels, 3:385).

Everyone profits so much in baptism as he learns to look unto Christ.... The whole strength of baptism is contained in Christ (Commentary on Acts, 1:120).

Baptism, viewed in regard to us, is a passive work: we bring nothing to it but faith; and all that belongs to it is laid up in Christ (Commentary on Galatians, 150).

### **Institutes of the Christian Religion**

Now baptism was given to us by God for these ends (which I have taught to be common to all sacraments): first, to serve our faith before him; secondly, to serve our confession before men (4:15:1).

But we must realize that at whatever time we are baptized, we are once for all washed and purged for our whole life. Therefore, as often as we fall away, we ought

to recall the memory of our baptism and fortify our mind with it, that we may always be sure and confident of the forgiveness of sins (4:15:3).

Lastly, our faith receives from baptism the advantage of its sure testimony to us that we are not only engrafted into the death and life of Christ, but so united to Christ himself that we become sharers in all his blessings (4:15:6).

But whether the person being baptized should be wholly immersed, and whether thrice or once, whether he should only be sprinkled with poured water—these details are of no importance, but ought to be optional to churches according to the diversity of countries. Yet the word “baptize” means to immerse, and it is clear that the rite of immersion was observed in the ancient church (4:15:19).

Few realize how much injury the dogma that baptism is necessary for salvation, badly expounded, has entailed. As a consequence, they are less cautious. For, where the opinion has prevailed that all are lost who have not happened to be baptized with water, our condition is worse than that of God’s ancient people—as if the grace of God were now more restricted than under the law! (4:15:20).

But this principle will easily and immediately settle the controversy: infants are not barred from the Kingdom of Heaven just because they happen to depart the present life before they have been immersed in water. Yet we have already seen that serious injustice is done to God’s covenant if we do not assent to it, as if it were weak of itself, since its effect depends neither upon baptism nor upon any additions (4:15:22).

If it is right for infants to be brought to Christ, why not also to be received into baptism, the symbol of our communion and fellowship with Christ? If the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them, why is the sign denied which, so to speak, opens to them a door into the church, that, adopted into it, they may be enrolled among the heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven? How unjust of us to drive away those whom Christ calls to himself! (4:16:7).

## Tracts and Letters

The salvation of infants is included in the promise in which God declares to believers that he will be a God to them and to their seed.... Their salvation, therefore, has not its commencement in baptism, but being already founded on the word, is sealed by baptism (3:109–10, Antidote to the Council of Trent).

Those who were baptized when mere infants, God regenerates in childhood or adolescence, occasionally even in old age (Tracts 2:218, Mutual Consent in Regard to the Sacraments).

**QUOTATIONS FROM JOHN WESLEY ON BAPTISM  
(FROM *JOHN WESLEY ON CHRISTIAN BELIEFS*,  
KENNETH CAIN KINGHORN, ED.  
[NASHVILLE: ABINGDON, 2002])**

The new birth is represented by baptism, which is the beginning of a complete restoration to life (p. 63).

The new birth is not baptism. The two are not the same thing. To be sure, many people seem to imagine that both are essentially alike. At least they speak as if they think the two are identical. Yet, I do not know that this belief is publicly professed by any Christian denomination at all. Certainly no church within the British Empire holds this view—not the established Church or any of the dissenting churches (p. 235).

What can be more obvious than that the application of water is an external work, and the coming of the Holy Spirit is an internal work? It is clear that the one is a visible thing and the other is an invisible thing. The two are entirely distinct from each other. One is a human act that washes the body, and the other is an act of God done in the soul. The rite of baptism is just as separable from regeneration as the body is from the soul, or water is from the Holy Spirit (p. 236).

Do not say in your heart, “I was once baptized, so therefore I am now a child of God.” I truly regret that the work done in your baptism will by no means automatically

continue throughout your life. How many baptized gluttons, drunkards, liars and common swearers, abusive critics, and gossips, whoremongers, thieves, extortioners are there? What do you think? Are these people now the children of God? Indeed, whoever you are, if you are one of these people I say to you, "You are from your father the devil, and you choose to do your father's desires." In the name of him whom you crucify afresh, I call out to you. In the very words that Jesus spoke to your circumcised predecessors, I declare, "You snakes, you brood of vipers! How can you escape being sentenced to hell?" (p. 309).

All of you who do not have these marks of the new birth on your souls (whether you were baptized or are unbaptized) need to receive these marks in your lives. Without them, you will certainly perish everlastingly (p. 310).

## **QUOTATIONS FROM CHARLES H. SPURGEON ON BAPTISM**

### **The New Park Street Pulpit**

I should think it a high sin and treason against heaven, if, believing that baptism signifies immersion, and immersion only, I should pretend to administer it by sprinkling; or, believing that baptism appertains to believers only, I should consider myself a criminal in the sight of God if I should give it to any but those who believe (4:170).

### **The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit**

I do not question the safety of the soul that has believed, but I do say again, I would not run the risk of the man who, having believed, refuses to be baptized (16:156).

As long as you give baptism to an unregenerate child, people will imagine that it must do the child good; for they will ask, If it does not do it any good, why is it baptized? (19:556).

Do not make any mistake, and imagine that immersion in water can wash away sin; but do remember that if the

Lord puts this outward profession side by side with the washing away of sins it is not a trifling matter (31:251).

I feel shocked when I hear people say, "But it is not essential to salvation." You mean and beggarly spirit! Will you do nothing but what is essential to your own salvation? A Pharisee or a harlot might talk so. Is this your love to Christ—that you will not obey him, unless he shall pay you for it, unless he shall make your soul's salvation depend upon it? (36:56).

Several sects claim apostolic succession, and if any possess it, the Baptists are the most likely, since they practice the ordinances as they were delivered; but we do not even care to trace our pedigree through the long line of martyrs, and of men abhorred by ecclesiastics. If we could do this without a break, the result would be of no value in our eyes; for the rag of "apostolic succession" is not worth warehouse-room. Those who contend for the fiction may monopolize it if they will (37:40).

I am amazed that an unconscious babe should be made the partaker of an ordinance which, according to the plain teaching of the Scriptures, requires the conscious acquiescence and complete heart-trust of the recipient. Very few, if any, would argue that infants ought to receive the Lord's Supper; but there is no more Scriptural warrant for bringing them to the one ordinance than there is for bringing them to the other (47:351).

## **QUOTATIONS FROM CHURCH FATHERS ON BAPTISM**

### **Augustine**

(He) who has been baptized in the Church, should he become a deserter from the Church, will lack holiness but will not lack the seal of the sacrament. . . . Just as the man who is a deserter from the army loses legal status without losing his citizenship.

In so far as I can judge, it is already as clear as crystal that in this question of baptism what is to be considered is not who confers but what is conferred; not who receives but what is received; not who has it but what he has.

## **Basil the Great**

For prisoners, baptism is ransom, forgiveness of debts, death of sin, regeneration of the soul, a resplendent garment, an unbreakable seal, a chariot to heaven, a protector royal, a gift of adoption.

Let no one be misled by the fact that the Apostle frequently omits the name of the Father and of the Holy Spirit when mentioning baptism; nor let anyone suppose that the invocation of the Names is a matter of indifference. "Those of you," he says, "who have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ," and again, "Those of you who have been baptized in Christ have been baptized in his death." The naming of Christ, you see, is the confession of the whole; it bespeaks the God who anoints, the Son who is anointed, and the Spirit who is the anointing.

This then is what it means to be born again of water and Spirit; just as our dying is effected in the water, our living is wrought through the Spirit. If, therefore, there is any grace in the water, it is not from the nature of water but the Spirit's presence there.

## **Cyril of Jerusalem**

Since man is of twofold nature, composed of body and soul, the purification also is twofold. . . . The water cleanses the body, and the Spirit seals the soul.

## **Gregory of Nazianzus**

... [T]he virtue of Baptism is to be understood as a covenant with God for a second life.

In whose name were you baptized? In the Father's name? Jewish, but good. In the Son's name? Good; no longer Jewish, but not yet perfect. In the Holy Spirit's name? Excellent! This is perfect.

## **John Chrysostom**

Lest through a confidence in the gift of the font you should turn negligent of your conversation [way of life]

after it, even supposing you receive baptism, yet if you are not minded to be led by the Spirit afterwards, you lose the dignity bestowed upon you and the pre-eminence of your adoption.

### **Justin Martyr**

This is how we dedicate ourselves to God after being newly created through Christ. We bring them to somewhere where there is water, for they then wash themselves in the water in the name of God the Father and Lord of all, and of our Savior Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit.

### **Origen**

Not everyone who is washed receives salvation. We who have received the grace of baptism in the name of Christ have been washed; but I do not know which of us has been washed to salvation.

### **Tertullian**

Those who are going to be baptized must pray repeatedly, fasting and kneeling and in vigils, and confess all their past sins.

## **OTHER CHRISTIANS ON BAPTISM**

### **James P. Boyce (nineteenth-century Baptist theologian)**

Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus, obligatory upon every believer, wherein he is immersed in water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, as a sign of his fellowship with the death and resurrection of Christ, of remission of sins, and of his giving himself up to God, to live and walk in newness of life. It is prerequisite to church fellowship and to participation in the Lord's Supper.

**Martin Bucer**  
**(sixteenth-century German Reformer)**

Our regeneration and our renewal through the Holy Spirit are offered us and showed us, revealed through words and washing in water.

**J. Alec Motyer**  
**(twentieth-century Bible expositor)**

Baptism points back to the work of God, and forward to the life of faith.

**Friedrich Rest**  
**(twentieth-century author)**

In baptism, the Christian is born. His old self is buried and the new self emerges. Whether in the case of infants or adults, baptism signifies this more as a promise than as an actually fulfilled fact. The direction is indicated rather than the arrival.

**Friedrich Schleiermacher**  
**(nineteenth-century German theologian)**

There will always be some regenerate persons who are not yet baptized but who might well have claimed to be received earlier into the Church; similarly there will be baptized persons who are not yet regenerate but in the most active way are being commended to divine grace for regeneration by the prayers of the Church.

**Menno Simons**  
**(sixteenth-century Anabaptist leader)**

We have not a single command in the Scriptures that infants are baptized, or that the apostles practiced it. Therefore we confess with good sense that infant baptism is nothing but a human invention and notion.

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A number of ancient and modern resources exist to help churches practice the rite of baptism in public worship. Most historic denominations have their respective guides and liturgical aids. The reader can consult any of these to get an idea of how various churches practice baptism. One book designed for Protestant churches that includes helpful resources on baptism is *Baker's Worship Handbook: Traditional and Contemporary Service Resources*, Paul E. Engle (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998).

## **DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

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### **CHAPTER 1: BAPTISM AS A SYMBOL OF CHRIST'S SAVING WORK**

1. In examining every command, example, and implication concerning baptism in Scripture, can the reader discover any warrant for applying baptism to any but those who hear the gospel, repent of sin, and believe in Christ?
2. If circumcision came subsequent to Abraham's faith and thus subsequent to his justification and constitutes no part of his right standing before God (as Paul argues), then how, by analogy, should Christians view baptism in its relation to faith and justification?
3. If regeneration occurs at baptism, why do so many who are baptized never show the biblical marks of regeneration as set forth in 1 John 3:9 and many other Bible verses?
4. Should a church, believing that baptism precedes and involves church membership, be willing to accept an applicant for church membership who, in its view, has not been baptized?

### **CHAPTER 2: BAPTISM AS A SACRAMENT OF THE COVENANT**

1. If "sacrament" is not a biblical term, then why is it used to describe baptism? What are the implications of the belief that the relation between baptism and grace is mysterious?
2. Why is it important to distinguish adequately between the rite of baptism and the reception of divine grace? Are there biblical examples that demonstrate this separation?

3. How can we justify drawing from patterns of OT faith to elucidate patterns of NT faith? What analogies exist between the Passover and circumcision in the OT, and the Lord's Supper and baptism in the NT?
4. What is the difference between entry and life in the visible church and in the invisible church? Why is this distinction important for understanding baptism?
5. The new covenant is predicted to be without unbelievers (Jer. 31:31–35). Why does the visible church still have baptized unbelievers within it?
6. If there are no NT passages that explicitly command or indisputably exemplify infant baptism, what implicit NT evidence is there to support the practice?

### CHAPTER 3: GOD'S BAPTISMAL ACT AS REGENERATIVE

1. If Jesus really could have used other ways of describing entry into his kingdom (John 3:1–15), why, in the light of the biblical understanding of God as Creator, did he choose to describe this entry as a “new birth” or “birth from above” rather than as a commercial agreement, a romantic proposal, or some other metaphor?
2. On the basis of Paul's argument in Romans 6, how would the apostle answer someone who said, “I'm baptized. That means I am free to do anything I please! The more I sin, the more God has to forgive—and he likes to forgive!”?
3. If individual biblical teachings fit together in a “body of doctrine,” then what is the relationship in Titus 3:3–8 between the “washing of rebirth and renewal” and the teachings of Paul on sin, on grace, on Christ, and on the good works of the believer?
4. If it is God who places believers together in a congregation or community of his people through baptism (1 Cor. 12:12–13), then what does that say about our relationship to our siblings in the household of God? What difference does it make for Christians that their relationship with others in the church as brothers and sisters flows from the relationship God has established with them as Father?

## CHAPTER 4: BELIEVERS' BAPTISM AS THE BIBLICAL OCCASION OF SALVATION

1. Compare similarities and contrast differences between what happens at a baptism and what happens at a wedding.
2. If sinners are saved by trusting in Jesus' completed work on the cross and by repenting of their sins, what problems does this understanding present for those who baptize infants for their salvation? How would you evaluate the various solutions proposed to resolve these theological problems centered around the proper subjects of baptism?
3. What is the connection in Jesus' mind and life (and in the Christian disciple's mind and life) between being baptized and dying? Which Scriptures address these connections in the NT?
4. Fill in this table of the conversions in Acts. Indicate the appropriate verses where the specified actions are explicitly stated or clearly implied. What observations does this lead you to make concerning the conversion process in the book of Acts?

| <b>People Converted in the Book of Acts</b> | <b>Hearing Word</b> | <b>Believing, Obeying</b> | <b>Repenting of Sins</b> | <b>Being Baptized</b> | <b>Professing Jesus</b> |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Jews at Pentecost<br>2:14 - 41              |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Jerusalem Jews<br>5:12 - 14                 |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Jewish priests<br>6:7                       |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Samaritans<br>8:4 - 25                      |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Ethiopian eunuch<br>8:26 - 40               |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |

| <b>People Converted in the<br/>Book of Acts</b>    | <b>Hearing Word</b> | <b>Believing, Obeying</b> | <b>Repenting of Sins</b> | <b>Being Baptized</b> | <b>Professing Jesus</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Saul/Paul<br><i>9:1 - 19; 22:1 - 16; 26:1 - 18</i> |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Cornelius<br><i>10:23 - 11:18</i>                  |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| In Antioch<br><i>11:19 - 21</i>                    |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Cypriots<br><i>13:4 - 12</i>                       |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Pisidians<br><i>13:48</i>                          |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Iconians<br><i>14:1</i>                            |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Lydia<br><i>16:11 - 15</i>                         |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Jailer<br><i>16:25 - 34</i>                        |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Thessalonians<br><i>17:4</i>                       |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Bereans<br><i>17:11 - 13</i>                       |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Athenians<br><i>17:34</i>                          |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Corinthians<br><i>18:7 - 8</i>                     |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Apollos<br><i>18:24 - 26</i>                       |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |
| Disciples of John<br><i>19:1 - 7</i>               |                     |                           |                          |                       |                         |