

# FORM FOR THE HOLY BAPTISM OF CHILDREN



The essence of the doctrine of holy baptism is summarised in these three points:

## **Sin**

Rom 3:9, 19  
Rom 5:12-21  
Jn 3:3

First, we and our children are conceived and born in sin and are therefore by nature children of wrath, so that we cannot enter the kingdom of God unless we are born again. This is what the immersion in and sprinkling with water teaches us. It signifies the impurity of our souls, so that we may detest ourselves, humble ourselves before God, and seek our cleansing and salvation outside of ourselves.

## **Redemption**

1 Cor 6:11  
Mt 28:19  
Gen 17:7  
Gal 4:6-7

Second, holy baptism signifies and seals to us the washing away of our sins through Jesus Christ. We are therefore baptised into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

When we are baptised into the name of the Father, God the Father testifies and seals to us that he establishes an eternal covenant of grace with us. He adopts us for his children and heirs and therefore promises to provide us with all good and avert all evil or turn it to our benefit.

When we are baptised into the name of the Son, God the Son seals to us that he washes us in his blood from all our sins and unites us with him in his death and resurrection. Thus, we are freed from our sins and accounted righteous before God.

1 Cor 1:30

When we are baptised into the name of the Holy Spirit, God the Holy Spirit assures us by this holy sacrament that he will dwell in us and sanctify us to be living members of Christ, imparting to us what we have in Christ, namely the cleansing from our sins and the daily renewal of our lives, till we shall finally be presented without blemish among the assembly of the elect in life eternal.

1 Cor 12:13  
Rom 8:9,15,16

## **Gratitude**

Rom 12:1-2  
Mt 22:37-40  
Eph 2:22-24  
Rom 4:20-21  
Ps 105:8

Third, since every covenant contains two parts, *a promise and an obligation*, we are, through baptism, called and obliged by the Lord to a new obedience. We are to cleave to this one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to trust him, and to love him with our whole heart, soul, mind, and with all our strength. We must not love the world but put off our old nature and lead a God-fearing life. And if we sometimes through weakness fall into sins, we must not despair of God's mercy nor continue in sin, for baptism is a seal and trustworthy testimony that we have an eternal covenant with God.

## **Infant baptism**

Gen 17:7  
Acts 2:39

Although our children do not understand all this, we may not therefore exclude them from baptism. Just as they share without their knowledge in the condemnation of Adam, so are they, without their knowledge, received into grace in Christ. For the Lord spoke to Abraham, the father of all believers, and thus also speaks to us and our children, saying, 'I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.' Peter also testifies to this when he says, 'For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.'

Mk 10:16  
Col 2:11-12  
Ps 78:3-4  
Eph 6:4

Therefore, God formerly commanded that infants be circumcised. This circumcision was a seal of the covenant and of the righteousness of faith. Christ also took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them. Since baptism has replaced circumcision, therefore, infants must be baptised as heirs of the kingdom of God and of his covenant; and as they grow up, their parents have the duty to instruct them thoroughly in these things.

Beloved church, receive this child (these children) as part of the covenant people of God and the body of Christ. Love this child (these children), pray for him (her/them) and be an example of life in Christ.

In order to now administer this holy ordinance of God to his glory, for our comfort, and to the upbuilding of the church, let us call upon his holy name.

### Prayer

1 Pt 3:20-21

O, almighty, eternal God,  
In your righteous judgment you punished the unbelieving and unrepentant world with the flood, but in your great mercy saved and protected the believer Noah and his family, a mere eight people. You drowned the obstinate Pharaoh and all his host in the Red Sea but led your people Israel through the midst of the sea on dry ground - by which baptism was signified.

Rom 6:4 ff.

We therefore pray that you, in your infinite mercy, will graciously look upon this your child (children) and incorporate him (her/them) by your Holy Spirit into your Son Jesus Christ, so that he (she/they) may be buried with him by baptism into death and raised with him to walk in newness of life.

Mt 16:24  
1 Jn 4:18

We pray that he (she/they), following him day by day, may joyfully bear his (her/their) cross and cleave to him in true faith, firm hope, and ardent love. Grant that he (she/they), comforted in you, may leave this life, which is no more than a constant death, and at the last day may appear without terror before the judgment seat of Christ your Son.

All this we ask through him, our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who with you and the Holy Spirit, one only God, lives and reigns forever. Amen.

*The parents are now called to answer the following questions:*

Beloved in Christ the Lord: you have heard that baptism is an ordinance of the Lord our God to seal to us and our children his covenant; we must therefore use this sacrament for that purpose and not out of custom or superstition. That it may be clear, then, that you desire baptism for the right purpose, you are to answer sincerely the following questions:

First, do you confess that our children, though conceived and born in sin, and therefore subject to all sorts of misery, even to condemnation, are sanctified in Christ and thus as members of his church ought to be baptised?

Second, do you confess that the doctrine of the Old and New Testament, summarised in the confessions and taught here in this Christian church, is the true and complete doctrine of salvation?

Third, do you promise as father and mother to instruct your child in this doctrine, as soon as he (she/they) is (are) able to understand, and to have him (her/them) instructed therein to the utmost of your power?

Answer: Yes (to be answered by each parent)

Then the minister of God's Word says as follows upon administering the baptism:

**Baptism** [NAME], I baptise you into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Prayer** Almighty, merciful God and Father, we thank and praise you that you have forgiven us and our children all our sins through the blood of your beloved Son Jesus Christ. You received us through your Holy Spirit as members of your only-begotten Son, and so adopted us to be your children. You sealed and confirmed this to us by holy baptism. We pray through your beloved Son that you will always govern this child by your Holy Spirit, that he (she/they) may be nurtured in the Christian faith and in godliness, and may grow and increase in the Lord Jesus Christ. Grant that he (she/they) thus may acknowledge your fatherly goodness and mercy, which you have shown to him (her/them) and to us all. May he (she/they) live in all righteousness under our only Teacher, King, and High Priest, Jesus Christ, and fight courageously against and overcome sin, the devil, and his whole dominion. May he (she/they) forever praise and magnify you and your Son Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Spirit, the one only true God. Amen.

Eph 4:15-16

Eph 6:10-13