

FORM FOR HOLY BAPTISM: ADULTS



[When people who were not baptized as children – whether it be because of parental negligence or straying – have gained understanding and wish to be baptized, they must be thoroughly instructed in the tenets of the Christian faith. Once they have offered sincere testimony of this (to the church council, representatives of the church council or publicly - whatever the church deems most appropriate), they can be baptized. For this the following form is to be used.]

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 and 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 is a sign and seal of the washing away of sin through Jesus Christ. We are, therefore, 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 everlasting 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 all things for our good.

When we are baptized in the name of the Son, the Son assures us that He washes away 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 will dwell inside us and sanctify us as members of Christ. This He does by making real 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 ultimately presented without stain in the assembly of the elect in life eternal.

Gratitude Third: Because all covenants have two sides, through baptism God also calls and commands us to renewed obedience: to 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 the incontestable witness of our eternal covenant with God.

Baptism of adults Although children of Christian do not yet understand all these promises, they must [still] by virtue of the covenant be baptized. The baptism of adults is not to be permitted, unless they have come to reflect on their sin, repented and confess their faith in Christ. For this reason, not only did John the Baptism, in preaching repentance for the forgiveness of sins in accordance to God's command, baptize the repentant (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3), so also did our Lord Jesus Christ command His

apostles to teach and baptize all nations in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19). To this He also added the promise that whoever believes and are baptized, will be saved (Mark 16:16). As such, the apostles (as is apparent from the Acts of the Apostles: Acts 2:38; 8:36, 37; 10:47–48 and 16:14–15, 31–33) only baptized adults who repented and confessed their faith. This is why it is still to this day not permissible to baptize any adult other than those who know and understand the mysteries of the holy baptism through the preaching of the holy Gospel. It is for them who give account of this – and also their faith – by the confession of their mouth.

To now administer this holy sacrament of God to His glory, our comfort and the building up of the church, 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 a flood. In your great mercy, You saved and preserved the faithful Noah and his family – a mere eight souls. As sign of the baptism, You drowned the unyielding Pharaoh and all his men in the Red Sea and brought Your people Israel through the sea on dry ground.

We pray that in Your boundless mercy, You look upon these people (this person) 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, firm hope and fervent 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 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 adult to be baptized is addressed as follows:

You, N, wished to receive the holy baptism that it may be a sign and seal of being grafted into God's church. In order to show that you not only accept the Christian faith, in which you have been instructed and which you confessed before us, but that you also, by the grace of God, seek to live your life according thereto, we ask that you sincerely answer the following questions before God and His church:

Questions

First: Do you believe in the only true God – as the holy Trinity of father, Son and Holy Spirit – who created out of nothing heaven and earth and all that is in it and still keeps and rules over it so that nothing in heaven or earth occurs outside of His Godly will?

Answer:

Yes.

Secondly: Do you believe that you have been conceived and born into sin and are, therefore, under the wrath of God and incapable of good and inclined to all evil, having so often transgressed in thought, word and deed the Lord's commands and sincerely repent of these sins?

Answer:

Yes.

Third: Do you believe that Jesus Christ, both true and eternal God and also a man of flesh and blood, conceived in the virgin Mary, was given by God to be your Saviour; that you through this faith may receive forgiveness of sins in His blood and that through the power of the Holy Spirit, you have become a member of Christ and His church?

Answer:

Yes.

Four: Do you agree with all the articles of the Christian faith as taught from God's Word in this church and do you intend to continue steadfastly in this teaching every

day of your life? Do you also reject all heresies and errors in conflict with this doctrine? Do you promise to continue in the fellowship of this church both by listening to the Godly Word and by partaking in the Lord's Supper?

Answer: Yes.

Five: Do you genuinely intend to always live as a Christian and to forsake the world and its evil temptations, as a member of Christ and His church should; and do you promise to submit gladly to all Christian admonition?

Answer: Yes.

May the great and good God mercifully crown with His grace and blessing the sacred commitment that you have just made, through Jesus Christ. Amen

Baptism *Then the minister says:*

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

Prayer of Almighty God and merciful Father,

thanksgiving 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, You govern this brother (these brothers) [and/or] sister(s) by Your Holy Spirit that he/she/they may live a Christian and God-fearing life and grow and increase in our 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 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