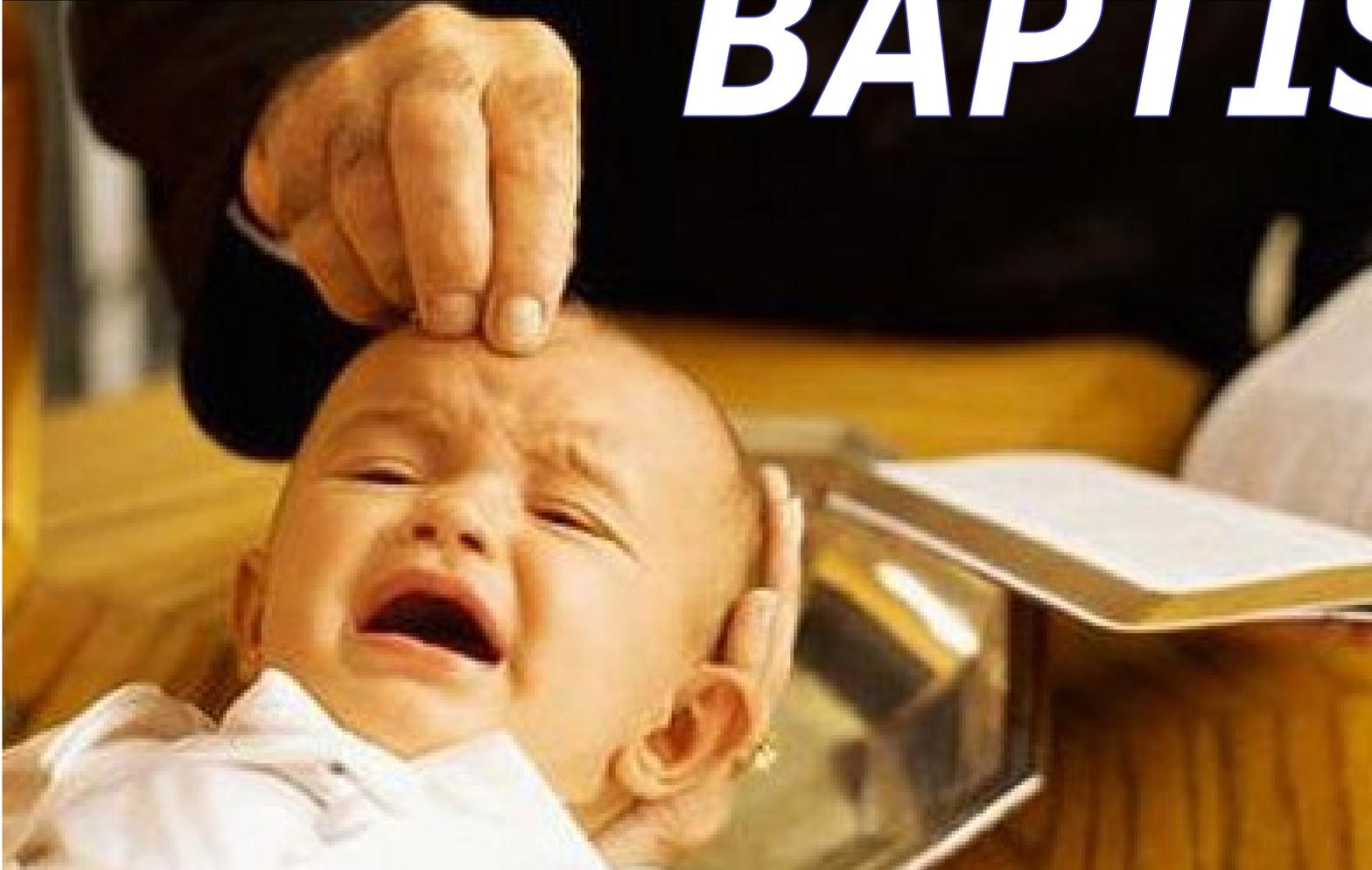


# ***INFANT BAPTISM***



# INFANT BAPTISM

Denomination	Infant Baptism
Roman Catholic Church	Yes
Eastern Orthodox Church	Yes
Lutherans	Yes
Methodists (Wesleyans)	Yes
Reformed churches	Yes
Presbyterians	Yes
Congregational churches	Yes
Anglican (Church of	Yes

<b>Denomination</b>	<b>Infant Baptism</b>
Baptists	No
Churches of Christ	No
Anabaptists (e.g. Church of the Brethren, Brethren in Christ, Amish, Hutterites, Mennonites)	No
Assemblies of God	No
Pentecostals	No
Plymouth Brethren	No
Seventh-day Adventists	No

# INFANT BAPTISM

- By the 2<sup>nd</sup> century we hear the first reports of infant baptism. At this time, Tertullian opposed the practice.
  - It follows that deferment of baptism is more profitable, in accordance with each person's character and attitude, and even age: and especially so as regards children ... let them be made Christians when they have become competent to know Christ. Why should innocent infancy come with haste to the remission of sins? Shall we take less cautious action in this than we take in worldly matters? Shall one who is not trusted with earthly property be entrusted with heavenly? Let them first learn how to ask for salvation, so that you may be seen to have given to one that asks.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On Baptism

# INFANT BAPTISM

- Because of original sin, Augustine (in the 5<sup>th</sup> century) stated that infants who are not baptized would be eternally damned in hell.
- Even if there were in men nothing but original sin, it would be sufficient for their condemnation... even that sin alone which was originally derived unto men not only excludes from the kingdom of God, which infants are unable to enter (as they (his opponents) themselves allow), unless they have received the grace of Christ before they die, but also alienates from salvation and everlasting life... <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Augustine - 'On the Baptism of infants'

# INFANT BAPTISM

- Baptismal regeneration is the idea that water baptism is essential for salvation and it was one of the earliest heresies to enter the church.
  - From the idea that baptism was necessary for salvation, came the practice of baptizing children, just in case they died in infancy.
- And so Augustine writes that infants can be regenerated by baptism.
  - It is this one Spirit who makes it possible for an infant to be regenerated ... when that infant is brought to baptism; and it is through this one Spirit that the infant so presented is reborn. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Augustine - Letters 98:2 (AD 412)

- ❑ Q: Will unbaptized children go to hell?
- ❑ A: Augustine wrote of "the kingdom of God, which infants are unable to enter... unless they have received the grace of Christ before they die". In contrast Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven belonged to little children:

➤ Matt 19:13-14 Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them. Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."



# CHILDREN BELONG TO GOD

- Until a child reaches the age of understanding - and can make a conscious decision to accept or reject the Lord - they belong to God. Jesus said that their angels always saw the face of his Father in heaven:
  - Matt 18:2,3,10 He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven... See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven."



# INFANT BAPTISM

- ❑ You may ask why when babies are baptized (or 'christened') in certain churches, they are given their names at the same time. There is no precedent for this in Scripture.
- ❑ Quoting from Johannes Warns, we read, "It is noteworthy that in ancient Germanic times there was a form of dipping, and pouring of water upon children with which the giving of the name was connected." <sup>1</sup>
- ❑ In the religious customs of the Romans the aqua lustralis or water of purification played an important part. A lustratio liberorum (purification of deliverance) took place, with newly born girls on the eighth day after birth, with boys on the ninth day, to protect them from sorcery. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Warren Paynter: "1st Principles 03 - The doctrine of baptisms"

<http://www.gofhenoni.co.za/ministry-archives.aspx?mTd=75>

# INFANT BAPTISM

- ❑ In the *Manual of Roman Antiquities* (Ramsay and Lanciane) we read: "Boys on the ninth, and girls on the eighth day after birth underwent a religious purification termed 'lustratio', and on this day, which was called 'Dies Lustricus', the former received their 'Proenomen' (nomen accipiebant)."
- ❑ Proenomen means "first name". In many traditional churches the "Christian name" is the name given at the christening. Like many pagan ideas this practice was absorbed into the practice of the Church and Christianized by combining it with infant baptism.
- ❑ Christening (also known as paedobaptism) gradually displaced the Biblical teaching of the Baptism of Believers (known as credobaptism).

# SPRINKLING



# SPRINKLING

□ In the Bible, blood<sup>1</sup> was sprinkled (rhantizo); not water.

<sup>1</sup> Here are the 6 times 'rhantizo' (pronounced hran-tid'-zo) and 'rhantismos' are used in the NT (KJV):

1. Heb 9:13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer **sprinkling** (rhantizo) the unclean...
2. Heb 9:19 ... he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and **sprinkled** (rhantizo) both the book, and all the people
3. Heb 9:21 Moreover he **sprinkled** (rhantizo) with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.
4. Heb 10:22 ... having our hearts **sprinkled** (rhantizo) from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed (louo) with pure water.
5. Heb 12:24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of **sprinkling** (rhantismos)...
6. 1 Pet 1:2 ... unto obedience and **sprinkling** (rhantismos) of the blood of Jesus Christ...

# SPRINKLING

- The first recorded departures from the practice of immersion in baptism were in special cases only i.e. due to deathbed or sickbed baptisms, or scarcity of water. Some see the Didache as making the earliest reference to an exception with it's remarks about the preferred use of "living water" (which might be running water) for baptism.
- And concerning baptism, baptize this way: Having first said all these things, baptize into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Matthew 28:19 in living water. But if you have not living water, baptize into other water; and if you can not in cold, in warm. But if you have not either, pour out water thrice upon the head into the name of Father and Son and Holy Spirit. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Didache (Chapter 7. Concerning Baptism)

# SPRINKLING

- ❑ So the writer of the Didache seems to be saying that immersion in running (or still) water is preferable, but pouring is allowable if these are not available. <sup>1</sup>
- ❑ Hippolytus of Rome, who wrote in detail about their common practice of triune immersion conceded, "If water is scarce, whether as a constant condition or on occasion, then use whatever water is available." <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Didache is not inspired, but is considered valuable as an early church document. It is also called the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" and is supposed to be a record what the twelve apostles taught. It was possibly written in the late 1<sup>st</sup> or early 2<sup>nd</sup> century but there is debate as to its authenticity. The work is cited by Eusebius (260-341), Athanasius (293-373) and possibly by Origen (185-254). The Didache 16:2-3 is either quoted in the Epistle of Barnabbas 4:9, or vice versa. The Epistle of Barnabbas was written in 130-131 AD.

<sup>2</sup> The Apostolic Tradition (AD 215)

# SPRINKLING

- ❑ The Bishop of Rome, Cornelius I, wrote that as Novation was about to die, “he received baptism in the bed where he lay, by pouring”.<sup>1</sup>
- ❑ Cyprian wrote that no one should be “disturbed because the sick are poured upon or sprinkled when they receive the Lord’s grace.”<sup>2</sup>
- ❑ However it was not until AD 1311 that the Council of Ravenna seems to give sprinkling preference over immersion:
  - “Baptism is to be administered by trine aspersion or immersion.”<sup>3</sup> (Aspersion refers to sprinkling.)

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Fabius of Antioch (AD 251); cited in Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, 6:43:11

<sup>2</sup> Letter to a Certain Magnus 69:12 (AD 255)

<sup>3</sup> Labbe and Cosasart, Sacrosancta Concilia, II. B. 2.1586. Paris, 1671



**BELIEVERS**

**BAPTISM**

# PERSECUTION

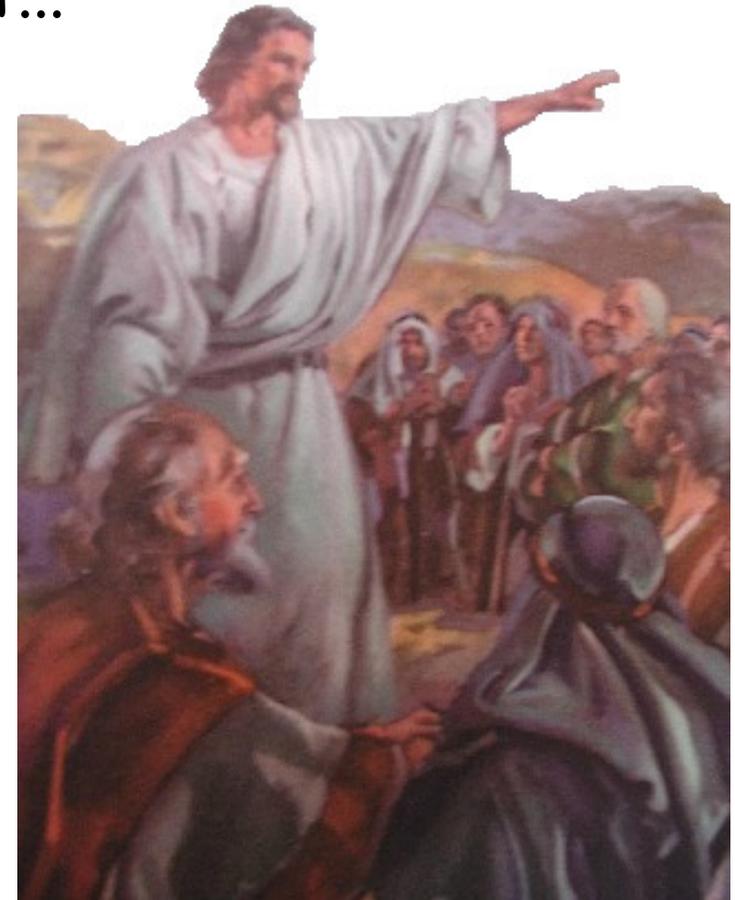
- ❑ Acts 2:37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"  
38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.  
39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."
- ❑ The Waldenses in 12<sup>th</sup> century France opposed heretical papal doctrines like infant baptism.
- ❑ 12th C, in southern France the disciples of Henry of Lausanne taught that: The baptism of persons before they have reached the years of discretion is invalid. Believers' baptism was based upon Mark 16:16.

# PERSECUTION

- ❑ Mark 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.
- ❑ 14<sup>th</sup> C: Amongst other things, the Lollards (followers of Wycliffe) practiced believer's baptism and denied infant baptism. Fox says one of their articles of faith was that "faith ought to precede baptism."
- ❑ 16<sup>th</sup> C: Anabaptists - Conrad Grebel became convinced from Scripture that infant baptism was wrong. In order to exercise faith, a person had to be old enough to understand the Gospel. Baptism could only have meaning for a person who understood why he or she was being baptized.
- ❑ Baptists

# BELIEVERS BAPTISM

- ❑ Jesus instructed us to baptize disciples or believers:
  - Matt 28:19 “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...”
  - Mark 16:16 “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”
- ❑ The Biblical precedent is to baptize believers or disciples. As babies do not yet have the capacity to believe or even understand the concept of salvation, we do not baptize infants.



# BELIEVERS BAPTISM

- ❑ Even with John's baptism of repentance (which is not the same as Christian baptism) - repentance came first and then baptism. John would not baptize those who did not demonstrate repentance already:
  - Matt 3:7-8 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? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance."
- ❑ Of the seven sacraments practiced by the Papal church, Protestants only retained the two which were Biblical - the Lord's Supper and Baptism. As the Lord Supper may not be given to unbelievers (1 Cor 11:28), neither should Baptism.

# BELIEVERS BAPTISM

- ❑ The NT teaches 'believers baptism' with repentance as a prerequisite, which infants are incapable of doing:
- ❑ On the day of Pentecost:
  - Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized..."
- ❑ In Samaria:
  - Acts 8:12 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.
- ❑ When Paul was in Corinth we read the following:
  - Acts 18:8 ... many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized.

# BELIEVERS BAPTISM

- The disciples of John the Baptist that Paul encountered at Ephesus, already believed and then were baptized in water and the Holy Spirit:
  - Acts 19:1-5 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?" "John's baptism," they replied. 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." On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

# HOUSEHOLDS BAPTISED

- One of the arguments used by the advocates of paedobaptism is the fact that there are several passages in the book of Acts where we read of a whole household being baptized. This phrase occurs in Acts 11:14 concerning the household of Cornelius; in Acts 16:15 concerning the household of Lydia; in Acts 16:31 concerning the household of the Philippian jailer; in Acts 18:8 concerning the household of Crispus the ruler of the synagogue. Apart from the fact that there are households where there are no small children or infants, it is clear from these Scriptures that baptism only followed after faith.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Warren Paynter: "1st Principles 03 - The doctrine of baptisms"  
<http://www.aqfbenoni.co.za/ministry-archives.aspx?mId=75>

# HOUSEHOLDS BAPTISED

- Cornelius and his household heard the gospel (Acts 10:34-43) and Peter ends his message with these words, indicating that belief is the criteria for forgiveness:
  - “All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” (Acts 10:43)
- Acts 11:18 indicates that they repented:
  - “So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life.”
- Acts 11:14 shows that it was the message of the gospel that would lead to salvation:
  - He will bring you a message through which you and all your household will be saved.’

# HOUSEHOLDS BAPTISED

- Peter only instructed that Cornelius and his household be baptized after he saw the evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. As Peter knew that this gift is only given to believers, he realized that they met the criteria for water baptism:
  - Acts 10:44-47 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have."

# HOUSEHOLDS BAPTISED

- The Philippian jailer and his household believed first and then were baptized. Note that "he and his whole family" had first "come to believe in God".
- Acts 16:29-34 The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved - you and your household." Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God - he and his whole family.

# HOUSEHOLDS BAPTISED

- ❑ In Philippi, Lydia first responded to the gospel before she was baptized:
  - Acts 16:14-15 One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. When she 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.
- ❑ The case of Crispus shows that believing precedes baptism:
  - Acts 18:8 Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized.

## **BIBLICAL PRECEDENT FOR BLESSING CHILDREN**

**☐ Gen 27: Isaac blesses Jacob**

**☐ Gen 48: Jacob blesses his grandsons Ephraim & Mannaseh**

**☐ Gen 49: Jacob blesses his 12 sons**

**☐ 1 Sam: Hannah offers her son in service to God**

**☐ Luke 1: Zechariah blesses his son John**

**☐ Matt 10:13 People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. 14 When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 15 I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” 16 And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.**

## ❑ DISCIPLINE

- **Prov 13:24** He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.
- **Prov 22:6** Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

## ❑ SCRIPTURE:

- **2 Timothy 3:15** and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

## ❑ EXAMPLE:

- **Col 3:21** Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.
- **1 Thess 2:7** but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children.