

Discussion Questions

- Why do you think it might be attractive to baptize our infant children?
- How does baptizing infants distract from the gospel message?

Day 5 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

Yesterday we discussed how Presbyterians and other paedobaptists think Peter says the New Covenant promise is for all believers and their children. They then baptize their infants. Peter in Acts 2, however, is declaring that the salvation is for Jew and Gentile alike. The ones who are saved out of those two groups are those ‘whom the Lord our God calls to himself.’ The New Covenant and the Old Covenant don’t treat the children of the covenant the same. This is why the paedobaptists conclusions around baptism end up so wrong. The question we must ask ourselves is, ‘who are the covenant children’? In the Old Covenant the children of the covenant are all the physical descendants of Abraham who are born from the line of Israel. If you are born to a covenant member, then you are a covenant member. This is why the boys were all circumcised shortly after birth. No effectual calling of God or new birth was required. The New Covenant is very different! The children of the New Covenant are all those who are the spiritual descendants of Abraham. It’s not based on your physical birth, but whether you have the new birth. John 1:12-13 *But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*

Discussion Questions

- Why is spiritual birth more important than physical birth?
- Have you been born again?

Baptist Catechism Family Worship Guide



West Oaks Baptist Church

(in preparation for Sunday, August 31st, 2025)

Baptist Catechism Question #99

Q: Are the infants of such as are professing believers to be baptized?

A: *The infants of such as are professing believers are not to be baptized, because there is neither command or example in the holy scriptures, or certain consequence from them to baptize such.*

Suggested Memory Verse

John 1:12-13 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (ESV)

Day 1 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

When we look back over church history we find that many Christians have baptized infants. As Baptists we only baptize those who have made professions of faith in Jesus Christ. This excludes infants from the ordinance of baptism. There are a number of reasons we only baptize those who have confessed faith in Christ. The first and primary reason we baptize those who have made a profession of faith is because that is the command God gives us in his word. Acts 2:38 *And Peter said to them, “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. Peter tells his listeners to repent and be baptized. Repentance here is understood to stand for repentance and faith together. This means that Peter is telling everyone who hears him to believe in Jesus and then to be baptized. If this is the command of God then we must faithfully obey him. Note that Peter does not tell his hearers to believe and baptize their children. There is no command, in this passage or any other, for believers to do such a thing. They are to believe and be baptized themselves only. If we are to be faithful followers of Jesus we must be careful to listen and obey exactly as our God has commanded us.*

Discussion Questions

- Why do you think so many churches have baptized infants?
- How can we know what is the right thing to do?

Day 2 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

Yesterday we considered the command of God regarding baptism. The Bible is clear in telling us to believe and to be baptized. There is no command to baptize our children. Today we consider that there is also no example in scripture of infants being baptized. There are many examples of believers being baptized. Sometimes whole families are described as hearing the word, believing the word, and then being baptized together. What we don't see any examples of throughout the whole Bible, is an infant being baptized. You may sometimes hear Presbyterian Christians propose that there were likely babies present in the families that were all baptized together. While there's no way to prove that babies weren't present, the Bible never gives a clear indication that they were. At best the Bible is silent on the presence of infants in these occurrences. If we look a little closer, even this possibility seems less likely. Consider Lydia. Acts 16:15 *...she was baptized, and her household as well...* Lydia's household was baptized, however, Lydia herself was likely single and her servants likely were as well. When the Philippian jailer was baptized in that same chapter of Acts his household was as well. Could there have been infants? Possibly, but immediately after this Luke makes clear that the Jailer's entire household rejoiced at his faith in Jesus. Infants are not likely included when Luke says everyone rejoiced. Not once do we see an example of an infant baptized in the Bible.

Discussion Questions

- What does the rejoicing of the Philippian Jailer's family tell us about their faith?

- Have you ever rejoiced at the salvation of God? If not, might you start today?

Day 3 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

We have seen the last couple days that the bible neither commands infant baptism nor gives any example of it. The clear testimony of scripture is that those who believe in Jesus Christ are to be baptized into Christ's church. Despite that clarity some argue for infant baptism as a necessary consequence of other teachings in the Bible. The rest of this week we will consider some of those possible connections. One common connection that Presbyterians make is that they equate baptism in the New Covenant with circumcision in the Old Covenant. The claim is that since God required his people in the Old Covenant to circumcise themselves and their children, he likewise expects his people in the New Covenant to baptize themselves and their children. While this may seem compelling initially, when we look a little closer it doesn't hold up to the biblical data. Circumcision is given in the Old Covenant as a picture pointing forward to the New Birth that God would bring about in the New Covenant. Baptism, on the other hand, is a picture pointing back to what God has already done in the believer's life. He has already died to sin and been raised with Jesus spiritually. Romans 6:4 *We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*

Discussion Questions

- How are the functions of circumcision and baptism different?
- Was circumcision always intended to point to the faith of the one circumcised? How can you tell?

Day 4 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

One bible verse that often comes up when discussing baptism is Acts 2:39. After Peter commands the sorrowful Jews to “repent and be baptized” he follows up with, “For the promise is for you and for your children...” Presbyterians see in this verse a promise that the New Covenant is like the Old Covenant in including children with their parents. If the covenants really are this similar then the argument to treat baptism like circumcision is strengthened. Surely we must give baptism to believer's children. The problem with this interpretation is that it doesn't consider the rest of verse 39! The entire verse must be read. Acts 2:39 *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.* This verse doesn't stop with the Jews or their children but goes on to include ‘all who are far off’. If this verse is taken to mean all believer's children should be baptized, it must also mean all gentiles should be baptized. The truth is that verse 39 isn't telling us who to baptize, it's telling us who salvation is for. It is for the Jews, their children, and the gentiles. Does that mean everyone will be saved? No! only those whom the Lord our God calls to himself. God will save people from every tribe, tongue, and language. When he calls them and gives them faith in Jesus, then we are to baptize those new believers.