

What is Holy Baptism, and What Does Baptism Do?

A Quick Study for adults who bring their child to Baptism

Holy Scripture:

Matthew 28:16-20

Acts 2:38-39

Romans 6

Galatians 3:25-27

Ephesians 4:4-7

Titus 3:5-7

1 Peter 3:18-21

Small Catechism:

First

What is Baptism? Answer: Baptism is not simple water only, but it is the water included in God's command and connected with God's Word.

Which is that Word of God? Answer: Christ, our Lord, says in the last chapter of Matthew, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"

Second

What does Baptism give or profit? Answer: It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.

Which are these words and promises of God? Answer: Christ, our Lord, says in the last chapter of Mark, "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

Third

How can water do such great things? Answer: It is not the water indeed that does them, but the Word of God, which is in and with the water, and faith, which trusts this Word of God in the water. For without the Word of God the water is simple 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 Spirit. As St. Paul says in Titus, chapter three, "He saved us...by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is trustworthy."

Fourth

What does such baptizing with water signify? Answer: It signifies that the old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts. And also it shows that a new man should daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Where is this written? Answer: St. Paul says in Romans chapter 6, "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."

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