

# THE WASHING OF REBIRTH

**INTRODUCTION:** It's easy to give someone physical blessings, like food or clothes. But how do you give someone spiritual blessings--like forgiveness, hope, peace, and eternal life?

**What is a sacrament?** We observe from their use in Scripture that a sacrament is:

- A \_\_\_\_\_ act,
- Instituted by \_\_\_\_\_,
- With certain \_\_\_\_\_ connected with the Gospel promise,
- By which God both offers and gives \_\_\_\_\_.

There are two sacraments: \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_

Note St. Augustine's description: "*the visible Word*"

## 1. THE INSTITUTION OF BAPTISM

### *What is Baptism?*

Baptism is not just plain water, but it is water used by God's command and connected with God's Word.

### *What is that Word of God?*

Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Matthew, "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit!" (Mt 28:19)

- Baptism is applying \_\_\_\_\_ in any manner in the name of the \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. This washing is God's tool to make \_\_\_\_\_ for eternity and is meant for \_\_\_\_\_.

Should babies be baptized? Yes!

1. Scripture calls them \_\_\_\_\_ by birth and under God's \_\_\_\_\_. (Ps 51:5, Ro 3:10ff)
2. Jesus tells us to baptize \_\_\_\_\_, no exceptions. (Mt 28:19)
3. Baptism is a \_\_\_\_\_ that includes \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 2:38-39)
4. Jesus says even \_\_\_\_\_ can believe in him. (Mt 18:6, Mk 10:13-16)
5. The \_\_\_\_\_ must work faith, whether in the old or the very young. (Ro 12:3, Jn 3:5-6)

From the *Augsburg Confession*:

"It is very certain that the promise of salvation also applies to little children... Therefore, it is necessary to baptize little children, that the promise of salvation may be applied to them, according to Christ's command to baptize all nations (Matthew 28:19). Just as in this passage salvation is offered to all, so Baptism is offered to all, to men, women, children, infants. It clearly follows, therefore, that infants are to be baptized, because salvation is offered with Baptism. Second, it is clear that God approves of the Baptism of little children. Therefore [those] who condemn the Baptism of little children believe wickedly." (Article IV)

## 2. THE BLESSINGS OF BAPTISM

### *What does Baptism do for us?*

Baptism works forgiveness of sin, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.

### *What are these words and promises of God?*

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." (Mk 16:16)

- Acts 2:38, "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."
- John 3:3,5, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again...I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is **born of water and the Spirit**."
- 1 Peter 3:21, "...this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. **It saves you** by the resurrection of Jesus Christ"
- Baptism gives \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

## 3. THE POWER OF BAPTISM

### *How can water do such great things?*

It is certainly not the water that does such things, but God's Word which is in and with the water, and faith which trusts this Word used with the water. For without God's Word the water is just plain water and not baptism. But with this Word it is baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of rebirth by the Holy Spirit.

### *Where is this written?*

St. Paul says in Titus, chapter 3, "God saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life." This is a trustworthy saying.

- Baptism gets its \_\_\_\_\_ from the \_\_\_\_\_, which works and strengthens saving \_\_\_\_\_ through the powerful promise of \_\_\_\_\_.

## 4. THE MEANING OF BAPTISM FOR OUR DAILY LIFE

### *What does baptizing with water mean?*

Baptism means that the old Adam in us should be drowned by daily contrition and repentance, and that all its evil deeds and desires be put to death. It also means that a new person should daily arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

### *Where is this written?*

St. Paul says in Romans, chapter 6, "We were buried with Christ through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."

- Baptism serves to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ God-pleasing living.

### **QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:**

- Do I believe that "baptism now saves you also"--or is it just a human ordinance without any power to forgive and save?
- Am I living as one still captive by sin, or as one who has been freed by baptism to live a new life?

### **FOR NEXT TIME**

Complete Lesson 7 Worksheet.

NEXT LESSON DATE: \_\_\_\_\_