



The Sacrament of Baptism

Introduction

Opening Prayer: Heavenly Father, you have given us water. Water can be harmless and it can also be the most powerful element in the world. Water can sustain or take life. We use water to clean, drink and live. We know of times from the Bible when you used water for a miracle. Above all, thank you for using water in my baptism when you washed away my sins and made me your own dear child. Amen.

Do you have any unique abilities? Can you wiggle your ears, lick your nose or your elbow, or do something even cooler? If so, and I asked you, "How can you do that?" You'd probably say, "I don't know. I just can." That's a lot like our main question for today.

Lesson Aim: How can baptism offer and give the great blessings that it does?

Part One

Read or skim the familiar account of Noah's ark in Genesis 6:11-8:12.

- 1) What was the world like in Noah's time?
- 2) What made Noah special from all other people?
- 3) What do Noah's flood and baptism have in common?
- 4) How did God use water to wash away sin?
- 5) How did God use water to save those who were faithful and believed in him?
- 6) Did water do those things, or did God?



Read 1 Peter 3:20b-21.

At this point in chapter 3, Peter has just started talking about Noah and the ark. We're looking at the sentence that begins halfway through verse 20, where Peter is talking about Noah's ark.

- 7) We're told here that the eight people who were in the ark were saved through what?
- 8) Then this verse tells us that the water of baptism provides us not only with the removal of dirt (both physical and spiritual), but baptism also provides us with what?
- 9) By what does the water of baptism save us?

Read Titus 3:5-7.

In 1 Peter we learned that God saved us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He did this not because of righteous things we have done, but because of his mercy.

10) This passage describes baptism as the washing of what?

Read Ephesians 5:25-27.

This verse tells us that in Christian baptism we are cleansed by a washing with water, but not just water.

11) Christ cleansed us with water through what?

Through baptism, Christ makes us holy and blameless before God.

The power of baptism is the Word of God, so it's not the water that saves us, it's God. God uses the water with his Word.

12) What are the words of baptism? (cf. Matthew 28:18)

KEY POINT 1 - It is not the water that does such great things, but the Holy Spirit, who works by God's Word connected with the water used in Baptism.

What I've learned so far:



Part Two

Let's look again to a passage we've seen several times in these lessons on baptism.

Read Acts 2:38-39.

1) This passage talks about a promise that is for you and your children. What is that promise? Or what does being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ give you?

Read Colossians 2:12.

2) What blessing of baptism does this verse promise through your faith?

If a baby had a fever and a doctor gave the baby's parents medicine that he assured them would get rid of the fever, the parents would be fools not to use the medicine. God tells us that in Baptism a baby (or anyone) can receive three wonderful blessings: faith, the forgiveness of sins, and eternal life. It would be foolish for parents to not baptize their baby and thus to cause them to be without the blessings of Baptism!

KEY POINT 2 - Through the Word of God in Baptism, the Holy Spirit offers blessings to us and also gives us the faith to trust that promise.

What I've learned so far:

Part Three

Study pages 320-325 in the Catechism and answer the following questions in your own words.

- 1) Why is baptism able to offer and give the great blessings that it does?

- 2) Through what does the Holy Spirit work in baptism?

- 3) What does the Word of God make baptism?

- 4) What is a sacrament?
A sacrament
 - A. Is instituted by
 - B. Uses
 - C. Offers and gives

- 5) What are the Means of Grace?

Baptism is not our work, but God's work. It is a priceless treasure God gives and faith receives. God's Word of gospel promise makes baptism what it is. Baptism gives us great comfort and strength when our sins accuse us. True repentance is daily returning to baptism. Baptism is our daily garment, by which we suppress the Old Adam and grow up in the New Man, being clothed with the righteousness of Christ. — Luther

Helpful Passage

John 3:5

We are born in a new life when we come to faith by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Main point — In Baptism, the Holy Spirit works through God's Word connected with the water, offering God's blessings and giving faith to receive those blessings.



Final considerations:

- 1) What makes the water of baptism different from other water?
- 2) Why is the Word of God so important in baptism?
- 3) Why does the Bible call baptism a washing of rebirth?
- 4) What is the power of a sacrament?
- 5) The power of baptism lies in the ____
 - A. water which is used, since it is holy water.
 - B. Word of God which is connected with the water.
 - C. fact that the water is applied three times in the name of the Triune God, which assures us of the divine help of all three persons of the Trinity.

What I've learned about the power of baptism:



Commit to Memory:

- The Power of Baptism (with its *How can water do such great things?* and *Where is this written?*)
 - Acts 2:38-39