

FORM FOR THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS

Beloved congregation in the Lord Jesus Christ:

The principal parts of the doctrine of holy baptism are these three:

First: That we with our children are conceived and born in sin, and therefore are children of wrath, so that we cannot enter into the kingdom of God, except we are born again. This, the dipping in or sprinkling with water teaches us, whereby the impurity of our souls is signified, that we may be admonished to loathe ourselves, humble ourselves before God, and seek for our purification and salvation apart from ourselves.

Second: Holy baptism witnesses and seals unto us the washing away of our sins through Jesus Christ. Therefore we are baptized into the Name of God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. For when we are baptized into the Name of the Father, God the Father witnesses and seals unto us that He makes an eternal covenant of grace with us and adopts us for His children and heirs, and therefore will provide us with every good thing and avert all evil or turn it to our profit. And when we are baptized into the Name of the Son, the Son seals unto us that He washes us in His blood from all our sins, incorporating us into the fellowship of His death and resurrection, so that we are freed from our sins and accounted righteous before God. Likewise, when we are baptized into the Name of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit assures us by this holy sacrament that He will dwell in us, and sanctify us to be members of Christ, imparting to us that which we have in Christ, namely, the washing away of our sins and the daily renewing of our lives, till we shall finally be presented without spot among the assembly of the elect in life eternal.

Third: Whereas in all covenants there are contained two parts, therefore are we by God, through baptism, admonished of and obliged unto new obedience, namely, that we cleave to this one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that we trust in Him, and love Him with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength; that we forsake the world, crucify our old nature, and walk in a godly life. And if we sometimes through weakness fall into sins, we must not therefore despair of God's mercy, nor continue in sin, since baptism is a seal and indubitable testimony that we have an eternal covenant with God.

And although our children do not understand these things, we may not therefore exclude them from baptism, since they are without their knowledge partakers of the condemnation in Adam, and **so again are received unto grace in Christ**: as God speaks unto Abraham, the father of all believers, and therefore also to us and our children, saving: *I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee* (Gen. 17:7). This also Peter testifies with these words: *For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him* (Acts 2:39). Therefore God formerly commanded to circumcise them, which was a seal of the covenant and of the righteousness of faith; as also Christ embraced them, laid His hands upon them, and blessed them (Mark 10:16). Since, then, baptism has come in the place of circumcision (Col. 2:11-13), **the children should be baptized as heirs of the kingdom of God** and of His covenant; and as they grow up, the parents shall be bound to give them further instruction in these things.

That we, therefore, may administer this holy ordinance of God to His glory, to our comfort, and to the edification of the church, let us call upon His holy Name:

O almighty, eternal God, Thou who hast according to Thy severe judgment punished the unbelieving and unrepentant world with the flood, and hast according to Thy great mercy saved and protected believing Noah and his family; Thou who hast drowned the obstinate Pharaoh and all his host in the Red Sea and led Thy people Israel through the midst of the sea upon dry ground — by which baptism was signified — we beseech Thee

that **Thou wilt be pleased of Thine infinite mercy, graciously to look upon these Thy children and incorporate them by Thy Holy Spirit into Thy Son Jesus Christ**, that they may be buried with Him through baptism into death and be raised with Him in newness of life; that they, daily following Him, may joyfully bear their cross, cleaving unto Him in true faith, firm hope, and ardent love; that they, being comforted in Thee, may leave this life, which is nothing but a constant death, and at the last day may appear without terror before the judgment seat of Christ Thy Son, through Him, our Lord Jesus Christ, who with Thee and the Holy Spirit, one only God, lives and reigns forever. AMEN.

ADDRESS TO THE PARENTS

Beloved in Christ the Lord, you have heard that baptism is an ordinance of God to seal unto us and our seed His covenant; therefore it must be used for that end, and not out of custom or superstition. That it may, then, be manifest that you are thus minded, you are to answer sincerely to these questions:

First: Do you acknowledge that our children, though conceived and born in sin and therefore subject to all manner of misery, yea, to condemnation itself, **are sanctified in Christ**, and therefore as members of His Church ought to be baptized?

Second: Do you acknowledge the doctrine which is contained in the Old and the New Testament, and in the articles of the Christian faith, and which is taught here in this Christian church, to be the true and complete doctrine of salvation?

Third: Do you promise and intend to instruct these children, as soon as they are able to understand, in the aforesaid doctrine, and cause them to be instructed therein, to the utmost of your power?

Answer: We do (or in case only one of the parents is a confessing member: I do)

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Then the minister of God's Word, in baptizing, shall say:

N—, I baptize you into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

THANKSGIVING

Almighty God and merciful Father, we thank and praise Thee that **Thou hast forgiven us and our children all our sins, through the blood of Thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, and received us through Thy Holy Spirit as members of Thine only begotten Son, and so adopted us to be Thy children, and sealed and confirmed the same unto us by holy baptism**. We beseech Thee also, through Him, Thy beloved Son, that Thou wilt always govern these children by Thy Holy Spirit, that they may be nurtured in the Christian faith and in godliness, **and grow and increase in the Lord Jesus Christ, in order that they may acknowledge Thy fatherly goodness and mercy, which Thou hast shown to them and to us all**, and live in all righteousness under our only Teacher, King, and High Priest, Jesus Christ; and manfully fight against and overcome sin, the devil, and his whole dominion, to the end that they may eternally praise and magnify Thee, and Thy Son Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Spirit, the one only true God. AMEN.