



1

Replying to Household Baptisms

- Acts 16:14-15
 - Put simply, to argue that infants were present (or absent) in Lydia's household is speculative, contrary to R. Scott Clark who passionately asserts that "it cannot be reasonably argued that there were no children in this household." Instead, multiple factors seem to give positive reason to think infants were not present in Lydia's household:
 - 1) No husband is mentioned—her household is described as her own 2) she was in business for herself selling fabrics 3) she had traveled hundreds of miles from Thyatira to conduct business in Philippi and 4) she felt the freedom to invite a group of men to stay at her home.

2

Replying to Household Baptisms

- Acts 16:31-34
 - 1) Paul and Silas spoke the word of the Lord to “all who were in his house” 2) the whole household is said to rejoice 3) we might question the plausibility of waking an infant in the middle of the night to have a new worldview spoken to them 4) vs. 34 indicates that the Philippian jailer “believed in God with his whole household.”
- The *Principle* of Household Baptism

3

A Baptist Theology of Household Baptism

- Baptists affirm the necessity of household baptism—particularly of infants—on the basis of the head of the household and that God's primary operative unit is still the family. That's because they believe that those who enter into the household of God (Eph. 2:19; 1 Tim. 3:13) by being born from above (Jn. 3:3-4) are entitled to receive the covenant sign (Matt. 28:19-20) without delay as infants in Christ (1 Cor. 3:1) and children adopted into the family (Rom. 8:15-17) following the example and command of Christ (Matt. 3:13-17), the head of the household (Eph. 5:23).

4

Responding to “Let the Children Come to Me” (Mk 10:13-16 et al.)

- Objection #1: There is no mention whatsoever here or in parallels that Jesus or his disciples baptized any of the children brought to him or that that they were brought to him for any other reason than to receive a traditional blessing from an elder/rabbi in accordance with common practice of the day.
 - Carson: “Children in Jesus’ day were often brought to rabbis and elders to be blessed, customarily by placing hands on them.”
- Objection #2: As a constant mistake, paedobaptists errantly equate “children” with “infants.” Baptists do not have a theological (though some have practical) objection to baptizing children who show evidence that they understand the Gospel and have repented of their sin. This remains the case despite Lk. 18:15’s mention of infants brought to Jesus “so that he might touch them” as a form of blessing.

5

Responding to “Let the Children Come to Me” (Mk 10:13-16 et al.)

- Objection #3: Nothing about what Jesus says indicates that the Kingdom belongs to physical children, but rather, those who receive the Kingdom of God “such as” (Gr. *toioutōn*) children (Mk. 10:14)—that is, as humble, dependent, trusting and needy people, not as those who can’t sit still or require diaper changes.
- Objection #4: In order to justify their practice from this text, the paedobaptist must assume that all of the children brought before Jesus were children of believers, when in reality, all sorts of people sought the blessing and healing of Jesus and the vast majority of people who followed Jesus around were not true disciples.

6

Responding to 1 Cor. 7:14

- Objection: Paedobaptists are inconsistent in their understanding and/or application of this passage because both the children and the unbelieving (adult) spouse are said to be holy/made holy by the believing spouse. And yet, paedobaptists do not consider the unbelieving spouse to be in the covenant, (rightly) refusing them baptism on account of their unbelief.
- Reformed Baptist Interpretation #1
- Reformed Baptist Interpretation #2
- Reformed Baptist Interpretation # 3

7

Responding to 1 Cor. 7:14

- On interpretation #3, the spouse/child comparison is one from **analogy**, not **causation**: in the same way that the children of the Corinthians should not be put away as bastard children from a principle of legitimate parenthood regardless of their unbelief (which could cause one to wonder if they are legitimate children under the Christian arrangement), so too an unbelieving spouse should not be put away by the believing spouse from a principle of legitimate spousal union (which given that the other is not “in the Lord”—1 Cor. 7:39—could otherwise cause one to wonder if they are in a legitimate spousal-relationship under the Christian arrangement).

8

John Dagg (mid 1800's)

“[Paul] examines the particular case of intercourse between married persons, and decides that a believer and unbeliever may lawfully dwell together... He maintains that the intercourse of a married pair with each other and that of parents with their children, must be regulated by the same rule. An unconverted husband or wife stands on the same footing with unconverted children. If intercourse with the former is lawful, intercourse with the latter is equally lawful. In this manner he shows that this Judaizing doctrine, if applied in its full extent, would sever the ties that bind parents to their children, and throw out the offspring of Christian parents into the ungodly world from their very birth, without any provision for their protection, support or religious education. By showing that this monstrous consequence legitimately follows from the doctrine, he has furnished an argument against it which is perfectly conclusive.”

9

Does Baptism Replace Circumcision?

- Rom. 4-11-12
 - Objection #1: The passage quite literally says that Abraham received the sign of circumcision “as a seal of the righteous he had by faith while he was still circumcised.”
 - Objection #2: It is difficult to understand how baptism as a distinct, Christian act is a “seal” of God’s promise to bless belief with justification when such a designation fails distinguish children in Christian homes from children in pagan homes—both have the same conditional promises of the Gospel extended to them.

10

Does Baptism Replace Circumcision?

- Objection #3: The most egregious paedobaptistic error here is to suggest that the passage is describing the general nature of circumcision for everyone who would receive it. Instead, the passage is clearly discussing *the relationship between circumcision and Abraham*—a man who stood at a unique place in redemptive history as father of both the circumcised and the uncircumcised.
 - As such, his circumcision designated something that circumcision could not possibly designate for any of his descendants: namely, that he was to be the father of all those who believed, Jews and Gentiles, circumcised and uncircumcised, not because of genetic descent, but because of the faith he had *before he was circumcised* (4:12).