

TWELVE REASONS WHY I BELIEVE THAT BELIEVER'S BAPTISM BY IMMERSION IS THE BIBLICAL PATTERN FOR NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANS AS OPPOSED TO INFANT BAPTISM

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1. From a plain, straightforward reading and interpretation of the entire New Testament, the most logical understanding of what is presented is that believers¹ in Christ were baptized after a personal profession that Jesus was their Lord and Savior. Infant baptism as a new sign of the Abrahamic covenant requires much inference.
2. There was a reason that Christ had John baptize Him as an adult. Christ's example is lost if the primary mode of baptism is babies and children before salvation (Mt. 3).
3. Water baptism is not the New Covenant replacement for the physical circumcision Abraham and his descendants performed. Circumcision of the heart, that is regeneration, is the spiritual replacement for physical circumcision (Col 2:11). Neither Christ nor the Apostles specifically taught that baptism was a replacement for circumcision; it must be inferred from an understanding of a need to perpetuate the Abrahamic Covenant in the OT. If infant baptism was the replacement for circumcision, this would surely have been discussed at the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15.
4. The order of mention matters in Scripture. In the NT, repentance and/or faith in Christ always precedes any and all commandments to baptize in the NT (see Mk 16:16 and Acts 2:38). In the Great Commission, disciples are made and then they are baptized (Mt 28:19-20).
5. Infant baptism by pouring does not provide a picture of identifying with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ in the way Paul describes in Roman 6:4 and Col 2:12. Infants can't walk in the newness of life of salvation.
6. Infant baptism is meaningless to the infant; whereas, believer's baptism can be a tremendous step of obedience and growth for a new Christian. Believer's baptism serves as a powerful testimony of the power of the gospel to change men and women into new creatures in Christ (Acts 2:38). In Acts, Jewish men who already had the sign of the Abrahamic Covenant of faith were instructed to be baptized as a testimony of their personal faith in Christ (see also Acts 8:12; 9:18).
7. Baptizing infants or children before they believe the gospel and receive Christ individually and personally in a salvific way may give unregenerate children a false assurance of being a believer or child of God without actually being born again.
8. There isn't a single specific reference to an infant having water poured over their head in the Bible. It is an assumption that the New Testament reference to: "households being baptized" includes infants and toddlers (Acts 16:15; 1 Cor 1:16). Nowhere in the Bible does it indicate pre-converts to Christ were ever baptized.
9. As twin church ordinances ordained by the Lord Jesus Christ, baptism and the Lord's Supper are to be enjoyed and partaken by those of like standing. One should expect the feeding of the communion elements to the infant if they are to also be baptized without their consent, but infants cannot examine themselves before they partake as the Apostle Paul instructed (1 Cor. 11:28).
10. Baptizing unregenerate or unsaved babies into the visible church sends the wrong message about who is in the church and how one becomes a part of the body of Christ or of the family of God. The Lord adds to the church those who are saved (Acts 2:47). A person must be born again to be a part of the body of Christ.
11. Peter's use of "baptism" in 1 Peter 3:21 can only be applied to believer's baptism. Infants or toddlers cannot have a guilty or clear conscience toward God; therefore, the subject of Peter's baptism must be children and adults with a cognitive awareness sufficient to refuse to be baptized and experience a guilty conscience before God for their disobedience.

¹ Believer's baptism is sometimes referred to as credobaptism [as opposed to pedobaptism]; credo is Latin for "I believe."

12. The oldest early church manual, the *Didache*², (circa 100 AD) suggests that candidates for baptism should fast one to two days before being baptized (7:1-4). It is hard to imagine ordering an infant to fast before being baptized. This indicates that it was not the practice of all early churches to baptize infants. Instead, history suggests that Presbyterians and Lutheran Reformers continued the practice from the Roman Catholic Church's sacrament of Infant Baptism; albeit, with a different theological perspective. Instead, all churches must seek to distance themselves as far as possible from the corrupt practices of the Catholic Church.

² Reference: <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/didache-lightfoot.html> (accessed September 29, 2011).