

Romans 9; Lord's Day 27

HOW GRACE IS GIVEN IN BAPTISM

- I. The biblical practice.
 - A. The apostles practiced the baptism of new believers and their household (Acts 16:15,31,32; I Cor. 1:16).
 - B. Water baptism, like circumcision, is commanded of us; it is not an option.
 1. When Jesus says, "Suffer the little children to come to Me," then we may not say, "Forbid them."
 2. Genesis 17:14 declares that refusing circumcision is breaking the covenant and punished by being cut off.
 - C. There is the difficulty that not all the children of believers are saved.
 1. Serious errors have arisen in the attempt to deal with this difficulty.
 2. First, that we do not know who are elect does not affect the practice of baptizing because of God's command.
 3. Second, Scripture answers this problem by pointing to the Israelites who did not believe (Romans 9:1-8).
- II. The Biblical grounds.
 - A. First, children are included with their believing parents in the covenant and in the Church.
 - B. Second, God's promise of redemption and forgiveness is directed to children as well as to adults (Luke 18:15,16).
 - C. Thirdly, God promises the Holy Spirit, the author of faith, also to His called children of believers (Acts 2:38,39).
 - D. As infants they partake of condemnation in Adam without conscious knowledge, so they can partake of God's grace without conscious knowledge (cf. Ps. 139:13; Jer. 1:3; Luke 1:15; Mark. 10:13-16).
 - E. The infant of a faithful believer is baptized not because of its response, but because God promised to be the God of His people and of their children (Gen. 17:7 and Acts 2:39).
- III. The biblical responsibility.
 - A. In obedience to God's command we baptize them and we teach them the truth along with the command to obey (Gen. 18:19).
 1. We teach our children (as well as everyone) their need for Jesus and forgiveness in Him.
 2. Our instruction is always accompanied with prayer.
 - B. Teach our children to consider themselves saved only in the way of their believing and repenting, not because they were baptized or because their parents are believers.
 - C. Constantly praise God for His goodness to us and our children, praying He will not cut us off in our generations.