

Lord's Day 27

Heidelberg Catechism

The Second Part – Of Man's Deliverance – Of Holy Baptism

Question 72

Is then the external baptism with water the washing away of sin itself?

Answer

Not at all; for the blood of Jesus Christ only, and the Holy Ghost, cleanse us from all sin.¹

Question 73

Why then doth the Holy Ghost call baptism “the washing of regeneration,” and “the washing away of sins”?

Answer

God speaks thus not without great cause, to wit, not only thereby to teach us that, as the filth of the body is purged away by water, so our sins are removed by the blood and Spirit of Jesus Christ;² but especially that by this divine pledge and sign He may assure us that we are spiritually cleansed from our sins as really as we are externally washed with water.³

(Continued...)

1 Matt. 3:11

I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

1 Pet. 3:21

The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

1 John 1:7

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

1 Cor. 6:11

And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

2 Rev. 1:5

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

1 Cor. 6:11

And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

3 Mark 16:16

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Gal. 3:27

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Question 74

Are infants also to be baptized?

Answer

Yes; for since they, as well as the adult, are included in the covenant⁴ and church of God;⁵ and since redemption from sin by the blood of Christ, and the Holy Ghost, the author of faith, is promised to them⁶ no less than to the adult; they must therefore by baptism, as a sign of the covenant, be also admitted into the Christian church, and be distinguished from the children of unbelievers⁷ as was done in the old covenant or testament by circumcision,⁸ instead of which baptism is instituted in the new covenant.⁹

4 Gen. 17:7

And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

Acts 2:39

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call

5 1 Cor. 7:14

For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

Joel 2:16

Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.

Matt. 19:14

But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

6 Luke 1:14, 15

And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

Ps. 22:10

I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly.

Acts 2:39

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call

7 Acts 10:47

Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

1 Cor. 12:13

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

1 Cor. 7:14

For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

8 Gen. 17:14

And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

9 Col. 2:11-13

In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;