

Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 27, "Infant Baptism"

Scripture Lesson: Colossians 2:6-15

Lesson Aim	To understand that the Scriptures require the baptism of infants.
Steps to Learning	Read the Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 27 and Colossians 2:6-15 . Discuss the sermon and the particulars of the lesson below. It may be best to work through the material over several days or sessions.
Discuss	<p>Infant baptism is not explicitly commanded in the Bible. How, then, can the church command that infants be baptized? The church baptizes infants because infant baptism is implicitly commanded. A comparison can be drawn with the doctrine of the Trinity; the Trinity is not explicitly taught nor is it taught that one must believe in it, yet the church teaches the Trinity and teaches that one must believe in it because the Scriptures implicitly teach the same.</p> <p>What is another reason the church baptizes infants and the children of Christian parents? According to the Scriptures, the infants and children of believers have always been included in the family of God, the church. Why would we not continue to make this identification when the New Covenant is more inclusive?</p> <p>What is the Covenant of Grace and how does it relate to the issue of baptizing infants? The Covenant of Grace, initiated in Genesis chapter 3, is the saving relationship between God and his people through Jesus Christ who is the Mediator between God and his people. It comes to a more definite expression in the Abrahamic Covenant and fulfilled in the New Covenant through the completed work of Jesus Christ. It is called the Covenant of Grace because people are saved by grace through faith in Christ who does the work of salvation in this perfect life, death and resurrection from the dead.</p> <p>How does Colossians 2:6-15 relate to the Covenant of Grace and infant baptism? This passage argues that the Sacrament of circumcision is replaced by the Sacrament of baptism. Just as the Old Testament people, including infants, were marked out by circumcision as being saved by grace so are those in the New Testament and beyond marked out by baptism as being saved by grace. Circumcision is a bloody sign pointing to the cross of Christ and baptism is a bloodless sign pointing back to the cross; baptism is bloodless because the blood of Christ was shed in history for God's people.</p>
Bible Reading	Psalm 119 (Reading through the Psalms)