

Baptism Policy

A Pastor's Conviction About
Baptizing Children and Youth

August 17, 2016

BAPTISM POLICY

The following slides present only this pastor's conviction by observations and study from the last 10-15 years about this topic. Rising popularity of quasi-infant baptism by Baptists today is one more symptom of these perilous times. More could be written, but this should suffice to express his concern and zeal.

BAPTISM POLICY

Requirements for a scriptural baptism taught elsewhere is a different topic:

<http://www.letgodbettrue.com/bible/baptism/requirements.php>

**We love Bible baptism,
but it should only
occur to worthy
candidates.**

**We will defend the
faith once delivered
and the old paths,
including baptism.**

**We hate
infant baptism
as a profane heresy
from the RCC.**

**We are in the perilous
times of the last days.**

**We see a downgrade
on most sides by
most Christians.**

Baptism Is the Lord's - 1

- Baptism is an individual ordinance, not a church one.
- Baptism is a ministerial ordinance, not a church one.
- An administrator's conscience qualifies by the word.
- My convictions are for me, and not for other pastors.
- Inductive reasoning – specific cases to a general rule.
- Trends, habits, traditions, feelings, etc. are worthless.

Baptism Is the Lord's - 2

- Baptism is a ministerial work; pastors judge candidates.
- Think John ... Philip and eunuch ... Ananias and Paul.
- No sincere pastor takes this big responsibility lightly.
- He knows ... hindering the qualified gets a millstone.
- He knows ... baptizing the unqualified is compromise.
- He has his own faith, which is to be followed (He 13:7).

**At what minimum age
should a pastor
baptize?**







**Instead of loving
these little tykes
being baptized ...**

**resent the men taking
advantage of them.**

Evolution of Practice

- Decisional salvation reduces eternal life to nothing.
- No requirements for repentance or regeneration.
- Even calling Jesus “Lord” is frowned on by many.
- If childlike, rote faith saves ... it is enough for baptism.
- Believers are baptized ... so baptize such little children.
- As salvation is compromised more ... so is baptism.

Current Trends

- The SBC has baptisms increasing ... *of 6 and under!*
- Perilous times ... *does not quasi-infant baptism fit?*
- See Steven Furtick's ... "spontaneous baptisms."
- With disdain for sound doctrine, compromise is easy.
- With little discipleship, nearly any age can qualify.
- Baptism becomes fun event for church excitement.

Market Survey in our Church

- We could easily add 50+ to our membership tonight.
- Every child present could be quickly convinced to it.
- A bank can book loans ... ignoring quality ... so can we.
- Children want to please parents, peers, and pastor.
- A sincere child loving Jesus is good, but not enough.
- Our dear children cannot satisfy the requirements.

My Calling

- Holding fast the faithful word (Titus 1:9).
- Earnestly contend for the ancient faith (Jude 1:3).
- Seek out the old paths to walk in them (Jer 6:16).
- Hold fast apostolic traditions only (II Thess 2:15).
- Preach the word without compromise (II Tim 4:1-4).
- Separate the holy and profane (Ezek 44:23-24 cp Heb 13:7).

Temptations

- Keep parents happy that think their children special.
- Keep members happy that were godly prodigies at 5.
- I may be accused of needing a millstone and an ocean.
- Accused of being a child-hater, harsh, hateful, etc.
- Fear of accusations of changing, overreacting, etc.
- Shame of changing a practice I engaged in for 20 yrs.

**All that matters is
what the Bible says ...**

**for baptism is only
known by the Bible.**

What Does Baptism Require? - 1

- Belief with all thine heart (Act 8:37; Jas 1:8; 4:8; Mat 22:36-40).
- Conviction of sin (Ac 2:37; 19:18-19; Job 33:27-28; Mt 3:6; Mk 1:5).
- Repentance (Matt 3:2; 4:17; Acts 2:38; 13:24; 20:21; II Cor 7:10-11).
- Fruits of repentance (Matt 3:8; Luke 3:7-14; Acts 10:47; 26:20).
- Regeneration (John 3:3,5; Matt 21:31-32; Acts 10:1-2; 16:14-15).
- Active conscience purified by gospel (I Pet 3:21; Heb 9:14).

What Does Baptism Require? - 2

- Lordship of Jesus Christ (Acts 22:16; 2:21; 9:6; Rom 10:13)
- Justify God as righteous about sin (Luke 7:29-30; 19:8-9).
- Commitment of discipleship (Luke 14:25-33; Rom 6:1-5)
- It must come by the word of God (Rom 10:17; I Cor 2:1-5)
- Costly sacrifice or humble change (Matt 11:12; Luke 16:16).
- Grasp of doctrine and symbols (Rom 6:3-23; I Cor 15:29).







Dangers with Children

- Can children, 5-15, meet baptism's prerequisites? No.
- Childlike faith inadequate (Mat 19:13-15; Jn 2:23-25; I Co 14:20).
- Moved by parent/peer pressure (John 12:43; Pr 29:25).
- Manipulation is a real danger (I Cor 2:1-5; II Cor 2:17; 4:1-7).
- Mental assent ... or passionate embrace and a price.
- Eagerness and right answers are insufficient evidence.

**Does the Bible say
anything of the age
of those baptized?**

Jesus was 30!

Luke 3:23

Men and Women!

(no children)

Acts 5:14

Acts 8:12

**There are no more
children baptized in
the Bible than infants!**

**Does the Bible say
anything about age
that is helpful?**

Age of Accountability is 20?

Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.

Deuteronomy 1:39

Age of Accountability is 20?

28 Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you:

29 Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me,

Number 14:28-29

Age of Accountability is 20?

- God killed all Israelites over 20 for refusing Canaan.
- He saved those under 20 to mock parental worry.
- He said those under 20 did not know good or evil.
- Under 20 are *little ones* and children (Num 14:31-33).
- I use this age from the OT as only a general principle.
- I will baptize at 18 to prove the OT is not a hard rule.







**What ages do others
pick for baptism?**

Many PB & SBC = 5

W.A. Criswell = 9

John MacArthur = 12

Mark Dever = 18

**Historically,
by limited data,
it was an adult
ordinance.**

16+

**How do some come
up with these ages ...
like 12?**

**Age of accountability
... and Bar Mitzvah!**

Age of Accountability is 12?

- Most Arminians put the age of accountability at 12.
- Dying under 12 goes to heaven ... those over to hell.
- Why would they ever baptize children under age 12?
- They damn themselves by this age and their illogic.
- If not morally accountable ... they have no real clue!
- Age of accountability ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/heresy/age-of-accountability/sermon.php>.







**They have little
reason beyond happy
mommies and Jesus
saying to suffer little
children (infants).**

Baptism Policy - 1

- I cannot baptize anyone until at least 18 ... ordinarily.
- This age ... close to 20 ... is to see teenage endurance.
- Baptism requires ... faith ... repentance ... discipleship.
- A 12-year-old has not faced temptation e.g. sexual.
- Do 10-year-olds pick jobs, spouses, rulers, cars, etc.?
- Should we let 10-year-olds join the church and vote?

Baptism Policy - 2

- I ask candidates put in writing their faith/repentance.
- I want them to think carefully and produce a record.
- Baptismal candidates will vary greatly and widely.
- A 14-yr-old may seem more ready than one baptized.
- There does not need to be delay once 18 is reached.
- There is little need for baptism preparatory classes.

Baptism Policy - 3

- I am not waiting for perfect candidates ... but for 18!
- Most conversion and learning is done after baptism.
- To reject a person requires public sins of exclusion.
- The teaching and faith before baptism is minimal.
- If I am wrong in 18 ... Jesus has a millstone for me.
- Loving Jesus requires ... keeping His commandments.

Baptism Policy - 4

- But you *grandfather* young ones? ... faith and proof!
- I as a pastor will not be guilty of quasi-infant baptism.
- Our youth must show commitment and discipleship.
- Youth 18-20 ... still here ... seeking baptism ... great!
- It will not solve all problems or guarantee baptisms.
- It shows the Lord my seriousness in perilous times.

Baptism Policy - 5

- Historically the age for baptism was teens at least.
- When martyrdom was involved, what child is ready?
- We do not want rebaptisms for “now I understand.”
- At what age do youth begin to pick their way in life?
- We are not tied to infant “decisions” like so many.
- Individuality and a lifelong perspective are needed.

Baptism Policy - 6

- The Bible says ... *men and women* (Acts 8:12; 5:14).
- What age would you say was too young? ... and why?
- Your experience is the worst criterion for doctrine.
- A child wanting baptism is doing what they should.
- Relate this issue to dry-pastor baptistery conscience.
- What comes after baptism (godparents) is irrelevant.

Baptism Policy - 7

- Being born again precedes baptism. How to prove it?
- I don't want to overreact, but the other may be worse.
- Forward commitments of faith are totally irrelevant.
- Parental/peer pressure for baptism is great at 5-15.
- Peer pressure reverses and tests discipleship after 15!
- True confession of Christ involves the Spirit (1 Cor 12:3).

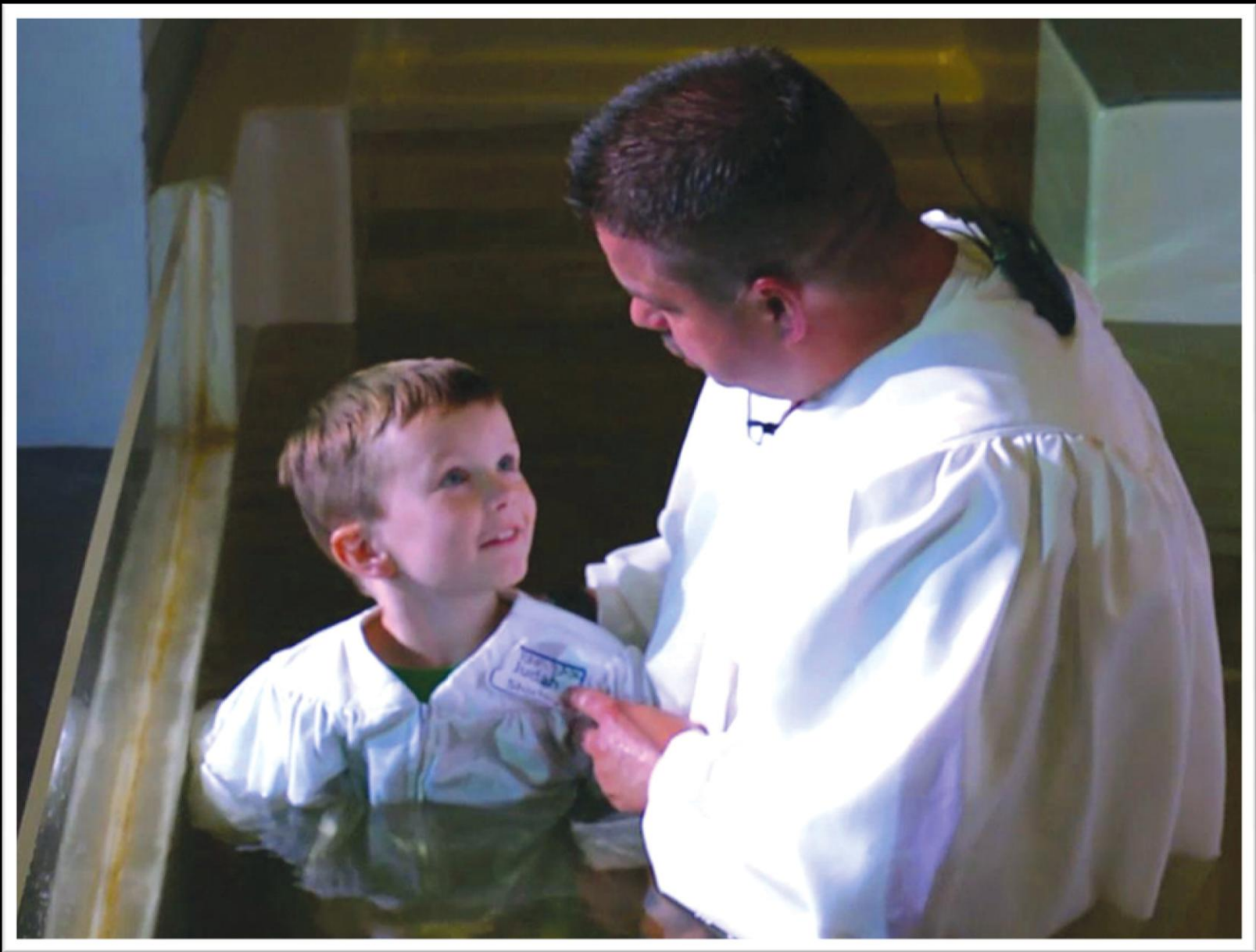
Baptism Policy - 8

- Baptism is followed by membership and communion.
- Communion requires sober self-examination (I Cor 11:28).
- Communion requires conscious discernment (I Cor 11:29).
- What *old man* can a child truly bury to live a new life?
- Check baptism's requirements again – it requires 18!
- Rather than dilute baptism, let us exalt it (II Ti 3:1 – 4:4).













Objection – Jesus and Children

- Passages ... Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17.
- Brought ... *little children, young children, ... infants.*
- For what ... lay hands on to pray and bless them.
- They are examples of humility and lack of malice.
- This objection proves our point – *No baptism of them!*
- Do you understand? ... Jesus did not baptize them!

Objection – Little Believers

- Passages ... Matthew 18:1-14; Mark 9:33-44.
- These little ones *believed* in Jesus (Matt 18:6; Mark 19:42).
- But He still did not baptize them ... or even suggest it!
- Jesus can and will save children, but not by baptism.
- Jesus avoided some “believers” ... and we must not forget it (John 2:23-25; 6:14-15,25-36; 7:31; 8:30-45; 12:42-43).

Miscellaneous - 1

- Presbies sprinkle anticipating the infant will one day be regenerated and converted; Baptist baptism states a person already regenerated and converted.
- Eight-year-olds could not match the testimonies we heard two weeks ago from 18,18,20,20,45,45.
- Charity & David ... you are both 14? ... what is coming?
- *Since you baptized me at 4, what should I do now in light of this teaching?* I never baptized any such age!

Miscellaneous - 2

- Jonathan Edwards lost his church, by a vote of 200-20, for pursuing a regenerate membership.
- We should encourage children at early ages toward the Lord and righteousness, but not baptism!
- Whatsoever is not of faith is sin ... (Rom 14:23).
- Baptism too early may assure/confirm salvation too early. We want to work out salvation (Phil 2:12-13).

Miscellaneous - 3

- We can press the gospel claims early and hard, while holding the brakes on baptism.
- God timed this for our study of being born again! I should only baptize the truly regenerate with proof.
- The privilege of a Christian home can mean “faith” from infancy without knowing love or commitment.
- If your teen is discouraged by not being baptized, then they were likely weak or false believers anyway.

Miscellaneous - 4

- Since God makes children capable of marriage at 14/12 or earlier, do you trust them to pick a spouse?
- Any modern pastors disagreeing mean nothing, since pastors of the past were in line with 18 or above it.
- Matt 21:28-32 has two sons ... examples of good and bad men ... how can children say what they will do?
- The only age we are given in the Bible is 30 ... Jesus!

Miscellaneous - 5

- The responsibility of baptism is comparable to other responsibilities that are not conferred until 18+.
- Think spouse, job, voting, military, contracts, own place, unsupervised drinking, college choice, etc.
- Youth peer pressure is great with a public baptism.
- History was basically adult baptism ... 16+ ... 30!
- Other nations are much more like adult baptism.

Miscellaneous - 6

- Discipleship brings persecution ... chosen by children?
- Various other pastors' convictions are linked below.
- If the Bible has no children baptized ... why start it?
- The worst heresies all began with slight compromise.
- If 12 ... why not 10? If 10 ... maybe 5? If 5, maybe 3?
- If a 3-year-old can get "saved" ... then baptize him!

Miscellaneous - 7

- Baptism does not bear on eternal life ... so make sure.
- Which conscience can truly answer God ... 5? ... or 18?
- Did mommies have a role with infant baptism heresy?
- Children/teens desiring it have done all God expects.
- Children/teens enduring the wait indicate character.
- Never fear to change a practice for greater truth.

Are You Baptized?

Are You Living Like It?

1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:1-2

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

Romans 6:3-5

For Further Study - 1

Other Baptists (good) ... <https://davidschrock.com/2015/05/08/on-baptism-and-children/>.

Other Baptists (good) ... <https://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/trevinwax/2011/02/21/should-we-baptize-small-children/>.

Other Baptists (variety) ... <http://www.baptistboard.com/threads/does-your-church-have-age-requirement-for-water-baptism.69280/>.

Other Baptists (12) ... <http://www.zbcc.ca/essays/archives/2013/01/01/baptism-and-communion-for-children/>.

Other Baptists (variety) ... http://www.challies.com/articles/at-what-age-should-we-baptize#disqus_thread.

Other Baptists ... <http://www.affinity.org.uk/foundations-issues/issue-63-article-5---why-believers-baptism-should-usually-be-adult-baptism>.

Other Baptists ... <https://www.benevol.org/sites/default/files/documents/Two%20Views%20on%20Childhood%20Participation%20in%20Church%20Discipleship.pdf>.

Other Baptists ... https://books.google.com/books/about/Believer_s_Baptism.html?id=EraDre6dUwYC.

Mark Dever sermon ... <http://www.capitolhillbaptist.org/sermon/at-what-age-should-believers-be-baptized/>.

Capitol Hill statement ... <http://www.capitolhillbaptist.org/sermon/the-baptism-of-children-at-capitol-hill-baptist-church/>.

www.LetGodBeTrue.com

For Further Study - 2

Author's Baptism Documents ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/baptism/baptism.php>.

Age of Accountability ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/heresy/age-of-accountability/sermon.php>.

Perilous Times ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/exposition/perilous-times/sermon.php>.

Salvation By Works ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/salvation/salvation-by-works/sermon.php>.

Why No Invitation ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/why-no-invitation.pdf>.

John 2:23-25 for false believers ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/john-two.pdf>.

Belly Worshippers ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/practical/belly-worshippers-2/sermon.php>.

Baptism of Children (9/15/2004) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/baptism-of-children.pdf>.

www.LetGodBeTrue.com