

Chapter 28

Baptism

1. Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ.¹ By baptism a person is solemnly admitted into the visible church.² Baptism is also a sign and seal of the covenant of grace,³ of the believer's engrafting into Christ,⁴ of rebirth,⁵ of remission of sins,⁶ and of the believer's yielding to God through Jesus Christ to walk in newness of life.⁷ By Christ's own direction this sacrament is to be continued in his church until the end of the world.⁸

1. Mt 28.19, Mk 16.16.
2. 1 Cor 12.13, Gal 3.27-28, Acts 2.41, 10.47.
3. Rom 4.11, Col 2.11-12, Gal 3.29.
4. Gal 3.27, Rom 6.3-5.
5. Ti 3.5.
6. Mk 1.4, Acts 2.38, 22.16.
7. Rom 6.3-4.
8. Mt 28.19-20.

2. The physical substance to be used in this sacrament is water. The person is to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit⁹ ordinarily by a lawfully called minister of the gospel.¹⁰

9. Mt 3.11, Jn 1.33, Mt 28.19-20, Acts 8.36,38, 10.47, Eph 4.11-13.
10. See General Note.

3. Dipping the person into the water is not necessary. Baptism is correctly administered by pouring or sprinkling water on the person.¹¹

11. Heb 9.10,19-22, Acts 2.41, 16.33, Mk 7.4, Acts 1.5, 2.3-4,17, 11.15-16, 10.46-47, 1 Cor 10.2.

4. Not only those who actually profess faith in and obedience to Christ are to be baptized¹² but also the infants of one or both believing parents.¹³

12. Mk 16.15-16, Acts 8.37-38; see citations under Section 1 above, Acts 9.18.
13. Gn 17.7,9-10, Gal 3.9,14, Col 2.11-12, Acts 2.38-39, Rom 4.11-12, 1 Cor 7.14, Mt 28.19, Mk 10.13-16, Lk 18.15-16, Acts 16.14-15,33.

5. Although it is a great sin to condemn or neglect this sacrament,¹⁴ baptism is not inseparably connected with God's grace and salvation. One can be saved and reborn without baptism,¹⁵ and, on the other hand, everyone who is baptized is not therefore unquestionably reborn.¹⁶

14. Lk 7.30, Ex 4.24-26, Gn 17.14, Dt 28.9.
15. Rom 4.11, Acts 10.2, 4, 22, 31, 45-47, Lk 23.40-43.
16. Acts 8.13,23.

6. The effectiveness of baptism is not tied to that moment in time in which it is administered.¹⁷ However, by the correct use of this sacrament the grace promised in it is not only offered but actually embodied and conferred by the Holy Spirit to everyone (adult or infant) to whom that grace is given, according to the purpose of God's own will and in his appointed time.¹⁸

17. Jn 3.5,8, Rom 4.11.
18. Gal 3.27, Ti 3.5, Eph 5.25-26, Acts 2.38-41, Eph 1.4-5, Acts 16.31,33.

7. The sacrament of baptism should be administered only once to a person.¹⁹

19. Ti 3.5; there is no command, and no adequate example for the repetition of baptism.