

Infant Baptism

There is a very common belief among denominations today that babies need to be baptized. Where did this doctrine come from? What is the reasoning behind it? Is it taught in God's Word?

From what I have read in various sources, there are several reasons why people want to baptize babies: (1) to sanctify them to God, (2) because Matthew 28:19-20 commands Christians to baptize all nations, (3) because babies are capable of committing sins, etc. This study will not address those issues. The doctrine I want to concentrate on is the one related to another doctrine called "Original Sin". This doctrine basically teaches that Adam's sin passed on to all human beings and, therefore, all human beings are born sinners, with Adam's sin on their account. Therefore, babies need to be baptized to wash away Adam's sin. What does God's Word teach about sin?

When I studied God's Word, this is what I learned:

- According to I John 3:4, sin is defined as the transgression of God's Law.
- According to James 1:14-15, I sin when I give in to the temptation to break God's Law.
- According to James 1:15, the result of sin is spiritual death.
- Isaiah 59:2 says that **my** sins (not Adam's) have separated me from God. Romans 3:23 says that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Does this verse include babies? Only if you think that it is possible that a baby can be tempted to break God's Law and give in to that temptation. Note that Romans 3:23 says that all have sinned (committed an action)—not all have sin (something we inherit at birth).

Conclusion: Sin is an action I commit—not something I inherit.

- Ezekiel 18:20 says, *"The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself."*
- Deuteronomy 24:16 says, *"Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin."*

Conclusion: Adam's children did not inherit his sins. Adam's grandchildren did not inherit Adam's sins. Adam's great grandchildren did not inherit Adam's sins. And I did not inherit Adam's sins. No person is held responsible for anyone else's sins—except for Christ who willingly took responsibility for our sins.

- According to Ecclesiastes 12:13-14, King Solomon concluded what life is all about when he said that we are to fear God and keep His commandments because this is man's all.
- Paul said in II Corinthians 5:10 that we will all stand before God on Judgment Day so that each person will be judged by what he did with his life, whether good or bad.

Conclusion: Life is about what each one of us has done with *our own* life. It is not about what Adam did. When I stand before God on Judgment Day I will not have to answer for Adam's sins. I will have to answer for my own sins.

- Luke said in Acts 22:16, *"Arise and be baptized and wash away **your** sins."*
- Luke also said in Acts 3:19, *"Repent therefore and be converted, that **your sins** may be blotted out..."*
- Jesus said in John 8:24, *"...if you believe not that I am He [the Son of God], you will die in **your** sins."*

- Philip preached the gospel of Christ to the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8. When the eunuch saw a body of water, he asked Philip what was stopping him from being baptized. Philip told him that if he believed with all his heart, he could be baptized. He did not tell the eunuch that whether he believed or not, he needed to be baptized to wash away Adam's sins.

Conclusion: I cannot find one passage in God's Word that gives any indication that the purpose of baptism is to wash away Adam's sins. Baptism is to wash away my sins that I committed that led to me being separated from God.

- Jesus said in Matthew 18:3, *"Assuredly I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."*
- Jesus said in Matthew 19:14, *"...let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."*
- Psalm 106:37-38 says, *"They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons, and shed innocent blood..."*
- In II Samuel 12:23, David's baby that Bathsheba had given birth to died. David stopped mourning and said, *"But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."* David knew he would see his son again in heaven because children are innocent.
- Ezekiel 28:15 says, *"You were perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, until iniquity was found in you."*

Conclusion: These verses indicate that children are innocent. How would Jesus' analogy make any sense if children were sinners?

What passages do people use to support this belief? They must be getting it from somewhere.

One passage people use to support their belief in original sin and infant baptism is Psalm 51:5, *"Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me."* They want to interpret David's statement to mean, "I was born with Adam's sin, and therefore I am a sinner." Is that what David meant? How could he have meant that when God said that the son shall not bear the sins of the father? David was simply saying in poetic language that he was being born into a world of sin.

Another passage that those who believe in infant baptism go to support their belief is Romans 5:18, *"Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life."* Let's think logically about this verse. Some want to interpret this passage to mean, "Adam's sin passed to all men so that all men are born condemned already". If that is true, then the second part of the verse would HAVE to mean, "Christ's forgiving blood passed to all men so that all men are born saved already." I think even those who believe in original sin and infant baptism would agree that this is not the case. Salvation is conditional. We cannot be inconsistent with this verse. We cannot say that this verse really means, "Through Adam's sin all men are born condemned already but through Christ's sacrifice only those who obey Christ are saved." This verse simply means that Adam introduced sin into the world because he sinned first. How do I know this? Because that correlates with the rest of God's Word that teaches each person is responsible for their own sins—not someone else's sins. It is also explained just a few verses before in Romans 5:12 which states that by one man sin entered into the world.

The same would be true for I Corinthians 15:22, *“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”* Some want to say this verse means that all are born spiritually dead because of Adam’s sin. Again, if that is what this verse means, the second half would have to mean that all are saved by Christ. Are all men saved? No. Only those who believe and obey are saved. Are all men spiritually dead? No. Only those who commit sin and are separated from God. If a person lives long enough, they will sin. When does a baby, unborn or born, commit sin?

Is it harmful to baptize a baby? In other words, if one wants to believe they need to baptize their baby, is it “no big deal”? It is a big deal. Here is why. I have shared the gospel of Christ with others and when it comes to baptism, a common remark is, “Well, I was baptized as a baby/child so I am okay.” Then that person ends up refusing to be baptized as a believer for the remission of sins. They do not understand or agree that when they were baptized as a baby or a child, it was NOT a baptism at all. Colossians 3:17 tells us we must do all things with the Christ’s authority. Therefore, they will stand before God on Judgment Day never having been baptized for the remission of their sins and, as a result, never received Christ’s blood and will be held accountable for every sin they ever committed. That is a fatal decision and they will lose their soul because of it. So, yes, it is a big deal. Believing in the false doctrine of infant baptism is very dangerous.

Although I do not believe the Scriptures tell us, I would think that Adam would have repented of his sins. So, the doctrine of original sin and infant baptism means that not only does God hold every human being responsible for something Adam did, but He refused to forgive Adam of his sins. This would have to be the case, because we know that God’s Word teaches that when God forgives sins, He remembers them no more (Hebrews 8:12; 10:17). So, if original sin is true, either Adam refused to repent of His sins or God refused to forgive him. Or maybe He forgave Adam but refused to forget them and then passed them on to all human beings?

Just thinking about this doctrine logically, I cannot understand it. If a baby, born or unborn, dies before it is baptized, those who believe in this doctrine must conclude that the baby will go to Hell. That makes God unfair, unjust, and unmerciful. We know God is none of these things. It also makes it everyone else’s fault that precious soul is lost forever. It’s Adam’s fault even though he has been dead for thousands of years. It’s the parents’ fault because they failed to baptize their baby (by the way, how do you baptize a stillborn baby?). It’s God’s fault for arbitrarily deciding to hold every human being accountable for someone else’s sins. And how did that baby ever get the choice? How do those who believe this doctrine explain away all of this? I know one doctrine that I have heard is that unbaptized babies who die do not go to the Hell that is full of “weeping and gnashing of teeth”. Rather, it’s a place of limbo where there is no pain. Please show me where God’s Word teaches that. Anyplace outside the presence of God would be Hell—whether it’s painful or not. When we come up with doctrines that are not supported in God’s Word, it seems to lead to other false doctrines. For example, all humans are born with Adam’s sin—not found in God’s Word. That leads to the doctrine that all babies need to be baptized—not found in God’s Word. Well, we don’t want babies going to Hell, so that leads to the doctrine that there is another Hell where there is no pain for those precious little souls—not found in God’s Word.

So, the overall conclusion is that the doctrine of infant baptism is man-made and not supported in God’s Word which means that it should not be done since anything we do outside of God’s Word is wrong.