

Young Children and Baptism

What do you do when a young child wants to be baptized?
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Prelude:

I. Should we just baptize anyone who approaches us for it?

- A. What if someone walks in whom we have never met and
 - 1. we know nothing of that person and
 - 2. they want to be baptized;
 - 3. what should we do?
 - a) I would want to study with that person.
 - b) In fact, that happens quite frequently.
- B. What if a very young child requests baptism; what should we do?
 - 1. Some people think we should just go ahead and baptize them.
 - 2. What do you think?
- C. What if the parent of a young child wants his or her child baptized; what should we do?
 - 1. These are not hypothetical situations.
 - 2. I have dealt with all of them over the years.

II. Should we just baptize them without any questions or further teaching?

Persuasion:

I. What Is the Purpose of Baptism?

- A. Why do children want to be baptized?
 - 1. They want to go to heaven.
 - 2. Therefore, they want to get baptized.
- B. Why does the Bible say we should be baptized?
 - 1. Mark 16.16
 - a) Saved from what?

b) Saved to where?

2. Acts 2.38

a) Does this not imply that one has to be a sinner?

b) If God does not forgive my sin,

(1) where do I go?

(2) Can you imagine this being the case with a young child?

(a) I ask children,

(b) Do you believe that you will go to hell, if you are not baptized?

i) Do you know what answer I most often get?

ii) They say no.

(1) Therefore, in my judgment,

(2) anyone believes that is not ready.

C. What I have observed in the past:

1. Parents who want their children baptized are offended and leave.

2. Children who are sincere, later do it when they know they are ready.

II. Who Is a Candidate for Baptism?

A. One who has sinned.

B. One who believes that Jesus is Lord.

1. However, it cannot be a gullible belief.

2. They have to know in their own hearts and minds that He is Lord.

a) What does it mean to believe in the identity of Jesus?

b) They have to be able to reason and see the choices.

C. One also has to have the ability to repent.

1. What does repent mean?

2. From what does a person repent?