

THE DYNAMICS OF

Baptism



The Heidelberg Catechism

Lords Day 26

Question 69:

How does baptism remind you and assure you that Christ's one sacrifice on the cross is for you personally?



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Answer 69:

In this way: Christ instituted this outward washing and with it gave the promise that, as surely as water washes away the dirt from the body, so certainly his blood and his Spirit wash away my soul's impurity, in other words, all my sins.



³⁸Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

Acts 2:38-39

⁵He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Titus 3:5-6

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Question 70:

What does it mean to be washed with
Christ's blood and Spirit?



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Answer 70:

To be washed with Christ's blood means that God, by grace, has forgiven my sins because of Christ's blood poured out for me in his sacrifice on the cross.



¹⁸For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.

1 Peter 3:18

²⁵I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. ²⁶I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

Ezekiel 36:25-27

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Answer 70:

To be washed with Christ's Spirit means that the Holy Spirit has renewed me and set me apart to be a member of Christ so that more and more I become dead to sin and increasingly live a holy and blameless life.



²¹and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

1 Peter 3:21

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Question 71:

Where does Christ promise that we are washed with his blood and Spirit as surely as we are washed with the water of baptism?



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Answer 71:

In the institution of baptism where he says:

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Matthew 28:19



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Answer 71:

In the institution of baptism where He says:

"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:16) This promise is repeated when Scripture calls baptism the washing of rebirth (Titus 3:5) and the washing away of sins (Acts 22:16).



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Lords Day 27

Question 72:

Does this outward washing with water
itself wash away sins?



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Lords Day 27

Answer 72:

No, only Jesus Christ's blood and the Holy Spirit cleanse us from all sins.



⁸For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:8-10

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Lord's Day 27

Question 73: Why then does the Holy Spirit call baptism the washing of rebirth and the washing away of sins?



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Answer 73:

God has good reasons for those words. He wants to teach us that the blood and Spirit of Christ wash away our sins just as water washed away dirt from our bodies.



¹¹And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

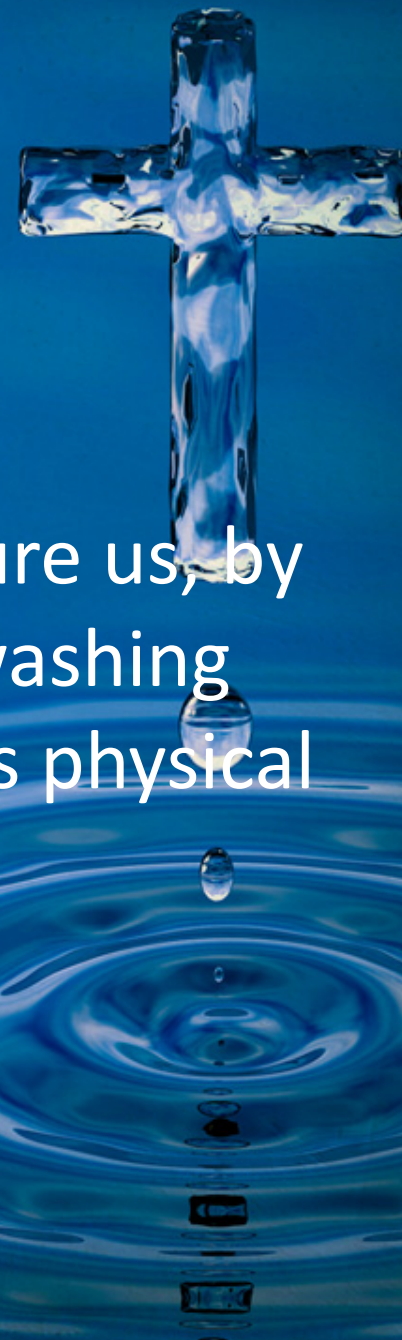
1 Corinthians 6:11

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Lords Day 27

Answer 73:

But more important, He wants to assure us, by this divine pledge and sign, that the washing away of our sins spiritually is as real as physical washing with water.



³Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Romans 6:3-4

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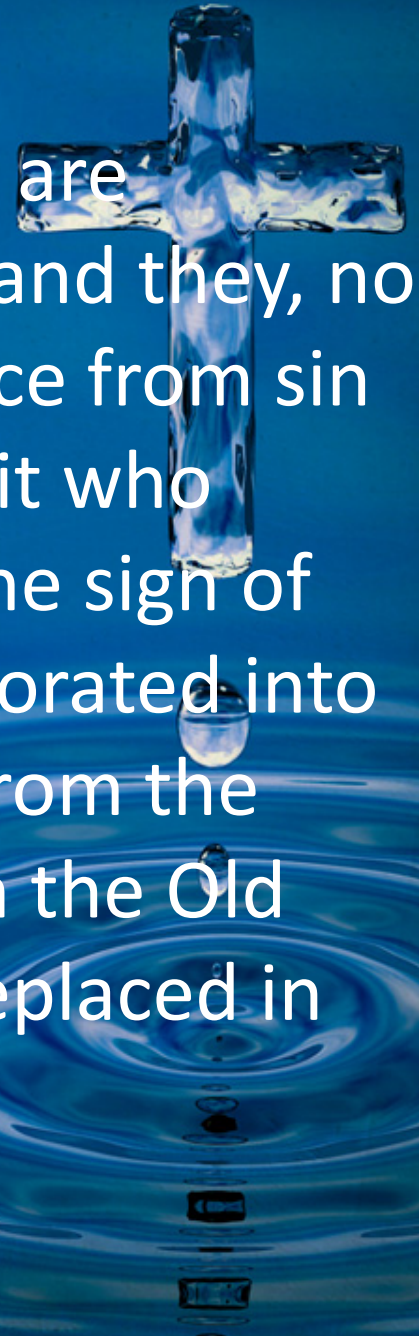
Lord's Day 27


Question 74: Should infants also be baptized?



Lord's Day 27

Answer 74: Yes. Infants as well as adults are included in God's covenant and people, and they, no less than adults, are promised deliverance from sin through Christ's blood and the Holy Spirit who produces faith. Therefore, by baptism, the sign of the covenant, they too should be incorporated into the Christian church and distinguished from the children of unbelievers. This was done in the Old Testament by circumcision, which was replaced in the New Testament by baptism.





²⁶You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, ²⁷for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Galatians 3:26-27

¹⁶And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'

Acts 22:16

