



Altus Reformed Baptist Church

Baptism- a Definition of Terms

We are unashamedly Baptist, which is to say that we hold to the 5 Solas of the reformation;

- Sola scriptura ("by Scripture alone")
- Sola fide ("by faith alone")
- Sola gratia ("by grace alone")
- Solus Christus or Solo Christo ("Christ alone" or "through Christ alone")
- Soli Deo gloria ("glory to God alone")

The primary focus of the life of all believers is the last Sola, to glorify God (Romans 12:1), and the primary means of doing this is through the first Sola, by Scripture alone.

What we mean by this is that we, who have been purchased off the auction block of slavery, that we sold ourselves into through our treason against God, (which is called sin), who have had our hearts regenerated by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:1-8), have been given to the Son by the Father in eternity past (John 5:26), and have hold that the blood of the Son is our propitiation (Romans 3:25), must live in submission to the Word of God (John 14:15), which is God (John 1:1).

We therefore hold that we cannot, and will not, follow human or church tradition over the clear teaching of the Word of God.

Baptism Defined

We also hold to the regulative principle of worship, which means that we will only do this things in our worship services that are prescribed within Scripture; we read the Word, we pray the Word, we sing the Word and we preach the Word. We also administer the 2 sacraments given us through the Lord for His church, baptism and communion.

Mode of Baptism

Baptism is defined for us in the New Testament beginning with the appearance of John, who was called the Baptist. His baptism was administered by full immersion, as a sign of repentance of sin (Matthew 3:5-6, 11, Acts 19:4).

For this reason, we hold that full immersion is the means and mode that the sacrament of baptism should be administered.

Timing of Baptism

In every instance given us in the New Testament, baptism followed confession and repentance, (Acts 2:1-41; 8:36-39; 16:30-33)

For these reasons we believe that only repentant believers can be baptized, anything other than that is merely getting sprinkled or dunked.

Multiple Baptisms

Scripture is clear in that there is only one Lord, one faith, one baptism, Ephesians 4:5. For this reason, we reject the notion that there is such a thing as getting “re baptized”, or even multiple baptisms.

That the evangelical world has become sloppy in the terminology concerning baptism is evident by the fact that we Baptists discuss the validity of infant baptism and even multiple baptisms for those that make spurious confessions.

There is only One baptism per believer, just as there is only One Lord, and One faith. Everything that proceeds regeneration and confession is a dedication or dunking and anything that happens after being baptized is nothing more than an appeal to that persons conscience in desiring to be obedient to the Lord.

Baptismal Regeneration

The bible is clear, that baptism is not necessary for salvation, that there is no magic in the waters of baptism, the thief on the cross is a great example of this truth. (Luke 23:39-43)

Signs and Sacraments

There are those that hold that baptism is the new covenant sign given to Christians just as circumcision was the Old Testament sign of the covenant community of God. However, Scripture says; “*This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you*” Luke 22:20.

Baptism is never spoken of in this manner in Scripture. Scripture says of baptism;

1 Peter 3:21

Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

Romans 6:3-6

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

Baptism- Conclusion

There is only one baptism, commanded by God for all who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit; *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”* Matthew 28:18-20

Baptism follows regeneration (make disciples and then baptize them), and only baptized believers are given the covenant sign of communion; *“This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you”* Luke 22:20.

The sacrament of baptism is a required element that proceeds communion and membership into the covenant body.

We hold that baptism administered by a member of this body, being supported by the members of this body, brings that person into membership with this body, and more importantly the entire body of Christ.