

Form for the Baptism of Adults

When adults who have not been baptized desire to receive baptism, they shall first be thoroughly instructed in the doctrines of the Christian religion. And when they have made a good profession in the presence of the consistory, they shall be permitted to make public profession and receive holy baptism; in the administration of which the following form shall be used.

Beloved congregation in the Lord Jesus Christ:

There are three principal parts of the doctrine of holy baptism:

First: That together with our children, we are conceived and born in sin, and therefore are children of wrath, so that we cannot enter into the kingdom of God, unless we are born again. This, the dipping in or sprinkling with water teaches us, through which the impurity of our souls is signified, that we may be admonished to loathe ourselves, humble ourselves before God, and seek for our purification and salvation apart from ourselves.

Second: Holy baptism witnesses and seals to us the washing away of our sins through Jesus Christ. Therefore we are baptized into the Name of God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. For when we are baptized into the Name of the Father, God the Father witnesses and seals to us that He makes an eternal covenant of grace with us and adopts us for His children and heirs, and therefore will provide us with every good thing and turn aside all evil or turn it to our profit. And when we are baptized into the Name of the Son, the Son seals to us that He washes us in His blood from all our sins, incorporating us into the fellowship of His death and resurrection, so that we are freed from our sins and accounted righteous before God. Likewise, when we are baptized into the Name of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit assures us by this holy sacrament that He will dwell in us, and sanctify us to be members of Christ, imparting to us that which we have in Christ, namely, the washing away of our sins and the daily renewing of our lives, until we shall finally be presented without spot among the assembly of the elect in life eternal.

Third: Since all covenants contain two parts, therefore are we by God, through baptism, admonished and obliged to live in new obedience, namely, that we cleave to this one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that we trust in Him, and love Him with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength; that we forsake the world, crucify our old nature, and walk in a godly life. And if through weakness, we sometimes fall into sins, we must not therefore despair of God's mercy, nor continue in sin, since baptism is a seal and indisputable testimony that we have an eternal covenant with God. And although the children of Christians, despite their inability to understand these things, must be baptized by virtue of the covenant, yet it is not lawful to baptize adults, unless they first confess and repent of their sins, and make a profession of their faith in Christ.

For this reason, according to the command of God, John the Baptist preached a baptism for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4, 5 and Luke 3:3), but also our Lord Jesus Christ commanded His apostles "*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, (Matthew 28:19 ESV). This promise is confirmed by Paul. "Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name" (Acts 22:16 ESV).

According to this rule as we see in the book of Acts, the apostles baptized no other adults but those who confessed and repented of their sins and who made a profession of faith. Therefore it is not lawful now to baptize any other adults than those who have learned and understand, from the preaching of the holy gospel, the mysteries of holy baptism, and are able to give an account of their faith and profess that faith publicly.

The Prayer:

That we therefore may administer this holy ordinance of God to His glory, to our comfort, and to the edification of the church, let us call on His holy Name:

O almighty, eternal God, you who have according to your severe judgment punished the unbelieving and unrepentant world with the flood, and have according to your great mercy saved and protected believing Noah and his family; you who have drowned the obstinate Pharaoh and all his host in the Red Sea and led your people Israel through the midst of the sea upon dry ground – by which you showed us the meaning of baptism – we earnestly pray that you will be pleased of your infinite mercy, graciously to look upon this brother (sister) and incorporate him (her) by your Holy Spirit into your Son Jesus Christ, that he (she) may be buried with Him through baptism into death and be raised with Him in newness of life; that he (she), daily following Him, may joyfully bear his (her) cross, cleaving to Him in true faith, firm hope, and ardent love; that he (she), being comforted in you, may leave this life, which is nothing but a constant death, and at the last day may appear without terror before the judgment seat of Christ your Son, through Him, our Lord Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit, one only God, lives and reigns forever. Amen.

Address To The Person To Be Baptized

_____, since, then, you desire to receive holy baptism, that it may be to you a seal of your incorporation in the Church of God—that it may now appear that you not only accept the Christian religion, in which you have been instructed by us, and of which you have made profession before us, but also that you intend to direct your life accordingly, you are to answer these questions sincerely before God and His church:

First: Do you believe in the only true God, distinct in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who of nothing has made heaven and earth and all that is in them, and still upholds and governs them, so that nothing comes to pass, either in heaven or on earth, without His divine will?

Answer: I do.

Second: Do you believe that you are conceived and born in sin and therefore a child of wrath, by nature totally incapable of doing any good and prone to all evil; and that you, in thought, word, and deed, have frequently transgressed the commandments of the Lord; and do you sincerely repent of these your sins?

Answer: I do.

Third: Do you believe that Jesus Christ, who is both true and eternal God and very man, who assumed His human nature from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary, is given you of God as a Savior; and that you by this faith receive remission of sins in His blood, and that you by the power of the Holy Spirit became a member of Jesus Christ and of His Church:

Answer: I do.

Fourth: Do you assent to all the articles of the Christian religion, as they are taught here in this Christian church from the Word of God, and are you determined to continue in the same doctrine to the end of your life; and do you also reject all heresies and errors conflicting with this doctrine, and promise that you will persevere in the fellowship of this Christian church, not only in the hearing of the divine Word, but also in the use of the holy supper?

Answer: I do.

Fifth: Do you firmly resolve always to lead a Christian life, to forsake the world and its evil lusts, as is becoming to the members of Christ and of His Church, and to submit cheerfully to all Christian admonitions?

Answer: I do.

The good and great God mercifully grant you His grace and blessing in this your holy purpose, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Then the minister of God's Word, in baptizing, shall say:

_____, I baptize you into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

The Reception [*The minister asks the congregation to rise.*]

Minister: In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ I now welcome you to all the privileges of full communion. I welcome you to full participation in the life of the church. I welcome you to its responsibilities, its joys, and its sufferings.

Congregation: *Thanks be to God! We promise you our love, encouragement, and prayers.*

Thanksgiving

Almighty God and merciful Father, we thank and praise you, that you have forgiven us and our children all our sins, through the blood of your beloved Son Jesus Christ, and received us through your Holy Spirit as members of your only begotten Son, and so adopted us to be your children, and sealed and confirmed the same to us by holy baptism. We earnestly pray that you also, through Him, your beloved Son, that you will always govern this brother (sister) by your Holy Spirit, and that he (she) may lead a Christian and godly life, and grow and increase in the Lord Jesus Christ, in order that he (she) may acknowledge your fatherly goodness and mercy, which you have shown to him (her) and to us all, and live in all righteousness under our only Teacher, King, and High Priest, Jesus Christ; and manfully fight against and overcome sin, the devil, and his whole dominion, to the end that he (she) may eternally praise and magnify you, and your Son Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Spirit, the one only true God. Amen.