

(b) In the NT: the covenant sign of baptism

Acts 2:38-39: "Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ... For the promise is to you and to your children"

Household baptisms - Acts 16:15, 31-33; 1 Cor 1:16.

OUTSIDE	INSIDE
<u>Abraham</u> : believe... then circumcision	<u>Abraham's kids</u> : circumcision... then believe
<u>Gentile</u> : believe... then be baptised	<u>Believers' kids</u> : be baptised... then believe

3. Implications of covenant baptism

(a) Remember that the power of baptism is not tied to that moment wherein it is administered (e.g. John 3:5)

(b) Christian baptism entails Christian education

(c) Parent by faith, not by fear (e.g. Deut. 5:10, Josh. 24:15)

Recommended resources

Short and highly readable book:

→ *Covenantal baptism*, by Jason Helopoulos

Two lectures, moderate difficulty... and bad audio (!):

→ *Baptism*, by Sinclair Ferguson – www.ipc.church/project/baptism/

Essay, hard but rewarding:

→ *Fathers of Faith, My Fathers Now! On Abraham, Covenant, and the Theology of Paedobaptism*, by David Gibson – online at *Themelios*

MAKING THE MOST OF BAPTISM
Immanuel: adult Sunday School - May 2025

3. Who should be baptised?

Read and discuss while waiting to begin

- Genesis 17:9-14, 17:22-26, 21:4, Deuteronomy 10:16, Colossians 2:11-13.
- Discuss: What do we learn about *circumcision*?

Q: To whom is baptism to be administered?

A: Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him; but the infants of such as are members of the visible church are to be baptized.

(*Westminster Shorter Catechism Q95*)

paedobaptist – believers' children should be baptised as infants.

credo-baptist – a person is only baptised on profession of their faith

method: how do you work out what to believe?

1. There is ONE COVENANT OF GRACE

God makes covenants with Abraham (Gen. 12, 15, 17), with Moses (Ex. 24), with David (2 Sam. 7), & new covenant (Jer.31)...

yet ONE covenant

= "I will be your God and you will be my people"

(a) God covenants with Abraham... and his seed ②

Genesis 17:7, "And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."

(b) Gentile converts are *brought into* the covenant people ③

Ephesians 2:12-13, "remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."

The NT church is the expansion of Israel, not its obliteration
(e.g. Romans 11:16b-24)

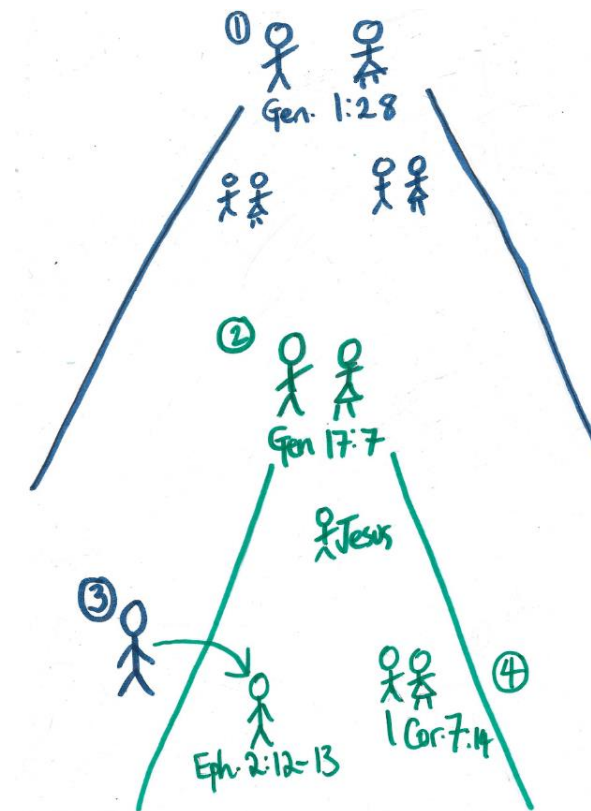
Pentecost is not the church's birth... but her coming of age

(c) Believers' children are *born within* this covenant... ④
because God deals with households

1 Corinthians 7:14, "...Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy."

"Godly offspring / seed", Malachi 2:15

e.g. Joshua 24:15, "... As for me & my house, we will serve the Lord."



2. Who should receive the sign of the covenant?

(a) In the OT: the covenant sign of circumcision

Q: What did it signify?

= Covenant (Gen. 17:9),

= cutting off and killing... in the heart (Deut. 10:16, Col. 2:11-13),

= God's righteousness (Romans 4:11)

Q: Whom did God command to be circumcised?

= Abraham... AND his seed, see Genesis 17:9-14, 17:22-26 and 21:4.