

Title: WSC Question 95: To Whom is Baptism to Be Administered?

- I. The doctrine stated:
 - A. WSC Answer 95: 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.
 - B. WLC Answer 166: Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, and so strangers from the covenant of promise, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him, but infants descending from parents, either both, or but one of them, professing faith in Christ, and obedience to him, are in that respect within the covenant, and to be baptized.

- II. The doctrine proved and explained.
 - 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." (AC 8:36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? [37] And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. [38] And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.)
 - B. "... infants descending from parents, either both, or but one of them, professing faith in Christ, and obedience to him, are in that respect within the covenant, and to be baptized."
 1. AC 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. [39] For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.
 2. GE 17:7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee... [10] This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.
 - a. Fisher: "Q. 31. What connexion is there between circumcising the seed of Abraham on the eighth day, under the Old Testament, and baptizing the children of professing parents under the New? A. The connexion is, that though circumcision and baptism be different signs, yet they are both of them seals of the same covenant of grace; and since the infant-seed of Abraham received the seal of circumcision under the Old Testament, by parity of reason, the infant children of professing parents should receive the seal of baptism under the New; especially as baptism is now come in the room of circumcision."

- b. Fisher: "Q. 32. How do you prove, from scripture, that baptism is come in the room of circumcision? A. From Col. 2:10-12: 'Ye are complete in him -- in whom, also, ye are circumcised with the circumcision made *without* hands -- buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him.'"
 - c. Fisher: "Q. 33. How does it appear, from this text, that baptism is now come in the room of circumcision? A. From the plain and obvious scope of it, which is to show, that there is no need now of that circumcision which was outward in the flesh, as we have all the blessed fruits and effects of Christ's death and resurrection more clearly, and, at the same time, more extensively, represented and sealed in baptism; which is dispensed equally to both sexes."
 - d. Flavel: "Q. 10. But circumcision was a seal of the covenant of works; and the argument will not hold, from a seal of the covenant of works, to a seal of the covenant of grace? A. Circumcision never was, nor was intended to be a seal of the covenant of works, but of the righteousness of faith; Romans 4:11. 'And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised...'"
3. 1 CO 7:14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.
- a. Fisher: "Q. 38. What holiness is here meant? A. Federal holiness, or being admitted to church membership, together with their believing or professing parent."
 - b. Fisher: "Q. 40. How does federal holiness entitle an infant to baptism? A. Federal holiness necessarily supposes a being within the covenant, in virtue of the credible profession of the parent; and, consequently, a right to the initiatory seal of it."
- C. Those born outside of the covenant community must not be baptized until they are united to Christ by faith.
- D. Those born into the covenant community must be baptized since the promise of the covenant belongs not only to their believing parents but also to them.

III. The doctrine applied.

- A. In obedience to Christ, every believer must be baptized.
- B. In obedience to Christ, every child of a believer must be baptized.
- C. Baptism sets before both you and your children the privileges of the covenant of grace thus by faith seek to possess them.
- D. Baptism sets before both you and your children the responsibilities of the covenant of grace thus in the power of the Spirit seek to fulfill them.