



## Communicating the Means of Grace for the Next Generation

### Session 2: Baptism

#### ❖ Introductory Matters

- My Baptism Journey
  - What is baptism and why is it important?
  - Who is baptism for?
  - How does God use baptism in our walk with Christ?

#### ❖ What is baptism and why is it important?

#### Westminster Confession of Faith

Q. 165. What is baptism?

A. Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, wherein Christ hath ordained the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to be a sign and seal of ingrafting into himself, of remission of sins by his blood, and regeneration by his Spirit; of adoption, and resurrection unto everlasting life; and whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible church, and enter into an open and professed engagement to be wholly and only the Lord's.

-In short baptism is about **REMEMBRANCE** and **RELATIONSHIP**.

- Remembrance: We have been saved through the death and resurrection of Christ
- Remembrance: We have been washed clean of our sins in the blood of Christ
- Relationship: Our union with Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit
- Relationship: Our new identity as children of God through his covenant promises
- Relationship: Our membership in the new covenant community of the church

#### Key Scriptures Passages:

- **Matt 28:19**
- **Acts 2:36-41**
- **1 Peter 3:18-22**

“God not only promised the covenant of grace in word but visually signified and sealed it through dramatic rituals” Michael Horton, *A Better Way*

## ❖ Who is baptism for?

- There is no difference between adult and child baptism for it reflects the faithfulness of God to bring them into the body of Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit and provide the common grace means to grow them in their relationship with Christ.

**“In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.” -Colossians 2:11-14**

Q: Why do Presbyterians baptize babies?

### **Westminster Larger Catechism**

Q. 166. Unto whom is baptism to be administered?

A. 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.

- **Baptism, like circumcision, does not guarantee salvation but is the mark of God’s covenant commitment to his people their children.**

## ❖ How does God use baptism in our walk with Christ?

### **Westminster Larger Catechism**

Q. 167. How is baptism to be improved by us?

A. The needful but much neglected duty of improving our baptism, is to be performed by us all our life long, especially in the time of temptation, and when we are present at the administration of it to others; by serious and thankful consideration of the nature of it, and of the ends for which Christ instituted it, the privileges and benefits conferred and sealed thereby, and our solemn vow made therein; by being humbled for our sinful defilement, our falling short of, and walking contrary to, the grace of baptism, and our engagements; by growing up to assurance of pardon of sin, and of all other blessings sealed to us in that sacrament; by drawing strength from the death and resurrection of Christ, into whom we are baptized, for the mortifying of sin, and quickening of grace; and by endeavoring to live by faith, to have our conversation in holiness and righteousness, as those that have therein given up their names to Christ; and to walk in brotherly love, as being baptized by the same Spirit into one body.

- Martin Luther was reputed to have the phrase “I am baptized” carved on his desk to remind him of who he was when he faced temptation. He also was reported to have said, “The only way to drive away the Devil is through faith in Christ, by saying: ‘I have been baptized, I am a Christian.’”
- Baptism should serve as an encouragement to parents of both children confessing faith and those currently living in rebellion that God is faithful to his covenant promises to his people.