



# His Word Is Truth!

This article is written by Pastor Tom Eckstein of Concordia Lutheran Church in Jamestown. "His Word is Truth" will appear in this paper every 3rd Monday.



Last month I began a series of articles on Baptism and infant Baptism. **At this point allow me to stress once again that I have good friends who are sincere Christians and yet have different views than I do about Holy Baptism and Infant Baptism.** Therefore, as brothers and sisters in Christ we should study the Holy Scriptures together in love and thereby allow God's Word to lead us into unity on those issues where we do not yet agree. **(See John 17:17-21; Acts 17:11; Ephesians 4:1-6, 14-16)**

In last month's article I

explained how Scripture teaches that baptism is the work of God – *an instrument He uses to give us Christ and His gifts of salvation.* **(See Matthew 28:19, John 3:5, Acts 2:38 and 22:16, Romans 6:3-4, Galatians 3:27, Ephesians 5:26, Colossians 2:11-12, Titus 3:5, 1st Peter 3:21)** At this point I will explain why Lutherans believe it is appropriate to baptize infants. I will do this in today's article by answering the following two objections to infant Baptism: **1) "Infants are not sinful, and so they don't need to be saved!" and 2) "But infants can't have faith in Jesus!"**

Concerning the first objection -- *"Infants are not sinful, and so they don't need to be saved!"* -- the fact is that Scripture teaches that our hearts are opposed to God from the moment of our conception (see Genesis 8:21 and Psalm 51:5) because we have inherited a sinful nature from Adam (see Romans 5:12-14 and 1st Corinthians 15:22). This is what Jesus

means when He says that **"flesh gives birth to flesh"** (see John 3:6). The fact that infants die is proof that they are sinners, because the Apostle Paul says: **"The wages of sin is death..."** (see Romans 6:23). Also, in Romans 5:12 Paul teaches that death comes to ALL because ALL sin. (Also see Romans 3:23) *Simply put, the conscious acts of sin that we see in children as they get older are only the expression of their sinful nature that has been with them since the moment of their conception!*

Therefore, infants also need to receive the salvation that only Jesus can give – and one of the ways that Jesus brings salvation to infants is through the waters of Baptism! However, as I stressed in last month's article, Lutherans do NOT believe that all infants who have not been baptized are going to hell. Many infants throughout Old Testament history were saved by Christ before He ever instituted Baptism. In the same way, many infants today are saved

by Christ even if they have not been baptized. Even though Baptism is one way that God brings Christ and His salvation to infants, it is not the only way He does this. **Scripture also teaches that God uses His spoken Word to give saving faith to infants!**

Now I will answer the second objection: *"But infants can't have faith in Jesus!"* The fact is that Scripture clearly teaches that infants CAN have faith. In Psalm 8:2 we see that infants can give praise to God! In Psalm 22:9 we see that David trusted in the Lord when he was a breast-feeding infant! In Matthew 18:6 Jesus teaches that "little ones" can believe in Him. Jesus is speaking about the "child" mentioned in Matthew 18:2. The Greek word for child is "paidion" which can also refer to infants. For example, the plural form of "paidion" is used in Matthew 2:16 for the children who were 2 years old and younger. Also, in Luke 18:15-17 we see that Jesus uses babies as examples of sincere faith.

The Greek word for babies is "brephos" which means infant. Finally, in Luke 1:41-45 we read that John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit even in his mother's womb!

There are many more examples of infant faith in Holy Scripture that I do not have room to list for you. Those who object to what Scripture teaches about infant faith usually have a narrow understanding of faith as merely conscious knowledge about God. But if faith is merely conscious knowledge about God, then do we lose our faith when we are asleep? Do we lose our faith if we are in a coma? Are the mentally challenged incapable of having faith in Jesus? Scripture says "No!"

In addition, Scripture teaches that saving faith in Jesus is necessary for salvation. But if infants can NOT have such saving faith, then either all infants who die are in hell or infants can be saved without saving faith in Jesus. **Scripture teaches neither error because Scripture**

**clearly teaches that infants CAN have saving faith in Jesus!** *Therefore, Lutherans Baptize infants because we believe they are "born again" when the Holy Spirit works through the waters of Baptism to give them saving faith in Christ.* **(See John 3:5, Acts 2:38-39 and Titus 3:5)**

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**Please read the next "His Word is Truth" on Monday,**

**November 17th!**  
*In next month's article Pastor Eckstein will use Holy Scripture to give answers to the following objections to Infant Baptism: 1) "But Jesus was baptized as an adult!" and 2) "The Bible never says we should baptize infants!"*

*For more resources about Christian teaching and issues, go to Concordia Lutheran's web page:*  
[www.concordiajt.org](http://www.concordiajt.org)

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