

Greetings in the precious Name of our Lord and Saviour , Jesus Christ.

Thank you very much for your email

The issue of baptism has been a hot topic which has caused much division and hard words in the church. There are fine dedicated Christians on both sides of this debate.

Most of the Reformers did hold to Covenant Baptism of children of believing parents. Both Dr. Martin Luther and John Calvin noted that it would be better if baptism were done by full immersion, as the early Church practiced. They also held that a person who was converted from an unbelieving background should be baptized on their own confession of faith. However, generally speaking, as the society granted citizenship on the basis of infant baptism, they recognised that they could not disrupt this long-established practice at that critical time in history - while the Church was facing a fight for its life against the Holy Roman Empire and the Catholic church.

I am a Reformed Baptist and would hold along with Charles Spurgeon, to the need for Believers Baptism by full immersion. However, many of my good friends, such as Dr. R. C. Sproul and Dr. James Kennedy held to Covenant Baptism of children of believers. As Christians I believe we can have charity and grace recognising that there are dedicated believers on both sides of this question.

Both of these positions can be abused. There are many cases of people who have their infants' christened, but do not bring them up in the Faith. Others go through their infant baptism and confirmation without any heart change or personal faith. In the same way one can say that many in churches that practice Believers Baptism can also have the young people all walk to the front and commit themselves to believer's baptism at a certain age when it is expected of them. In some of these cases it can be as empty and meaningless as confirmation is in some other churches.

Yet, despite some abusing these practices that is no reason why Christians should not respect and practice the means of grace in a Biblical way. We need to be like the Bereans , studying the Word of God carefully, to see if these things are true.

May the Lord bless, guide and strengthen you.

Yours for the fulfillment of the Great Commission

Dr. Peter Hammond