

Mark 10:13-16 - Part 2

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Preacher: Nathan Raynor

[0 : 0 0] Let's take your copy of God's Word. Turn to the Gospel according to Mark, chapter 10. For those of you who haven't seen us all summer, yes, we are still continuing our verse-by-verse! exposition of the Gospel according to Mark, and we have made it to chapter 10. We have seen the conclusion of Jesus' Galilean ministry and His public ministry at large, and He's begun to travel kind of halfway through chapter 8 with the disciples towards Jerusalem, and His attention has turned towards them. There's lots of Pericopes here that are specifically poignant and challenging to those of us who claim to be in Christ. And last week we came to Mark 10, verses 13 through 16. Let's pray together first, and then I'll read that to you. Father God, I have no good that is mine apart from you. In the preaching of your Word, there is no wisdom that's been given to me that wasn't given to me by you. There's no degree of slickness of presentation that could possibly change anyone's heart apart from your work in their lives. And so I plead with you today. Help me. Empower me to speak with clarity and with conviction.

And help, Father, all of us to believe and to follow Christ as we should. And it's in His name I pray. Amen. So Mark chapter 10, beginning in verse 13. And they were bringing children to Him that He might touch them. And the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, He was indignant and said to them, Let the children come to Me. Do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it. And He took them in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands on them. And last week we spent some time talking about what it is that this text does mean. And we see that we are meant to have a childlike faith. And we came to understand together that this is not an ignorant faith, but that this is a faith that recognizes we have nothing to offer the kingdom of God. That we have nothing to add to the equation of our salvation because we are like children. But we also talked about some things that this text does not mean.

And we did this because I ran across in a commentary that I've been using in my study of the Gospel of Mark by J.C. Ryle, who was a 19th century Anglican bishop. He wrote this, Of course, it is not pretended that there is any mention of baptism or even any reference to it in the verses before us. All we mean to say is that the expressions and gestures of our Lord in this passage are a strong indirect argument in favor of infant baptism. It is on this account that the passage occupies a prominent place in the baptismal service of the Church of England. This fascinated me as John MacArthur would say, this is a dry passage. There's no mention of baptism in it anywhere. And yet it is used by Anglicans as a central text for the baptism of infants. And so in brief last week, I made the point to you that this text does not mean that there's some sort of special salvific category for children, although I would make a case there is from other biblical texts, but not this one. Or that this text is a case for infant baptism. And I promise you that we would look at that at greater length today. So we're starting kind of as a jumping off point, Mark chapter 10, but we're going to look at some selected texts today. Now, as I don't typically do, we're going to be dealing thematically. I want to encourage you to try to turn and try to keep up with me, but I'm afraid I have a lot of info to cover.

My normal 45-minute sermon is about four and a half pages. This is seven, so I'm going to move and try to get us through, because I know you guys are already all hungry. There are a number of categories of what people believe about baptism, and there are some various erroneous views that we won't even address in any degree today. But the two more common categories that we would find people that we would fellowship with that believe are paedo-baptists and credo-baptists.

Now, paedo-baptism or paedo-baptists is derived from the Greek *paes* simply means child. It's a simple term, sounds really fancy. Anglicans, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, more erroneous views like the Catholic Church are paedo-baptists. We are, our church, I can't

speak for every individual here, we are, I am, what's called a credo-baptist, which is from Latin, credo, I believe.

[5 : 26] Now, for the sake of simplicity for this sermon, I'm going to use the terms paedo-baptist and Presbyterian interchangeably, and let me tell you why. I'm going to paint with some extremely broad brushstrokes over the coming 45 minutes or so, but we find ourselves most theologically aligned with the Presbyterian Church, and specifically the branch of the Presbyterian Church known as the Presbyterian Church of America, the PCA Church. I am thankful for our PCA brethren. I want you to hear me very carefully. Please let this flavor everything else I say today. I am thankful for them. In fact, I discovered that every commentary I'm using for Mark right now was written by a Presbyterian. Isn't that fascinating?

They have offered so much to the Kingdom of God. We have a PCA church in our town, which I love, and I am thankful for. I consider the pastor a friend, although we have had trouble finding time to get together and to know each other at a deeper level. We'll continue to work on that. I am thankful for their partnership in the Gospel in this community. Glad that they are here.

However, we need to know why we believe what we believe. Not simply because it's another flavor, it's another idea concerning baptism, but because we have conviction about it. Some would have us just amiably disagree and fellowship with one another. I read a sermon this week from a pastor who was celebrating that he had both Credo Baptist and Paedo Baptist in his congregation. To say that this is a secondary issue, which I agree, it's not central to the Gospel. Baptism is not necessary for salvation, but it is an important doctrine. Baptism is not only given as an individual commandment to you and to me, but it is granted to the church, to the local church, as an ordinance. An ordinance or a sacrament. We tend to not, in Protestant churches, use the term sacrament because Catholics believe that the sacraments actually administer grace. They go in your good person list. We don't believe this is the case. So we tend to use the term ordinance. That is, it was ordained by Christ. An ordinance is a Christian right with particular significance. There's two of them. In the case of baptism, it's the Christian right that grants admittance to the covenant community. Paedo and Credo Baptists agree on this. The Lord's Supper is the other, which renews our commitment to the covenant community. It's part of the reason we do it every

Sunday here in our congregational meeting. Convictions ought to be held. I recently overheard a PCA pastor, one that none of you would know, say, well, we're pretty much a Baptist church.

And it wasn't my place in the conversation to scream, no, you're not. You're not, right? In fact, what you believe about baptism stands in antithesis to what Baptists believe about baptism.

[9 : 00] Now, I, with you, wish there was no denominationalism. What a wonderful world that would be, where we all could agree on all things in the scriptures. But what I will say as a benefit, as a value of denominations, is that it means that we believe things, that we have convictions, that we stand firm in, and that collectively, as a local congregation, we hold those things together. It matters what we believe about baptism. I don't think it's okay that it's a non-issue in our churches. I do believe we should hold the same convictions, and I'll show you why in the coming moments. Now, paedo-baptists do not contest that a believer ought to be baptized if that person makes a profession of faith, and they have never been baptized. If you were not baptized as an infant, and you make a profession of faith, you should be baptized, right? Our point of contention is whether or not an infant should ever be baptized, right? So, paedo-baptists believe in believer's baptism, which is why I think it's important that we clarify that we're credo-baptists. We believe in believer's baptism alone, and not infant baptism in any case. We don't have to look long or make a very long, challenging argument for baptism of a believer. We see baptism as expression in the scriptures of repentance and faith. We see this in Acts chapter 2, verse 37 through 38 and 41. Now, when they heard this, they were cut to the heart. This is the conclusion of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, brothers, what shall we do? And Peter said to them, repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the

Holy Spirit. Repent and be baptized, and it's expression of our repentance. And then verse 41, so those who received this word, received the word, were baptized, and there were out of that day about 3,000 souls. We will address verse 39 in a moment. Colossians 2, 11-12, Paul also expresses baptism as a response of repentance and faith. Verse 11, chapter 2, Colossians, in him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands by putting off the body of 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. So we have, those of us who have believed in Christ in the symbol of baptism, we've been buried with him, and we've been raised with him, past tense, through what? Our faith. It's an expression of a thing that has occurred. Our faith. It's commanded to us to baptize in the name of the Father and the Son and the

Holy Spirit in the Great Commission, Matthew 28, 19 and 20. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. See people come to repentance and faith and baptize them.

We don't have to look hard to make this argument, and no one, no one disagrees on this point. To my knowledge, it has never been debated in the history of the church.

I looked long and hard this past week for the history of infant baptism, and there is a lot of disagreement about it. Some say that it existed from the first century. Some say not until the third, which is the place that I'm arriving at. It would seem that it came about as part of state control of religion. It was a way to include all of the citizenship in the church so that they could be ruled over, but it's difficult. Boy, is it difficult. There's no lack of writing on the topic. I have read and read and read this week trying to get all the education I could possibly gather on, and I have to tell you, I still feel a bit ignorant on the history of it all. Create some challenges for us. We want to look at the church past and understand how we should operate now. Like we want to stand on the shoulders of giants, and we have giants to stand upon their shoulders. Men that have contributed so much to our faith. This is a case, it would seem though, that we need to just look at the scriptures, because there is so much disagreement on the matter. Let me read to you from the Westminster Confession, 1646.

[13:54] Chapter 28 of Baptism. Now hear me, this is what the Presbyterian Church holds to in this day. This is their confession of faith. Section 1. Baptism is a sacrament, or ordinance, of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church. So it grants admission to the visible church, but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, or his engrafting into Christ, right? It's a picture, it's a symbol of what has happened. A sign, a seal of covenant grace, and engrafting into Christ of regeneration, the changing of our hearts, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God through Jesus Christ to walk in newness of life. Okay? We all agree upon this. Boy, I read that and I say, that is beautiful. However, the Westminster

Confession, chapter 28, section 4, says not only those that do actually profess faith in and obedience unto Christ, but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized. Now, I'm aware of all the arguments. If you sit in this room as a paedo-baptist, I'm completely aware of them, but when you read the Westminster Confession, it is contradictory. Not only in tone, but in reality, it is contradictory. Right? What did they just say baptism was about? Not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church, right? But also as a sign and seal of covenant grace, and engrafting into Christ, regeneration, remission of sins, giving up unto God through Jesus Christ to walk in a newness of life. All of this is present moving forward. Not a future hope. The language doesn't say that at all. And so we find ourselves in a place of confusion. And there are three ways, I think, that the doctrine of infant baptism confuses the church. Isn't it interesting that as we've come to chapter 10, we have dealt now with the three stories so far with issues that are really contentious in the church that have been challenged in so many ways. A couple of weeks ago, we talked about divorce and remarriage and all of the views. And we started a process that our church is going to need to go to resolve what we believe about divorce and remarriage. We've come to this text, which on the surface doesn't seem to have anything to do with anything that would cause any contention whatsoever. However, it's been misused, I believe. And next week we get to talk about money, wealth, what's become of that in the church.

We need clarity in our day. This has never been untrue. We need the Bible to communicate to us how it is we're to live our lives in every respect. I find this issue particularly frustrating because I love you guys.

Again, broad strokes. I'm not upset at any one individual. I think that people who hold the doctrine of infant baptism do so with a clear conscience, with good motivation. But I just think they're wrong. I think they're confusing the church of God. I think that the reformers didn't go far enough. They took giant steps. We owe them so much, but they didn't press on into the truth. And that's what I want for us. And that's what I want for you as an individual. To submit yourself in every way to the Word of God. Three ways it confuses us. Infant baptism confuses our belief in the sufficiency of Scripture. It

confuses our belief in the sufficiency of Scripture.

[18 : 12] I believe that the Scripture is a perfect guide to holiness. Psalm 19, 7-13. Listen carefully. Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless and innocent.

God's law is perfect to deliver us to this point that we might be blameless if we could keep it. Right? We're given that blamelessness in Christ. But the Word of God is sufficient for this. We don't need to appeal to history. We don't need to appeal to tradition. All we need is the Word of God. This is why I've been saying to you all summer long after reading our text, this is God's Word to us. Written for His glory and for our good. Right? Our good. Our eternal good. We would all do well to listen to it in order to believe its promises and obey its commands.

Presbyterians find many of their roots in the Reformation, as do we as a Protestant denomination. Men that threw off the false teaching of the Catholic Church waved a banner called Sola Scriptura. [20 : 10] By Scripture alone. We will not allow the history or the traditions of the Catholic Church to define for us what it is we should believe.

You remember Martin Luther, the great Reformer, nailed his 95 theses on the door, 95 reasons that indulgences were not biblical. And he was summoned to the Diet of Worms in 1521.

And he said this, The Reformation, the Reformers, had a principle they called the regulative principle of worship.

As defined by John Calvin as follows, God disapproves of all modes of worship not expressly sanctioned by His Word. Not fascinating.

Now they would say expressly sanctioned would be that it's given as a command or example, or that it could be deduced by good and necessary consequence, which was a way of the time simply to say plain reason or plain logic.

[21 : 40] This is all I want. Show me in the Scriptures. Show me where the Scriptures say it and use plain reason. Don't get fancy on me. Just show me with plain reason and the Scriptures that something is true, and I'll believe it to be true.

A good example of something arrived at that's not expressly taught, but that it has arrived at by plain reason or logic, is the doctrine of the Trinity. The term Trinity is nowhere used in the Scriptures.

However, the Bible speaks of the Father as God in Philippians 1-2, Jesus as God in Titus 2-13, and the Holy Spirit as God in Acts 5-3-4.

So by plain reason, we can arrive at God being three in one. I don't believe this is the case for impton baptism.

Infant baptism is nowhere taught in the Scriptures. Pato Baptists agree that it's nowhere expressly taught. They would just say that it can be inferred by plain reason.

[22 : 44] One of their primary defenses is that while it's not found anywhere expressly in the Scriptures, that it's also not anywhere expressly prohibited in the Scriptures, which I find fascinating. Again and again and again you'll read this type of reasoning.

The Bible nowhere prohibits us from physically abusing our children, does it? Yet we know with plain reason, right? This way of treating our children is contradictory to the way in which we are guided to treat our children.

The Bible nowhere expressly prohibits heroin use. However, we know that we're to honor and worship God with our bodies, not destroy them.

These are plain reason. These are things that we can arrive at simply and easily. Infant baptism is not that way.

And the argument of household baptisms is often made by paedo-baptists. Right? Places like Acts 16, 14-15, we see a woman named Lydia and her household is baptized.

[23 : 53] Acts 16, 30-34, and if you'd like to turn with me to this one, you can. Paul and Silas are in a Philippian prison. They're praying and singing hymns. You remember there's an earthquake and all the doors open up.

And the Philippian jailer, the man that was in charge, feared for his life because he thought they had escaped. He was actually about to kill himself. In verse 30 of chapter 16, they told him, don't kill yourself, we're here.

It says, It doesn't say anything about infants.

In the text at all, does it? In fact, likely, a Philippian jailer who was in charge would have been a much older man. It probably wouldn't have had infants in the house anyway, but it doesn't say.

It says nothing at all. It's an argument from silence. Are we to presume then that there's a doctrine we should practice in our churches because maybe?

[25 : 12] I could just as easily teach to you that there were teenagers in this house, as anyone else can make the case that there were infants in the house. 1 Corinthians 1.16, Paul here mentions baptizing the household of Stephanas.

Again, no mention of infants, those who were unable to profess faith in Christ being baptized. Now, I mentioned that we were going to look at Acts chapter 2, verse 39, that I would come back to it. Now, remember verse 37 and 38. Now, when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brothers, what shall we do? And Peter said to them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 39. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.

Verse 40. And with many other words, he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation. So those who received his word were baptized, and they were added to that day 3,000 souls.

[26 : 24] So you see in a sandwich, and I intentionally presented it to you in that way, verse 37, verse 38, response of faith. Verse 31, response of faith. And then we see verse 39, speaking of a promise for you and your children.

But don't miss that it's also for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself. Peter is broadening the scope of the gospel.

The gospel is now available to all people who respond in faith. Not just you who are here on the day of Pentecost, but you can go back to your house, and you can preach the gospel to your kids.

And they can receive it. And you can go far off and preach the gospel, and they can receive it. If our logic stays consistent with the Pato-Baptists, the promise being for you and for your children, but wait, and all who are far off, it would seem that when I become a Christian, my kids are automatically granted that as well, and everyone else, as long as I can call them far off.

So you guys should run as far from me as you possibly can. It doesn't hold water. Pun intended. Turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 7.

[27 : 39] There's a new issue in the church now. What happens if a believer is married to an unbeliever?

This is now suddenly a new issue. Not people who are of the same lineage, not an Israelite married to an Israelite, but what happens now that there's a status change in a marriage?

And Paul addresses that. Chapter 7, beginning in verse 12. To the rest I say, I, not the Lord, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her.

Stay together. If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband.

Otherwise, your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. It's interesting language, right? Verse 15. But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so.

[28 : 41] In such cases, the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace. For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?

Now, firstly, the point of the text is speaking of unbelieving spouses, right? You see that. It wraps back around to that with this interesting little interjection that the children are made holy.

Verse 16 says, Remain with them. If they're willing to remain with you, remain with them. Because verse 16 says, How do you know? Maybe in your living out the gospel and your presentation of the gospel to your spouse, they may become saved.

What a glorious thing that would be if both of you would be regenerate and your marriage could better reflect the glory of God. So if they're willing, stay with them. That's the point of the text.

This is what he's trying to communicate to us. So what does he mean for the unbelieving husband is made holy? Another way of translating that word is made sanctified or set apart.

[29 : 42] And all Paul's communicating here is that the blessings of the gospel are made available to these people. If they're willing as an unbeliever to stay in your house, just as your children are

going to stay in your house, let them stay.

It's good for them to be in the presence of someone who is redeemed. They are in a sense then set apart, given the blessings of God through your faith.

This is all Paul is communicating to us here. Now the Pato-Baptist argument draws a lot, and I think rightly this is the best possible case for it, through the covenants, through the covenant of grace specifically.

Now Presbyterians are what we would call covenant theologians or covenantalists. They're on one end of a spectrum of how it is that we understand the ages and the covenants of God.

I find that covenant theology is over-reductionary. It's almost too simple. And it is that it looks that there are two overarching covenants in the scriptures.

[30 : 54] There's a covenant of works which was given to Adam and Eve pre-fall. They broke that. They broke the fellowship as a result. And ever since then, everyone else who has lived has lived under the covenant of grace.

Whether or not they responded to it and were the people of God, they live underneath it. And in an over-simplification, that means that every promise given to the Israelites of the Old Testament is a promise that directly correlates to the church in our day.

I just don't think it's that easy. The other end of that are dispensationalists, the whole left-behind crowd, if you're familiar with that. I'm also not on that end of the spectrum. I'm somewhere in between. It's very difficult to sort it all out and to figure out where does God make a promise to the Old Testament people of God that carries forward to the New Testament people of God?

How do these things find their mark? There's not possibly enough time to work out all the intricacies of that. There wasn't enough time in this week to work out all the intricacies of that and the way God's covenants manifest in the New Testament versus the Old Testament.

But this is the draw that they make, the connection that they make, that the Old Testament Abrahamic covenant found in Genesis chapter 12 and the mark of it, which was circumcision to the males, which was just for infants eventually, once all the men had been circumcised, new men were circumcised, is found in Genesis chapter 17.

[32 : 23] So there's a mark given to the people of God, specifically men of the people of God, and that now baptism is the direct correlation of that in our day.

Now rightly, right, again, respect these men, valuable biblical theologians. Rightly, Romans chapter 9, second half of 6 through 8, for not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but through Isaac shall your offspring be named.

This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. We see this to be true in the Scriptures, that we are children of Abraham.

We can sing that ridiculous song, Father Abraham, and turn in circles and kick our legs around because we are children of Abraham because of the spiritual blessings that have been brought to us.

But the covenants have changed, right? There was a physical birth, a physical birthright granted, but now it's a spiritual birthright that we have.

[33 : 31] I believe that some of the promises of God still apply to the nation, the actual bloodline of Israel in this day, but not all of them do. Romans chapter 2, verse 28 and 29, Paul writes, For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical, but a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart by the Spirit, not by the letter.

His praise is not from man, what man can do, what man can accomplish, but from God, because God has circumcised our hearts, made us clean in that way.

In Wayne Grudem's Systematic Theology, which I would commend to you, he writes, We should not be surprised that there was a change from the way the covenant community was entered in the Old Testament through physical birth to the way the churches entered in the New Testament, which is spiritual birth.

There are many analogous changes between the Old and New Covenants in other areas as well. There's a few for you. While the Israelites fed on physical manna in the wilderness, New Testament believers feed on Jesus Christ, the true bread that comes down from heaven, John chapter 6.

The Israelites drank physical water that gushed from the rock in the wilderness, but those who believe in Christ drink of the living water of eternal life that he gives, John chapter 4. The Old Covenant had a physical temple to which Israel came for worship, but in the New Covenant, believers are built into a spiritual temple, 1 Peter.

[34 : 57] Old Covenant believers offer physical sacrifices of animals and crops upon an altar, but New Testament believers offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

1 Peter and Hebrews. Old Covenant believers receive from God the physical land of Israel which he had promised to them, but New Testament believers receive a better country that is a heavenly one.

Hebrews chapter 11. In the same way, in the Old Covenant, those who were the physical seed or descendants of Abraham were members of the people of Israel, but in the New Testament, those who are the spiritual seed or descendants of Abraham by faith are members of the church.

And how do we know? How do we know? If you were a member, if you were a seed of Abraham unless you have professed faith in Christ. Furthermore, the Bible nowhere makes such a connection between the Old Covenant sign and the New Covenant sign.

Doesn't it seem like a pretty important thing to connect if it was meant to be connected? As baptism is an ordinance of the church, it reasons, it reasons that this would follow.

[36 : 08] Recall John's baptism, Mark chapter 1, verse 4. It was a baptism of what? Repentance. It was a baptism of repentance. Recall John the Baptist's response to the Pharisees and the Sadducees, the religious elite, those who had a bloodline heritage to the people of God.

Verse 7, Matthew chapter 3, he says, But when he saw many of the Pharisees coming to his baptism, he said to them, You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit in keeping with repentance and do not presume to say to yourselves, We have Abraham as our father. For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.

We are those stones that have been raised, professed faith in Christ, and are baptized with the baptism of repentance. He refused to baptize those who didn't bear fruit of repentance.

Now here's an argument for you from silence. Acts chapter 15, the Jerusalem council. Paul and Barnabas are currently in Antioch, and we see, starting in verse 1, but some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.

[37 : 31] Unless you take this sign, the Jews, you cannot be saved. And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate, I love that record, no small, a large dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question.

Do you recall this story that the gospel has been expanded to the Gentiles, and Paul and Barnabas are on missionary journey, and they are bringing people to faith in Christ, and there's this constant nagging of the Judaizers.

We see it in Galatians. That's what the book of Galatians is all about, is telling them that they can't be saved by their works. They don't have to be circumcised. Don't be circumcised. It doesn't matter anymore. It's no longer the sign.

It's no longer the mark. And so they go, and they have this recorded conversation. This council decides to send letters out to all the Gentile churches to tell them not to worry about it.

You're okay. You don't have to be circumcised. Why did they not record here by the hand of Luke, baptism's the new thing. Don't worry about the circumcision.

[38 : 35] Don't worry about the circumcision more, but be sure you're baptizing because that now is this new sign of the covenant. They don't mention it anywhere. Baptize your infants. Baptize your infants. Baptize your infants.

It's not in the scriptures. Can you get your head around that? I can't. I have a really difficult time doing so. And I have to say, the whole matter seems to be a way of reconciling the doctrine of original sin and the need to repent and believe concerning children who die prior to such confessions.

Isn't that a challenging thing? If we're to believe that we have a father who was Adam and his sin, the original sin, passed to us, that we have the same guilt, isn't that a challenge that we're born in iniquity, the Psalms say?

What happens to our young ones? We're not able to respond. We don't get that. How can we possibly reconcile these things? There are some that just argue against the doctrine of original sin, stating that children are inclined to sin by their nature.

They're born with a propensity to sin by their nature, but they're not guilty of sin until they knowingly sin. My kids knowingly sin all the time. I've got a four-year-old and a two-year-old.

[39 : 52] This is where we get the concept of the age of accountability found nowhere in the Scriptures. As a church, we hold to the doctrine of original sin. Our statement of faith says, we believe that man was created in holiness under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state.

This would be Adam. In consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint, but choice, being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil, and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin without defense or excuse.

We believe this to be true. What happens to children who die in the womb? To our young ones? To children who are mentally, or adults for that matter, who are mentally handicapped and don't seem to be able to understand and conceptualize?

The truth of it is that I don't know. I throw myself on the mercy of God for the matter. I lean on his character to say, surely, surely they're not being eternally punished.

Surely not. There are some instances in the Scripture. We see David has a young one that dies, and he says that one day he'll be with him. Speaking of glory. We've got some hints and some clues to that, but the Scripture don't speak clearly to it.

[41 : 13] And it puts us in a place where we ought to just say we believe that God knows what is best. We trust him in that because he's good, sovereign ruler.

Now I'll say that modern Presbyterians don't believe that infant baptism is salvific. They do not believe that. Again, broad brush, maybe some do. As far as I know, PCA Church does not believe that it is salvific, salvific.

Although they do use the terminology that it's a sign of covenant promise, which is hard for me because it seems that if God makes a promise, he necessarily fulfills that promise. And the Westminster Confession seems to give some hint to that.

Again, chapter 28, this is section 6. The efficacy, or the effect, of baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered.

Right? So they're not saved at the time of baptism. Yet, notwithstanding, or nevertheless, by the right use of this ordinance, the grace promise is not only offered, but really exhibited and confirmed by the Holy Ghost to such, whether of age or infants, as that grace belongeth unto according to the counsel of God's own will in his appointed time.

[42 : 26] It seems to say that they will. That they will be saved. They have another section that says not necessarily. It's fascinating. It seems very confusing to me.

I found on the website for the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, not PCA, so to be very clear and fair about that. This gentleman wrote, Moreover, I personally believe that when believing parents sometimes experience the tragedy of an infant miscarried from the womb or dying soon after birth, we may cling with reasonable hope that our little one is in heaven with the children's Savior.

Worldlings, that is those who are not believers, have no such hope. That's the inference he draws. In the fourth century, Augustine, who we love, wrote this.

If you wish to be a Christian, do not believe, nor say, nor teach that infants who die before baptism can obtain the remission of original sin.

If you wish to be a Christian, how dare you say, believe, or teach that kids that are not baptized can be saved. That's what he's saying here. So the baptism then, in some way, extends grace to them.

[43 : 39] And again, whoever says that even infants are vivified or brought to life in Christ, when they depart this life without participation in his sacrament, that is baptism, both opposes the apostolic preaching and condemns the whole church which hastens to baptize infants because it unhesitatingly believes that otherwise they cannot possibly be vivified in Christ.

Right? No church that hastens to baptize them because if we don't they can't possibly be vivified in Christ. So it would seem that early church leaders, Augustine of Hippo believed that there was grace administered to baptism.

There's much confusion over this where the Bible does not give clarity. We should simply not try to define it. So it confuses our belief in the sufficiency of Scripture.

Point one. These are going to move faster now. Foundation laid. It confuses the nature of the church. It confuses the nature of the church.

What is the church? We believe in a believer's church. Ephesians 5.25 says Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

[44 : 54] Every New Testament reference concerning the universal church or the local church rather, whether it's past, present, or future, is always speaking of those who are in the faith.

Not those outside, not those that we question, not our kids, but those who are in the faith.

Remember the Westminster Confession? Baptism is a sacrament in the New Testament ordained by Jesus Christ not only for the solemn mission of the party baptized in the invisible church.

We believe that to be true, but we just believe that somebody must be saved for that to be the case.

From our own document, from our bylaws, those seeking to become members of Christ's family church must meet the following conditions.

Number one, such persons must profess who have been born again of the Holy Spirit, having believed in the power of God Almighty in Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension to save them from the bondage and penalty of their sins and bearing fruit of their new life in Him.

You must be a Christian and you must be giving some evidence of that, that you are a Christian, that you are a good tree bearing good fruit. And secondly, such persons must have been baptized by immersion or expressed intent thereunto, right, when we get the tank out to make that happen as soon as we possibly can.

[46 : 11] That we agree upon this, that we are believers and we are united in this together. To be clear, the kids in our church that haven't professed faith in Christ and been baptized are not members of our church.

They don't sit in our meetings and vote. Right? We don't hold them to the same standard. Please don't hold my kids to the same standard you hold me to. They're not yet members of our church.

What a wonderful opportunity to not give our kids a false sense of their salvation. Does it not confuse that matter when you say to a child you were baptized, therefore you're part of the covenant community because you have received the covenant sign of promise.

Oh, but wait. You must repent and believe. After the fact, you must respond in faith from the symbol of the baptism that was originally given to you as a child.

In our church, failure to be baptized would constitute a matter of church discipline. If you want to join our church and you've never been baptized or you were baptized as an infant and you don't see the case for believer's baptism and you refuse to be baptized as a believer, we would say that we can't fellowship together in this way.

[47 : 27] It's a plain case in the scriptures made here. If you were to be obedient to the call of Christ, you need to be baptized. You say, no, I totally disagree. If we allowed you to be a member of our church, there would be an immediate case for church discipline.

Would there not? We'd be saying repent of your sin of not being baptized. And the proper repentance would be to be baptized. And if you didn't, we would have to excuse you from the church.

So we just prevent that altogether by not allowing it to begin with. Listen again, the Westminster Confession, chapter 28, section 5. Although it be a great sin to contemn or treat with contentment or neglect this ordinance, yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it as that no person can be regenerated or saved.

without it. Or that all are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated. So catch what they're saying. It's a great sin to hold the position I have.

To treat infant baptism with contempt. Will not do it. Will not baptize my children. Yet, again, broad stroke, in many, many, many Presbyterian churches, if you hold different convictions, you're not required to have your child baptized.

[48 : 51] What kind of a conviction is that? And about an ordinance, no less. My personal conviction concerning alcohol is that I don't.

I don't drink alcohol because of my position, because of the culture in which we live in. I think that the possible negativity of doing so far outweighs any short-term benefit of doing so.

It just makes no sense to me. But the scriptures nowhere prohibit you from doing so, and therefore I'm not going to teach you that you cannot. Right? This is the type of gray area conviction that we can disagree on.

Somebody, I know many of you do, enjoy a good glass of wine with your meal, go ahead. No problem. We can fellowship together on that. We can be a church together around that matter. This is one. How could we possibly disagree on this? Right? A conviction about an ordinance given to us as a church. How it is that we define the community of faith.

[49 : 50] And you say, nah, don't worry about it. I say a conviction treated that way is no conviction at all. Thirdly, it confuses the meaning of believer's baptism.

Infant baptism confuses the meaning of believer's baptism. Again, let's just remember, what is it that we believe baptism means?

It's a symbol, right? It's not salvific. It doesn't bring to us any type of grace. It's a picture of the grace that's already occurred in our lives. Romans chapter 6.

Again, notice the past tense language. You not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death. We were buried, therefore, with him by baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Our old selves have been put to death, and we are now a new creation. This is the picture of baptism, right? It's showing everybody, I have believed in Christ.

[50 : 55] The old Nathan is dead and gone. The new Nathan is here. I want to be in fellowship with you. I want to be held to that standard. Please help me to do so. Michael Green, Presbyterian, in his book, Baptism, its purpose, practice, and power, says this, and I just want to tell you up front, I completely disagree with him.

Infant baptism stresses the objectivity of the gospel. It points to the solid achievement of Christ crucified and risen, whether or not we respond to it, not that we gain anything from it unless we repent and believe.

I agree with that. But it is the standing demonstration that our salvation does not depend on our own very fallible faith, it depends on what God has done for us. Infant baptism stresses the initiative of God and salvation, should it be attached primarily to man's response or to God's initiative?

That is the heart of the question. For the Baptist, baptism primarily bears witness to what we do in responding to the grace of God. For the paedo-baptist, it primarily bears the witness to what God has done to make it all possible.

Wrong! That is not what we do when we baptize somebody. We are not applauding the person baptized. Good for you. You chose faith in Christ. Exalt you.

[52 : 12] Exalt you. Not at all. We are praising God for what He has done, what He has accomplished in that person. We know you are a Christian. You have professed faith.

Let's see what that looks like. Let's get our minds around it by burying you and raising you once again. Michael Green needs to sit down with me.

This is a horrible explanation of what we believe baptism to emphasize. Now as a separate but really inextricably tied issue is the confusion about the mode of baptism.

I will tell you, this is not a hill I am going to die on. I would not do it. However, we baptize by immersion and we do so for two reasons. For what we believe the ordinance of baptism represents. That is our death. I have said to you before, I will say it to you again. If our culture as a whole begins laying people out on the ground when they die and tossing a handful of dirt in their face and walking away, this is the way we expose of dead people, we may reconsider the way that we baptize people.

[53 : 20] Maybe. Wait till you get to my second point. But just by this one point, maybe we would consider that. But what do we do with dead people? They are buried. Even if they are not buried, they are in tomb.

You keep dead bodies away from animals. Let them decompose at their own happy rate. This is the way that people are dealt with when they die. I've got to tell you, we've got a cattle trough.

If you haven't been here long, we have a cattle trough we bring out and we put it right here. It is a pain in the rear. I've done it each time. I have flooded our stage twice and spent hours cleaning up the water.

It's a pain. It really, really is. It's heavy. I had to devise a complicated hose system to fill it. We've got to spread plastic out all over the place.

It is worth the trouble though. It is worth the trouble because of the picture and what it represents.

That's the first reason. Secondly, though, the Greek word from which we derive our English, baptize

or baptist, is baptizo, which means, catch this, which means not to wash.

[54 : 24] Not to wash. It means to dunk repeatedly and in a number of cases it's used for drown, immerse, go underwater.

Now, you see a couple of cases in the Bible. We see Jesus, Mark chapter 1, goes down into the water when he comes back up. It's possible, and many paedobaptists argue, that he simply walked down to the water.

That's where the water was at. He walked down to it. He walked back up. Maybe he was standing in the water. Possibly it was a little bit easier to sprinkle in that way. But the word baptizo means to dunk, dunk repeatedly, or to drown.

And to add, to heap upon that, Martin Luther, again, our famed Protestant Reformer, said, in the primitive church, baptism was a total immersion, or burial, as it were.

John Calvin, Presbyterian, says, baptizo signifies to immerse. And it is certain that immersion was the practice of the primitive church.

[55 : 29] Philip Sheff, a 19th century Presbyterian theologian and church historian, said, immersion was unquestionably the original form of baptism. So somewhere along the way, somewhere throughout history, someone figured it out and got it right and got it better than the early church, seemed to understand it, even apart from what the very word itself means.

So I think it confuses our belief in the sufficiency of scripture. I think it confuses the nature of the church. I think it confuses the meaning of believers' baptism. I think for all these reasons, while it's not the gospel, it's an obedient response to the gospel.

What are we commanded to do in the Great Commission? Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them teaching them all that I have commanded you. This is no different.

This is a doctrine that should not be neglected. This is something that you should find out what you believe. Search the scriptures for it. I hope I've made a case for you to be a credo-baptist today. Wrap your hands around it. Fellowship with those who agree with you because we honor the gospel when we do so. Why would we believe in a doctrine that's not anywhere explicitly taught in the scriptures?

[56 : 49] As I've argued, cannot be arrived at by plain reason and that confuses so much. It is a precious ordinance. If you have not been baptized as a believer, you should do so.

What a wonderful thing to celebrate in with the church of God. What God has done in your life. His initiative, His work, His accomplishment, if you don't know where you stand on this, if you're shaky on the matter, study your Bible and pray that God would reveal the truth to you.

If you come out at the end of that as a paedobaptist, I will give you a big hug. We can fellowship with one another in reaching this community. We can preach the gospel side by side. I will link arms with you in so many respects, but you shouldn't be part of a Baptist church.

You just shouldn't. Let's pray together. Let's pray together. Let's pray together. Let's pray together. Let's pray together.