

Discerning Infant Baptism

February 21, 2023

INTRODUCTION

Infant baptism has been the *universal* practice of the Christian church until the Radical Reformation in the 16th century, and most Christian denominations practice it today. Yet, many Christians don't understand the Biblical reasons for it. You may have grown up in a credobaptist (e.g. Anabaptist) church that never taught you the historic Reformed view of baptism and the Biblical, historical, and logical arguments for it. In fact, you probably learned a view of baptism that changes the Biblical meaning/significance of baptism almost entirely. So, you may find Covenant Theology and covenant infant baptism challenging to understand; it may be a "Copernican Revolution" in theology for you.

Since the burden of proof is upon credobaptists who must explain why the large majority of Christians throughout history were/are wrong about baptism, it seems prudent that if you deny the majority position of Church history, you should understand pretty well the arguments for covenant infant baptism and understand why exactly you reject the practice. It seems spiritually irresponsible to deny infant baptism altogether without learning and understanding some Biblical, historical, and logical arguments for it, especially if you're parents.

There are many excellent resources to consult when considering the topic of Covenant Theology and covenant infant baptism. This is only a brief and entry level list meant to open the door leading to further study and discernment. Check out what interests you, but I suggest *first* getting acquainted with Covenant Theology. **PINK INDICATES A HIGHLY RECOMMENDED RESOURCE TO START WITH!** Please contact me (Pastor Jonathan) if you'd like to borrow books. If you want *more* resources, please ask.

FIRST, A SPECIAL RESOURCE TO USE FROM THE START

Imagine belonging to a credobaptist church, and one day the founding pastor of your church makes an announcement: *he has become convinced of covenant infant baptism*. This is exactly what happened at Christ Church in Lafayette, Louisiana in 2022. Rev. Brandon Nealy had been a credobaptist for many years, changed his mind on baptism (became a paedobaptist), and led Christ Church through a transition. They now baptize infants into the visible church/covenant community.

NOTE: I MAY NOT AGREE WITH EVERYTHING STATED ON THE PODCAST, NOR CAN I ENDORSE EVERYTHING AT CHRIST CHURCH, NEVERTHELESS, THIS PODCAST IS A VERY BASIC AND HELPFUL PRESENTATION OF MANY EXCELLENT ARGUMENTS FOR INFANT BAPTISM, & BRANDON USES MUCH SCRIPTURE.

- **LISTEN (PODCAST):** *On Infant Baptism* by Rev. Brandon Nealy – 27 episodes – On Google Podcasts: <https://podcasts.google.com/feed/aHR0cHM6Ly9mZWVklmNlcm1vbmF1ZGlvLmNvbS8xNjEyMzE?p=14>; On SermonAudio.com: <https://www.sermonaudio.com/solo/brandonnealy/podcasts/161231/?sb=oldest>

SECOND, UNDERSTAND MORE ABOUT COVENANT THEOLOGY

- **READ (ARTICLE):** "What Is Covenant Theology" by Stephen G. Meyers – <https://tabletalkmagazine.com/posts/what-is-covenant-theology-2/>

- **READ (ARTICLE):** “Reformed Theology Is Covenant Theology” by Richard Pratt Jr. – <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/reformed-theology-covenant-theology/>
- **LISTEN (MANY SERMONS):** *Our Covenant Keeping God* sermon series by Rev. Jonathan Shirk – <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1DkupiQo84wLE4k0Jk-7Kg3WjP1R3Hq1WnQWnNyDnacQ/edit?usp=sharing>
- **READ/LISTEN (MANY RESOURCES):** “A Curriculum for Those Wrestling through Covenant Theology and Infant Baptism” by R. Scott Clark – <https://heidelblog.net/a-curriculum-for-those-wrestling-through-covenant-theology-and-infant-baptism/>
- **READ (BOOK):** Historic Reformed Confessions
 - **Heidelberg Catechism** – if attending Jerusalem Church, please ask for a **FREE** copy
 - **Westminster Confession of Faith** – <https://www.pcabookstore.com/p-3148-confessions-of-our-faith-fortress-edition.aspx>
 - **Belgic Confession of Faith** – <https://threeforms.org/the-belgic-confession/> (FREE); <https://shorturl.at/nu2jE> (paperback; hardcover; ebook)
- **READ (BOOK):** *Sacred Bond* by Michael Brown & Zach Keele
- **READ (BOOK):** *Covenants Made Simple* by Jonty Rhodes

THIRD, UNDERSTAND MORE ABOUT INFANT BAPTISM

- **WATCH (3:22):** Since Abraham was circumcised after having faith, why do we baptize infants before they show faith? – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LnNsKPurks>
- **WATCH (13:05):** *Bryan Chapell on Infant Baptism* – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vUCh1qpOOM>
- **WATCH (1:01:30):** *Infant Baptism – Dr. Ligon Duncan – Redeemer PCA* – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkqeQUFsBpg>
- **LISTEN (SERMON):** *What’s the Deal with Infant Baptism* sermon by Rev. Jonathan Shirk – <https://anchor.fm/jerusalem-church-sermons/episodes/Whats-The-Deal-With-Infant-Baptism----Genesis-151-6--171-14---7-24-16-e1t5oid/a-a951fdv>
- **READ (ARTICLE):** “A Brief Defense of Infant Baptism” by Kevin DeYoung – <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/a-brief-defense-of-infant-baptism/>
- **READ (ARTICLE):** “Why I Changed My Mind About Baptizing Infants” by Sean Michael Lucas – <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/why-i-changed-my-mind-about-baptizing-infants/>
- **READ (ARTICLE):** *Infant Baptism: How My Mind Has Changed* by Dennis Johnson – https://thirdmill.org/newfiles/den_johnson/TH.Johnson.Baptism.html
- **READ (SECTION OF BOOK):** *Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism, section on Question 74 on pgs. 591-607* by Dr. Zacharias Ursinus – <https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/sdg/ursinus/Commentary%20on%20the%20Heidelberg%20Ca%20-%20Zacharias%20Ursinus.pdf>
- **READ (SHORT BOOK):** *What Christian Parents Should Know about Infant Baptism* by John P. Sartelle
- **READ (SHORT BOOK):** *Why Do We Baptize Infants?* by Bryan Chapell
- **READ (SHORT BOOK):** *What Is Baptism?* by R. C. Sproul
- **READ (BOOK):** *Baptism: Answers to Common Questions* by Guy Richard
- **READ (BOOK):** *Covenantal Baptism* by Jason Helopoulos
- **READ (ACADEMIC BOOK):** *Christian Baptism* by John Murray