**Questions about Baptism Questions**

**By Dcn. Gerard-Marie Anthony**

**1. Is Baptism truly necessary for salvation? It would seem like it isn’t according to Rom. 10:9.**

In Scripture it says, “For, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved.” (Rom. 10:9)

It also says in Scripture that we must be born again (Jn. 3:15) and we must baptized and believe to be saved (Mk. 16:16). So is one right and the other wrong? If so which one is right and which one is wrong? Well neither or both. Scripture CAN’T CONTRADICT ITSELF because there is one truth. By the rite of Baptism someone, either the adult/child themselves or the parents/godparents make a profession/confession of faith and then are baptized. It is not either or but both; faith and Baptism are necessary for salvation.

2. **Okay, well then you would have to do this baptism as an adult because Romans continues, “For one believes in your heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved” (Rom. 10:10). To confess with your mouth, which is the key to salvation, is something an infant can’t do so you can’t have infant baptism.**

Again, both (faith and a confession of that faith) happen at Baptism. The Confession by mouth is a necessary precondition of the Baptism which is done by the parents or godparents on behalf of the child so it fulfills all the conditions. There are numerous examples of people providing faith for another in Scripture:

* + Mk. 2: 1-12: Healing of Paralytic
    - In verse 5 we see Jesus saw the faith of the paralytic’s friends and because of their faith/someone else’s, the paralytic, was healed
  + Lk 8:40-56: Healing of Jarius’ daughter
    - A father goes to Jesus and pleads for him to heal his daughter, the daughter dies,but notice what Jesus says to the dad in verse 50, “Do not be afraid; just have faith and she will be saved.” This is the same principle that is used in infant baptism.
  + Jn. 11:1-44: Raising of Lazarus
    - Lazarus was dead so obviously his own faith could not be supplied. It was the faith of his sisters Martha and Mary that Jesus used to bring back someone back to life…Hmmm…using someone else’s faith to bring someone back to life…sounds like infant baptism to me (note CCC#1250-1253) since in Baptism we are bought back to life through being plunged into Christ’s death and resurrection.

We also see this supported in Tradition with the Early Church Fathers and Writers. For example, the early Church Father, St. Irenaeus wrote in the 2nd century:

"He [Jesus] came to save all through himself; all, I say, who through him are reborn in God: infants, and children, and youths, and old men. Therefore he passed through every age, becoming an infant for infants, sanctifying infants; a child for children, sanctifying those who are of that age . . . [so that] he might be the perfect teacher in all things, perfect not only in respect to the setting forth of truth, perfect also in respect to relative age" (Against Heresies 2:22:4 [A.D. 189]).

Then the Early Church writer Origen wrote in the early 3rd Century:

“The Church received from the apostles the tradition of giving baptism even to infants. The apostles, to whom were committed the secrets of the divine sacraments, knew there are in everyone innate strains of [original] sin, which must be washed away through water and the Spirit” (Commentaries on Romans 5:9 [A.D. 248]).

The examples are numerous[[1]](#footnote-1), but we can plainly see through Scripture and Tradition that the faith of others can be supplied for the healing and life of others. This is the principle that happens with in infant Baptism.

**3. What is the proper way to Baptize? Some baptize in the name of Jesus, some in the Trinity; which one is right?**

In order to baptize properly, you need water, to say the proper words (formula) and have the intention of Baptizing. With these three elements, even a lay person can baptize in a state of emergency. Therefore, it is important to determine the right words. It would seem that all we have to say for a baptism to take place is the name of Jesus as Romans tells us, “Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Rom. 10:13). St. Paul tells us this again, “But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God” (1Cor. 6:11).

But Catholics baptize in the name of the Trinity. Is the Church wrong? No, the Church is simply following the instructions from her head and bridegroom. Jesus tells us this, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19). If Jesus is truth itself (Jn. 14:6), then if He says the way we should baptize is in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we should do so.

Also, being baptized “in the name of Jesus” was a way of distinguishing between the baptism of John the Baptist (a baptism of repentance) and a baptism of Jesus and the Holy Spirit which St. Paul mentions in his letter to the Corinthians (see 1Cor. 6:11). So, we should use the Holy Name of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, when it comes to baptism.

1. For more of a list of historical documents that mention infant baptism see: Early Church Teachings on Infant Baptism by Catholic Answers. Accessed at: <http://www.catholic.com/tracts/early-teachings-on-infant-baptism>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)