

# Popish Baptism

by Ian Paisley

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*The Catholic Church teaches that baptism is absolutely necessary for salvation, but this doctrine is seen as a perversion of the institution of Christ and a means of deluding souls.*

**Scripture:** John 3:5, Acts 2:38, Galatians 3:26, Ephesians 2:8, Colossians 2:8

**Topics:** "Roman Catholicism", "Holy Baptism"

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## Description

Ian Paisley exposes the errors and false teachings of the Roman Catholic Church regarding the sacrament of Baptism, highlighting the excessive rituals, superstitions, and man-made traditions that have been added to the simple institution of Christ. He emphasizes that true regeneration, enlightenment, conviction, and conversion of the soul can only be achieved through the Holy Spirit and faith in Jesus, not through baptism. Paisley condemns the Papal Church's doctrine that ties salvation to sacraments and ceremonies, revealing the dangerous consequences of such teachings on the eternal destiny of souls.

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## Transcript

BAPTISM is the first of the Seven Sacraments of Popery, and the manner in which it is dealt with, is a fair specimen of the manner in which Popery deals with everything, whether based on the Scriptures or on the authority of the Church. It is first to be noted then, that it is declared to be "absolutely necessary to salvation." It is broadly laid down, that "without Baptism the Atonement of the Cross cannot be applied to us; that Christ will not redeem us unless we are washed in the waters of baptism, and that no man can be justified by faith only without Baptism." (Maguire Dis. p. 151.)

These absurd pretences are stamped, as usual, with artifice and mystery. The nonsense of them need not be pointed out to the well-instructed reader, who will see that the redemption of souls by Christ, whose work it seems is still to be performed, is to depend upon their being baptized, and, consequently, through that baptism brought into a state which renders such redemption unnecessary! But it were absurd to argue against such folly.

The simple institution of Christ is not to the taste of the ignorant multitude that form the subjects of the Popedom; they think "it is not done well, nor orderly, unless they see conjuration, unless they hallow the water, unless there be oil, salt, spittle, tapers, and such other dumb ceremonies serving no use." (Homily for Whitsunday)

Here, again, the great object is clearly to exalt the priest, and to dazzle the people. An ordinance on which the salvation of a soul is made to depend, must be a very important thing; without pomp, and ceremony, and mystery, somewhat corresponding with the magnitude of the effect to be produced, even the vulgar might be led to question whether any such effect could flow from means so simple, and thus reach conclusions that might prove inconvenient to the priesthood.

The Council of Trent has a vast, even more than a usual amount of cursing, upon this subject. No fewer than fourteen anathemas are poured forth upon the heads of those who shall dare to manifest a little common sense, and venture even to hint a doubt on any of the dogmas of the Church concerning it.

From the importance which attaches to this subject, it is proper to set forth in full the doctrine as it is propounded in the Canons and the Catechisms of the Council of Trent, and the "Poor Man's Catechism," a great authority. Speaking of infant baptism, the last publication says: "If any one denies that the merit of Jesus Christ is applied to little ones by the sacrament of baptism, let him be accursed."-Canones, Sess. v., "Decretum de Peccato."

"If any one denies that infants are to be baptized, let him be accursed."-lb.

The Catholic form of baptism is as follows: -

"At the church-door the infant is stopped, to signify that being yet a slave to the devil, he cannot enter the church, and that baptism gives him entrance."-Poor Man's Catechism.

"The priest then says" to the infant "What do you demand from the church of God?" -lb.

"Then he breathes in his face three times, and commands the devil to depart, and give place to the Holy Ghost."-lb.

"He then makes the sign of the cross."-lb. The forehead, eyes, breast, shoulders, ears, are signed with the sign of the cross.

"The priest now blesses salt, and puts some of it into his mouth."-lb.

"The priest proceeds to read the exorcism, commanding the wicked spirit to depart." - lb. "Exorcism follows, which is accomplished to expel the devil and to break his strength." ("Sequitur exorcismus, qui ad expellendum diabolum ejusque vires frangendas . . . conficitur."-Cat. II. ii. 64.)

"Laying the stole upon the child, he leads him into the church."-lb.

"The priest repeats the exorcism."-lb.

"He touches the ears and nostrils with spittle." -lb.

The priest asks the infant these three things "Do you renounce Satan. and all his works? and all his pomps?" -lb.

"Then he" (the infant) "is anointed with the holy oils, blessed by the bishop, on the breast and between the shoulders."-lb.

"Next he " (the infant) "is examined as to his faith: -Do you believe in God the Father Almighty?" etc.-lb.

"Then the priest asks the infant, Will you be baptized; and the reason assigned is: -the Lord has willed that no one should be enlisted in the number of his followers, except as a volunteer. Then he pours water on the head three times in the form of a cross. Then he anoints the top of the head with chrism."-Ib.

"Then he puts white linen on the infant's head. A lighted candle is afterwards put into his hand; and, lastly, the infant receives usually the name of some Saint, to whom he may pray, and of whom he may hope that he will come to defend both his soul and his body." ("Quem imitari studeat, eum quoque precetur et speret sibi advocatum ad salutem tum animi, tum corporis defendendam venturum esse."-Cat. II. ii. 73.)

The effects of baptism are thus set forth:

"By baptism, putting on Christ, we are made a new creature in him, obtaining the full and perfect remission of all sins."- Canones, Sess. xiv., cap. 2. "Even little ones are baptized unto the remission of sins that in them the evil which they contracted by generation may be cleansed by regeneration." Canones, Sess. v., "De Peccato."

"If any one denies that the guilt of original sin is remitted by the grace of Christ, which is conferred in baptism . . . let him be accursed."-Ib.

"In baptism not only are sins remitted, but all the punishments of sin are also done away."-Cat. II. ii. 44.

"The causes of justification are, the final (cause), the glory of God; the instrumental (cause), the sacrament of baptism."-Canones, Sess. vi. cap. 7.

"If any one shall say that little ones, after they have been baptized, are not to be reckoned amongst believers . . . let him be accursed."-Ib. Sess. vii. can. 13.

"By baptism we are joined to Christ, the head, as his members."-Cat. II. ii. 51. "By the virtue of this sacrament, our mind is filled with grace, through which being rendered just and the children of God, we are constituted heirs of eternal salvation."-Ib. 49.

"Lastly, baptism opens to each of us the way to heaven."-Ib. 57.

In short, baptism is a sacrament by which infants are "cleansed from original sin," "made Christians," "born again," "born of God," "adopted children of God," and "heirs of the kingdom of heaven."

"Is baptism necessary to salvation? Yes; without it we cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "It is the first and most necessary of all the sacraments. For Christ has said, Unless a man be born again of water and of the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. And the church has defined that no one can be saved, unless he be baptized, either actually or in desire." Which law (John iii. 5.) is to be understood not of adults alone, but also of infants." ("Quam legem non solum de its qui adulta tate sunt, sed etiam de pueris infantibus intelligendum esse, communis Patrum sententiainfirmat."-Cat. II. H. 31.)

Such is the Romish doctrine of Baptism, which constitutes one of the most egregious errors of the Papal Church. The ingenuity of man seems to have been taxed to the uttermost to invest the ordinance with an artificial importance and a meretricious glare in the eyes of the multitude.

The marvel is, that both great and small did not, from the first, rise against the outrage on delicacy, decency, Scripture, and common sense. The mother of King James shows that there were those, in a later day, whose eyes were partially opened to the abomination.

The King tells us a curious story about his own baptism, in the Premonition, before his apology for the Oath of Allegiance, he says: "The Queen, my mother, of worthy memory, though she continued in the religion in which she was nourished, yet was she so far from being superstitious therein, that at my baptism, although I was baptized by a Popish Archbishop, she sent him word to forbear the use of the spittle, being indeed, a filthy, apish trick, rather in scorn than imitation of Christ; and her own very words were, that she `would not have a debauched priest to spit in her child's mouth."

Every well-taught Protestant knows that baptism by whomsoever administered, has no power in any way to affect immortal mind. It cannot regenerate -that is, quicken from a death of trespasses and of sins-enlighten, convince, and convert the human soul. Regeneration is effected solely by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel of Christ, and justification, is solely by faith, and not by baptism. Adoption proceeds from the mercy of God, through faith in the Lord Jesus; and has no connection whatever with Baptism.

It is worthy of notice that the Eastern Church largely participates with the Western, in heaping abuses on the ordinance of Baptism. The author of "Egypt's Princes," makes the following extraordinary statement:

"I have never, before or since, witnessed the rite administered as it then was. It was reduplicated. The first time it was mostly in Arabic. The mother, taking the child and facing the west, renounced in the name of the child, the devil, and his works and service, and then turning to the east, embraced the Saviour, and his righteousness and service. Three times the priest asked her, `Do you embrace Christ for this child ?' and three times she emphatically answered, `I do.' The priest then sprinkled water on the child, and I thought the ceremony was completed. But the two children were then taken to another part of the church, where was a font large enough for their immersion, and another priest completed the ceremony, this time all in Coptic. The children were stripped naked, and with long repetitions of prayers, they were three times immersed in the font, and then the priest commenced the process of anointing them with holy oil, which he did by dipping his thumb into the oil, and then commencing at the wrist of the child, tracing it along all its members and joints. The church was so cold that we needed our heavy shawls around us to keep warm, and the priest was an old trembling man, awkward in his manipulations; and as the poor things lay there on a garment on the ground, blue and screaming, until, utterly exhausted, they could cry no longer, I became so indignant that I could hardly restrain myself from interfering. I could no longer wonder that (as the Copts say is the case) the children are often killed by the process."

If these doctrines be true, assuredly the Papists throughout all the world ought to be shining patterns of every virtue. Every Catholic is taught to say that "the end for which Baptism was instituted, was to make us Christians; to free us from the slavery of Satan, under which we come into the world; to unite us with Christ as members of his body, to give us a heart to receive all the other sacraments; and a title to an eternal and happy inheritance in heaven." (Keenan, p. 157.)

It would be very difficult to put a larger amount of deadly error and impious falsehood into so small a space; every form of the sentence is a gross and fatal misrepresentation. The work of Christ, the truth of the Gospel and the offices of the Spirit in applying it to the souls of men, and the grace of God in the glorious dispensations of mercy, all are merged in Popish Baptism. The doctrine would be utterly contemptible, were it not for the awful consequences, which are said to flow from it.

It is throughout, altogether false, and is such a perversion, such a caricature of the institution of Christ, as to forfeit on behalf of those who teach it, all confidence among mankind. The fabrication of such a lesson of delusion must have been most deliberate, and its authors must have been fully conscious of their own

guilt in the act; in speaking so glaring a lie, they spoke it of themselves. There is not in the Word of God, the slightest foundation for the representation, which they have given, and not only given but enforced on the faith of men, under the penalty of damnation! No created mind can tell the amount of eternal ruin to souls, which has arisen from this pestilent doctrine, which merits all the anathemas that can be heaped upon it, by both earth and heaven!

It is matter of regret, that a portion of the Popish leaven upon this subject has crept into divers portions of the Protestant Church, from which it cannot be too speedily purged out, since it lies at the foundation of the Romish system, the very essence of which is the doctrine of salvation, not through the Gospel but through the sacraments dispensed by men in so-called Apostolic succession.

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ian-paisley/popish-baptism/>

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