

INFANT BAPTISM?

Joe Slater

As a baby, I was sprinkled with water to become part of a well-known Protestant denomination. Years later, having learned what the New Testament teaches, I was immersed into Christ for the remission of my sins.

Not long after the church began, some people began baptizing babies because they erroneously thought infants were born tainted with Adam's sin. God's word, however, teaches that we are individually responsible for our own behavior; we do not inherit anyone else's sin (Ezekiel 18:20; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

Substituting sprinkling or pouring for baptism (immersion) also began early, usually in cases of severe illness. It has never had Scriptural authority.

Most advocates of infant baptism admit that not a single example of it exists in the New Testament. If the apostles taught it and the first-century church practiced it, we wonder why it is never mentioned!

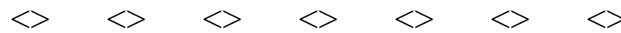
Some insist that infants were included when Lydia and her household, and the jailer and his household, were baptized (Acts 16:15, 33). Proof, of course, is sorely lacking. Scripture does not indicate whether either of these was married, much less whether they had children, much less whether those children were infants.

Consider the jailer's household: They had the word of the Lord spoken to them (16:32); they were all baptized in the middle of the night (v. 33); they rejoiced greatly (v. 34); they believed in God (v. 34). How much of this applies to infants? Nobody preaches to infants, for we know they have no capacity to comprehend the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. And when is the last time you heard of anyone baptizing an infant in the middle of the night? Now, do baptized infants rejoice

greatly? Hardly! Most of them protest rather loudly! And they certainly do not believe in God, not because they are wicked, but because they do not have the mental capacity to do so. Thus, to assume that the jailer's household included infants is presumptuous and contrary to all evidence and reason. Ditto for Lydia's household.

Baptism is for those who have believed the gospel (Mark 16:16), repented of sin (Acts 2:38), and confessed that they believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Acts 8:37). Infants simply are not subjects for baptism as taught in the New Testament. They have no sins of which to repent or be forgiven.

Let us diligently teach the truth regarding baptism, and urge everyone to comply with it!



Jesus and the Demonized man

(Mark 5:1-20)

Jesus **tranquilized** him (they found him sitting).

Jesus **civilized** him (he was clothed - the more civilized you become, the more you wear clothes).

Jesus **intellectualized** him (he was in his right mind).

Jesus **spiritualized** him (he wanted to be with Jesus).

Jesus **deputized** him (go tell others).

Unfortunately, the people cared more about a cured ham than about a cured man.

--Eddie Brinkley (one of Marshall Keeble's "preacher boys")

Singing and Making Melody

Paul says in Ephesians 5:19, "*Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.*" Some might assume that "speaking to yourselves" means "speak so that no one can hear you." But it is easy enough to check other versions to see that they translate it "*speaking to one another.*"

In this article, we do not intend to dwell on the slight differences in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. We only mean to comment on the significance of the phrase, "*singing and making melody in your heart.*"

The word "singing" is from the Greek term "*ado*" and is always used of vocal praise to God. It is used five times in the New Testament.

The term "making melody" is from the Greek word "*psallo*," which means in the New Testament, "to sing a hymn." The specific instruction here is that it is to be done in the heart. The singing is to be vocal music; the making melody (singing of a hymn of praise) is to be done in (from) the heart. In other words, it is not fitting and proper merely to sing a song. It is to be done from the innermost part of your life – the seat of your emotions and center of your being.

Those who think their worship is superior to that of those who use instruments of music may be sadly mistaken. Going through the motions of singing without doing it in the proper spirit and with the understanding is vain worship just as much as playing on a man-made instrument.

--T. Pierce Brown (via Buchanan Dam, TX)