

# Why We Believe In Infant Baptism

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, as I said, tonight we're doing something a little bit different. Rather than focusing on one particular passage and doing a normal sermon, we are going to just explore the great question that I think many people wrestle with.

Why do we believe in infant baptism? We read from Acts chapter 2, and we'll come back to that chapter later on.

And we will come back to this great verse where Peter says, 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.

I wanted to start by asking you the question, where are you on the question of baptism? And what I mean by that is, you know, you may be feeling convinced and confident about a particular position.

So whether that's, you believe, in credo-baptism, which is the baptism of somebody who has grown up and come to faith and can make a profession of faith and then they're baptized.

[ 1 : 11 ] We often say adult baptism, but you know, it could easily be a child aged 10, 11, 12, that's within that umbrella, if you like. Credo-baptism, believer's baptism.

Or maybe pedo-baptism, infant baptism. Maybe where we baptize children who are born into the church family. Maybe you are convinced and confident about one of those two positions.

And if so, then that's great. Maybe though, some of you kind of might have grown up in a church like Irish where we baptize infants, but you lean much more towards the adult baptism position because you look in the Bible and you're like, well, I look through the New Testament and I find adults being baptized.

And I can, I can see why people come to that conclusion. Or maybe, and I think this is maybe the majority position for many, maybe you do believe in infant baptism.

And maybe even baptized your own children, but you don't really know why. I think there's lots of people who are in that position.

[ 2 : 24 ] We believe in infant baptism, but we don't really know why. If that's where you are, you're the main person that I'm talking to tonight.

Because I'm not here to tie in, persuade you. If you're very convinced of the Baptist position, I'm not here to persuade you. Otherwise, anyone watching online or anything like that, not here to, to, to, to kind of say, you have to change your position and I'm not here.

Absolutely not here to kind of just criticize and slag off that position. There are lots of strong arguments for the Baptist position, lots of strong arguments for that position, which I recognize.

And I, and even though I don't agree with them, I do respect them and I recognize them and I understand them. What I want to just do tonight is show you that there are also very strong arguments for the infant baptism position.

And I hope it's helpful for us just to know them, to understand them and to see why we do what we do. And I think that there's, I think that's very, very important for us to do that because I think that, that the question, why do we baptize infants is one that we've not really got right in terms of our answer over the years.

[ 3 : 47 ] And I think that, that in our context here, particularly in the island, there's actually been a lot of stuff attached to infant baptism or assumed about infant baptism that's not actually accurate and not actually helpful.

So, so let me give you a couple of examples. I've often heard here in our islands, people talking about a baptism of an infant as a christening, as though it's like a naming ceremony or even more so, like when we talk about christening, some people with some people mean like naming ceremony.

And some people would go even further and almost as though that they are being christianized by being baptized, that it's making them Christians. And so we talk about baptism as a christening.

And I hear people say that still today, oh, you're having a christening at the church on Sunday, even people who come to church say that. And I know that it's not an intentional mistake, but baptism is not a christening.

And I, we, we, that, you know, we, like I will never refer to it as that because it's not that. Baptizing an infant is not a naming ceremony.

[ 5 : 05 ] It's not a christening where somebody's kind of like christianized by the ceremony. It's not that. Also unhelpful is the kind of practice that, that has emerged in Scotland in lots of places and especially on our island where anyone gets baptized.

So it's like anybody in the village, anyone with a vague connection to church gets baptized. And now I'll say a wee bit more about that later on, but that's, that's not what our theological position would say.

The Reformed theology of infant baptism does not say anyone can get baptized, anyone with a, with a basic connection to the church.

I'll say a wee bit more about that later on because there's two sides to that story. And also that's why the church shouldn't kind of go looking for baptisms.

I've sometimes heard in history, you know, of ministers, you know, long ago who would maybe go to a new place and they would, particularly on the mainland, they would try and find people who were maybe connected to the church and go and see if they had children and go and see if they wanted their children to be baptized.

[ 6 : 25 ] And it was good because they wanted to get people connected to the church, but it wasn't good because it's not, baptism is not something that we chase as churches.

It's a privilege that the church gives to those who seek it. So I will never go to somebody and say, Oh, you know, do you think you want to baptize your children?

I will only wait until they say, we want to baptize our children because we want to raise them in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

All of those things are unhelpful. Also unhelpful is a kind of superstition that gets attached to baptism. That happens in loads of different ways. It happens all over the world in different contexts.

That's not helpful. But probably the most unhelpful thing of all is that we hardly ever talk about it. And we hardly ever get people opportunities to ask questions and to think it through.

[ 7 : 22 ] So that's why I wanted to do what we're doing tonight, so that you've got the chance to talk about it and ask about it. I can't promise that I'll be able to answer every question without time. I absolutely best, but I certainly hope that what I say this evening will just at least tell you why I believe in infant baptism and why the Reformed Church does.

And the conclusion I hope we'll reach is I want you to see that infant baptism is beautiful, challenging and exciting.

That's what I want us to see, that it's beautiful, challenging and exciting. So first of all, we need to ask the question, what is baptism?

The answer to that question is that baptism is a sacrament. And in the Reformed Church, there are only two sacraments, the Lord's Supper and baptism.

And a sacrament is a sign and seal of God's covenant promises, a sign and seal of the covenant of grace.

[ 8 : 25 ] And so all of that points us to the coolest thing in the world that is covenant theology, the great thread that runs through the whole of scripture, that God is establishing his covenant relationship with us as his people and that everything that he does from Genesis right through to the new creation is within the context of covenant theology.

It's all the outworking of God's covenant promises. Baptism functions as well as the Lord's Supper, as what we call a sign and a seal of God's covenant promises.

Now you won't find those words in the Bible, you do find them in the Westminster Confession of Faith and it's a very helpful summary of what we see in scripture. So a sign and a seal, I've said this before, so forgive me if you've heard me say this, but a sign and seal does two things.

It gives you information and it gives you confirmation. A sign gives you information, a seal gives you confirmation.

And so that sign is giving you information. And what we say is that the sign, it's an outward sign of an inward reality or a physical sign of a spiritual reality.

[ 9 : 41 ] And baptism is using something physical, water, to point us towards something spiritual. And in particular, baptism is pointing us to the reality of our union with Christ.

That's really the key thing that's highlighting the fact that we are united to Christ and we are in being baptized, we're baptized in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, symbolizing our union with Christ and within that there's an emphasis on cleansing because of water.

You see that being there, rise, be baptized, wash away your sins. There's an emphasis on clothing. You see that in Galatians 3, 27.

As many of you were baptized into Christ, that word put on is actually the word clothed. So there's information being shared here that the water is telling you that you are cleansed in Jesus and the pouring out upon you or the immersing or whatever it may be is teaching you that we are being clothed by Christ and His righteousness.

So there's that great information outward and outward sign pointing to an inward spiritual reality. So there's information. The seal gives confirmation.

[ 11 : 04 ] So what we're trying to say there is that you're not just being told about the promises and the information and the sign. You are being told that. But these promises, the sacrament, the baptism and the Lord's supper is also giving you confirmation that these promises are real.

They are genuine. They are reliable. And that's captured in the fact that baptism is a naming ceremony, but it's not your name. It's God's name that counts.

We are baptized in His name, the Father, the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. And in baptism, there's this great confirmation that His promises to us are real and reliable and that He will keep them.

Now this is not a perfect illustration, but when I think of sign and seal, what I think of is a sign getting put above a shop.

So we've got a new shop informed just over there and a sign will be put above that shop. That sign gives you information. It's telling you that it's a shop. It gives you confirmation.

[ 12 : 14 ] It tells you whose shop it is and what the shop is going to sell. And so that's, it's not a perfect illustration and I'll come back to it later on, but I do think it's a helpful start, a sign over a shop.

So when you see sign and seal, I don't think seeing a road sign is not so helpful. Think of a shop sign. It's telling you what the shop is. It's giving you information. It's confirming who owns that and what it's all about.

Information and confirmation. Okay. One last thing to say on this note is that when we talk about a sign and seal, particularly when we talk about a sign, there is always a distinction between the sign and the thing signified.

A distinction between the sign and the thing signified. So baptism is taking water.

It's putting water on somebody and that is a sign that your sins are being washed away. It's not washing away your sins.

[ 13 : 22 ] It's a sign of the thing. It's not doing the thing. There's a distinction between the sign and the thing symbolized. And that's, that's reminding us that the whole point of a sign is to point to Jesus.

A good example is your wedding ring. Almost 20 years ago, Yuna and I got married and Yuna put this ring on my finger when we got married. And this is a sign.

But I didn't come out of their wedding service thinking, oh, I'm so glad I've got a ring. And every night I'm going to kiss my ring goodnight and I'm going to hug it and I'm going to look at it because I'm just so glad I've got a ring.

No, that's weird. Because marriage is not about the ring. The ring is just a sign that God blessed me with an amazing wife.

And there's a distinction between the sign and the thing signified. It's the same in baptism. So that's the kind of basic framework for understanding what a sacrament is, what baptism is.

[ 14 : 17 ] It's a sign giving us information. It's a seal giving us confirmation of God's covenant promises. Okay, that's the starting point.

Next we have to ask the question. Right, in order to understand infant baptism, where do we start? In order to understand infant baptism, where do we start?

And the answer, and this I think is extremely important, the starting place for understanding infant baptism is adult baptism. Okay? That's what we have to think about first.

And this again is a misunderstanding that often takes place. I remember when I first became a minister in 2014, the first baptism I did was of an adult. And I remember speaking to somebody, a friend on the mainland who is a Baptist, and I said, oh, I did my first baptism a couple of weeks ago.

It was an adult. And they said, do you baptize adults? And they assumed that we didn't baptize adults. It was just children. And what we need to emphasize is that we 100% believe in adult baptism.

[ 15 : 24 ] And we 100% long for it. We long to see people who do not know Jesus, who have never been part of the church. We long to see them come and hear the gospel and trust in Jesus and be baptized.

That is what we should be praying for. That is what we should be longing for. And that is what has been happening all across the ages of history from Pentecost onwards.

People who traveled from all these different places, heard the gospel, believed, baptized as adults. That is what we long to see. And what we need to recognize is that adult baptism is the primary, standard, normal type of baptism.

And we'll see that more and more in the years to come. Because 50 years ago in that village, it was probably the case that everybody was baptized. Now maybe half.

If things carry on, a fraction of the people in our village will be baptized in 50 years time. And when they come to faith, they'll be coming from the outside into the church and they'll be baptized.

[ 16 : 35 ] Adult baptism will become more and more common and normal in all the churches in Scotland because our nation is becoming more and more unchurched. Okay, so that corresponds to what we see in the New Testament.

When you look at baptisms in the New Testament, all the explicit baptisms of people are of those who are outside the church who are baptized as believers.

So whether that's Lydia, whether it's the people here in Pentecost, whether it's the Philippian jailer, they hear the gospel for the first time, they trust in Jesus, they are baptized as believers.

The big question is what happens to children? And when it comes to children, there are two options.

People born into the church, so take the people at Pentecost who are converted, talk about their children, two options could happen to them. They are born into the church and are baptized as infants, that's their position in the free church and in the reform church, or people are born into the church to be baptized later as believers.

[ 17 : 57 ] So it's both children who are born into Christian families, raised in the church, either they're baptized as infants or they're baptized later as believers.

Okay, that's the two options. In terms of biblical examples, just to emphasize the top one everyone agrees on, okay, so whether you're Baptist or infant Baptist, reformed, whatever, everybody agrees that people outside the church when they come to faith, they're baptized.

That's no one denies that, that is, we're all agreed on that. The question is children, either they're baptized as infants or they're raised in the church and later they're baptized as believers.

We need to ask how many biblical examples are there of each of these? So explicit biblical examples of people born into the church baptized as infants is zero. Okay, so you might say Thomas, why do you baptize infants?

Okay, but second one, people born into the church and baptized later as believers once they've born up biblical examples, zero.

[ 19 : 06 ] Neither of those things are explicitly evident in scripture. All you've got is this. And that's to be expected because that's for the situation of the church.

It's reaching uncharted territory from Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria to the ends of the earth. It's an unchurched world that they're reaching. What do you do with their children?

And we don't have explicit biblical examples of either. Good examples, Timothy. Timothy was raised in a Christian home, we're not told about his baptism. We don't know if he was baptized as an infant or as an adult, we're just not told.

And there's no explicit examples of this, even though some argue that household baptisms were included. There's no explicit examples of this. So what do we do? Now, it's perfectly logical and I can understand why people would say, well, we just accept that if it's adults for them, it should be adults for them.

And I get why people would say that. And that's okay. I'm not an absolutely not kind of firm. I'm not. And I should say this, I should have said this at the start.

[ 20 : 13 ] God's done amazing things through Baptists and he's done amazing things through people who are infant Baptists. You go to the 19th century, greatest preacher in England was Charles Spurgeon, a Baptist.

Greatest preacher in Scotland was Thomas Chalmers, a pedo Baptist. It's just in exactly the same way that God does amazing things in traditional churches and he does amazing things in contemporary churches.

God's bigger than all of our divisions. He does amazing things across them all. But you can come to that conclusion and say, well, it's adult sin, it's adult sin. That's fine. What we do is we say to answer this question, because the Eutech Testament gives us zero and zero, to answer this question, we need to go back to the Old Testament.

And that's what we do. We go back to the Old Testament and we especially go back to Abraham. And the reason we go back to Abraham is because the life of Abraham is a key moment in the initiation of God's covenant of grace.

Abraham is called by God. He enters into a covenant with God. He believes in God and the sign of the covenant circumcision is put on Abraham.

[ 21 : 23 ] We read all about that in Genesis 17. I won't read it out, but basically it's just describing that. God's establishing his covenant with him and he says, this is my covenant that you shall keep before me.

You and your offspring, you shall be circumcised. And what I want to emphasise is what this is describing to us just now is an adult circumcision.

Abraham is an adult circumcision and Abraham is the model for establishment of the covenant of grace.

He is the great Father in the faith. He is the norm from which we then follow, the man of faith. And so just as in the New Testament, you have the norm, standard, common example of adults coming to faith baptised as adults.

You see exactly the same thing in the Old Testament with Abraham. Adult comes to faith circumcised, an adult circumcision, a believer circumcision if you like.

[ 22 : 29 ] And that continued to happen. People who were outside the covenant community who had come in would be circumcised as adults. And so you might think, okay, Thomas, excellent argument against infant baptism right there.

What happens next? God comes to Abraham and says to him, you are entering my covenant. You are circumcised as an adult.

And then he says, do exactly the same thing to your child. Do exactly the same thing to your child.

And so what we have is the sign of the covenant in the Old Testament is circumcision, the sign in the New Testament. I'll say a wee bit more about that in a moment, but there's a key version in the New Testament which makes that connection.

I'll come back to that. But if you just accept that connection just now, if you just accept it just now, like I'm not saying you have to accept it, just saying recognize that we see that connection.

[ 23 : 32 ] In the Old Testament, God says to Abraham, put the sign on adults, in the New Testament, God is saying put the sign on adults. In the Old Testament, God says put the sign on children.

In the New Testament, what do we do? And the infant baptism position is based on the argument that says you do the same thing.

You put the sign on your child. Now not everybody agrees with that and I totally recognize that. I honestly, I'm not here to say the other argument is ridiculous. It's not. It's got lots of strong bases.

Absolutely. But this is why we do what we do. This is why we do what we do. And to be honest, it all comes down to this, I would say. In the Old Testament, there is no doubt whatsoever that the covenant sign is put on infants.

It says in it should say on. There's no doubt whatsoever. Nobody denies that it's absolutely obvious and clear. The Baptist position basically says it doesn't say carry on in the New Testament.

[ 24 : 40 ] So stop. Our position says it doesn't say stop. So carry on.

And really that's the fork in the road that divides Baptists and infant Baptists. And you know, you there's reasons to go one way, reasons to go the other way.

But that's why we do what we do. We see it in the Old Testament. We see the pattern of original adult, but also children. We see then the same thing you original adult, but also children because the New Testament doesn't say stop.

So we're going to carry on. That's why we do what we do. And as I said, there's reasons to go down this path and I'm not here to kind of critique those reasons.

There's also reasons to go down this path and I just want to give you them briefly. So I'm going to give you six reasons why we carry on, why we take this path at the bottom.

[ 25 : 42 ] And I'll try and be very, very quick. Times going by, very quick. So first of all, we see a link between circumcision and baptism and not just in terms of the pattern, but also in terms of this explicit text here in Colossians, where Paul talks about circumcision.

You were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands by the putting off of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism. Now, all I'm saying here is that we see in these verses, they are making a connection between circumcision and baptism, that Paul is describing baptism in a language of circumcision.

Alongside this explicit verse is a pattern that again I think is persuasive. In the Old Testament, you had two great signs.

You had circumcision that was done once and you had Passover that was done many, many times. In the New Testament, there is no doubt that the Lord's Supper replaces Passover because it's at a Passover when it's instituted and it's done many, many times, repeatedly.

I don't think it's ridiculous to say, well, baptism seems to follow the same equivalent pattern, a circumcision that is done once. And again, not everybody would agree with that, but I think that's an okay conclusion to come to, I actually think it's quite a persuasive conclusion to come to.

[ 27 : 13 ] There's this link between baptism and circumcision. Second reason is that when we talk about God's covenant promises, we describe them as the covenant of grace.

And our position has always been that that covenant stretches from the Old Testament right through to the New Testament.

So we don't say people are saved one way in the Old Testament and a different way in the New Testament. We're saying that God's plan is one thread that runs right the way through. The difference is not that old and new are like, that's one way and this is now a new way.

It's that this is a shadow and this is reality. Shadow reality. But there's unity running through it all. And that unity of the covenant of grace gives us reason to say, it doesn't say stop, so carry on.

And the other position is based more on a discontinuity and it's kind of trying to stop, trying to say there's more of a breach. Again, that's not an unreasonable thing to conclude, but we just don't do that because we highlight this unity of the covenant of grace running through scriptures.

[ 28 : 29 ] Third reason is the passage that we read. If you think about it, we're talking about the covenant of grace. We're talking about the sign of the covenant and you're asking the question, who is the sign for?

If baptism is the sign of the covenant, who is the sign for? And our argument is that the answer to that question is given in this verse here, verse 39, where Peter says, repent and be baptized for the promise is for you, the people who are right there for your children and for all who are far off, every one of the Lord, our God calls to himself.

So the promise is for you, the people at Pentecost listening to him. It's for your children and it's for them out there, the Gentiles who had previously been excluded, they are now included.

And all of them are to be baptized because the promise is for them, for you, for your children, for them out there. And that's why as a church, we want to see the children being born into the church, getting baptized.

We want to see the outsiders coming in, getting baptized. Again, that's the conclusion that we've come to on that. Fourth reason is household baptisms.

[ 29 : 45 ] Again, this is not conclusive, lots of different opinions on that, but there's mention of household baptisms in lots of different places in scripture and we would say, well, it's reasonable to assume that that would have included children.

Fifth reason is the way Jesus treats children. And this is a very important part of it and again, it's not conclusive, but if you look at Jesus, he is infuriated when children are kept away and he says, bring them to me and he blesses them and he absolutely includes them.

He says, to such belongs the kingdom of heaven. So we've got the number one links between baptism and circumcision. Number two, unity of the covenant of grace.

Three, Peter's answer to the question, who's the promise for? For four, household baptism. Five, the way Jesus treats children. And six, the fact that when we come to the New Testament, to the New Covenant, it is all about expansion.

Everything expands magnificently when you move from the Old Testament to the New Testament. If you go to the Old Testament, everything actually contracts as things get worse and worse as you go along.

[ 30 : 59 ] So you have this great promise to Abraham, I'm going to make you the father of a great nation, many nations, all the nations of the world, we bless through you. But actually after Abraham it narrows because it focuses just on Jacob.

And then Jacob has 12 children, but 10 of them go off the rails and it's left with only two and the focus actually then narrows even further just on to David. When you come to the Old Testament, everything's kind of falling apart and it's all narrowed, narrowed, narrowed.



By the time you reach the New Testament days with the people of God are just like, we just want Jerusalem back and the surrounding territory and we just want them aside to give us our wee patch of land back because this is what we want and that's all we need and that's what it's all about.

It's all just narrowed so much and when Jesus comes, it just expands so magnificently. Everything is expansive.

It's a message that's to go out to all nations. It's a message that's to call back the Jews who've been dispersed and who've turned away from God. It's a message to bring in those who never knew the Lord.

[ 31 : 56 ] It's a message to extend across the world and to reach into all the future generations. It's all expands, expands, expands, expands. And for that reason, I, we find it very difficult to think that you've got adults and children in the Old Testament getting circumcised, male adults, male children getting circumcised and you come to the New Testament and it contracts.

That the children who were once given the sign then aren't. That pattern of contracting to me doesn't fit the magnificent expansion that is happening in the New Covenant and I've said this, I think I've said this before, I've not read this in a book anywhere and so I'm not, I'm always a bit nervous saying that because it's just something I sort of think I can see myself but I do think it's right.

This expansion pattern is seen in baptism because it now means that women receive the sign as well.

Because in the Old Testament it was just men but now in the New, women, men, women, boys, girls, all receive the sign.

And so that's the reasons why we hold to infant baptism. That's why we do, that's why we do.

[ 33 : 22 ] And as I said, I'm not saying you have to believe that if you don't, that's okay but I just hope that you can understand and see that. That's what we don't do because of tradition, we don't do it because of superstition, we do it because of all that stuff that I've tried to show you today.

I was running out, but I want to just mention a couple of things. There is a couple of really important things to say. First of all, baptism is for believers.

The sacraments are for believers. And so when we talk about infant baptism, we are talking about the children of believers.

That's who it's for. It's not just we baptize anybody. Now I know that that's different to the way that we've done things over the years here.

Now some people would argue, and some people have argued that you can find an argument to say you baptize anybody because as long as there's just some connection to the church, that's okay.

[ 34 : 26 ] I don't agree with that and reform theology on the whole doesn't agree with that. It's for believers, but the question is who's a believer?

And I would say, and I'm just sharing my own opinion with me, believer does not necessarily mean a communicant member. You all know that this church is full of believers who aren't communicant members, who we are waiting to come and sit at the Lord's table.

I'm never going to turn them down if they want to baptize their children. Now pastorally this is an issue and it's complicated and it's just to speak really personally and openly.

If somebody comes to me and they're asking for baptism, they're not members and I really don't know where they stand with the gospel. I just speak in personally, I will err on the side of I will baptize their children because at the end of the day they're the ones taking the vows.

It would only be if somebody was really just blatantly doing it out of superstition or who knows what that I would say, look I don't think this is for you.

[ 35 : 52 ] And that's partly because just of the culture that we have here and that's trying to navigate a complicated pastoral situation. Complicated pastoral situations are never black and white and a lot of difficulties arise when baptisms are refused in our context.

But recognizing the pastoral sensitivities of our own context, I do want you to come back into your mind to recognizing the fact that fundamentally this is for believers, for the families of believers, the children of one believer or both believers.

There's loads of things I want to say but I've run out of time. I suppose I'll just pick the one important one that I really want to say.

The key reason why we do all this is because when children are born into the church family we do not raise them as outsiders.

And I heard someone speaking about this and he made a really intriguing point and he said he had gone from the Baptist position to the Peter Baptist position and he said one of the real reasons I did that is because we had children ourselves.

[ 37 : 00 ] And I thought to myself, you know, I'm raising my children and they're not outsiders.

Children born into our church are not outsiders. Now even Baptists recognize that because they will have baby dedications because they recognize that they're not outsiders. And when you raise your children as Christians, you don't say to them, watch us pray and one day you'll be able to pray if you become a believer.

No, you teach them to pray. And do you get them to say Lord? Yes, you do. And that implies worship.

Do you teach them to say Father? Yes, you do. And that implies that they are his children. And do you tell them to say Amen? Yes, you do because that's saying I trust you Lord with this prayer.

It's not just a superstitious word. It means that we are trusting. So we are raising our children as not outsiders but insiders.

[ 38 : 03 ] Now that doesn't mean that they're automatically Christians. They might not necessarily become Christians. We don't know that, but we're raising them as insiders because they're not outsiders. And if you come back to the illustration, the not perfect illustration of this shop sign and you put a sign, there's a sign that's going to go up on that shop down the road there.

It might never open. It might never open. And it might close down.

And whatever your position of baptism, that's always a risk. You baptize an infant. You don't know if they're going to come to faith. If you baptize an adult, you don't know if they're actually going to continue on in the faith.

You don't know that. And so that we have the same challenge on either side of that thing. Times run out. The last thing I want to say is this.

The key point in all of this, and this is the thing I want you to take away from this most of all, because you can take this away, whether you are an infant Baptist or an adult Baptist, whatever your position, you can take this away.

[ 39 : 12 ] All of this is highlighting to us how massively important the next generation is in God's purposes.

And throughout history, that has always been the case. The next generation is so, so crucial in God's purposes.

If the next generation in Carlyway does not follow Jesus, then there is no church in Carlyway. And there is no one here to tell the generation after that about Jesus.

And the whole community goes to hell. And the next generation are so crucial in God's purposes.

Where are they? Where are they? Are we going for them?

[ 40 : 21 ] Do we have a church that's relevant to them? Do we talk to them when they come into our building and our services?

Do we have services? Do we have a form of worship? Do we have an atmosphere that the next generation can walk into and think, this is everything that I have been eating in my life?

Or do we just keep it the way we like it? The next generation are so crucial to God's purposes.

That's why I believe he is saying when they're born, put my sign on them and seal them in my promises and raise them as part of my family because they're the ones who are going to take the Gospel to the generations that have not been born.

And as we go on in our faith, whatever your view on baptism and whenever it was you were baptized, I keep saying there's one thing I want you to do. There's like 10 things I want you to do.

[ 41 : 36 ] This is another one thing I want you to do. I want you to remember your baptism. Remember it, remember it, remember it. Even if you can't remember it actually happening, I can't remember my baptism actually happening. But I need to remember the reality of it.

I'm touched by Jesus, clothed by Jesus, his name upon me, in his family, with a job to do to bring the good news of Jesus to the generation out there, to the children in our community, to the young people in our community so that they're ready to tell a generation unborn all about him.

I'll just stop here. More to say but we can chat with questions afterwards. Thank you.