

Baptism (2)

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Preacher: Peter Robinson

[0 : 00] Ephesians chapter 2 beginning at verse 11. Ephesians chapter 2 verse 11.

Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles, that's basically all of us I imagine, by birth and called uncircumcised by those who call themselves the circumcision, that done in the body by the hands of men, remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.

But now in Christ Jesus, you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one, and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with all its commandments and regulations.

His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near, for through him we both have access to the Father by one's Spirit.

[1 : 36] Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a temple in the Lord, and in him you too are being built together, become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Now, if anybody wants to, there's copies of the notes I'm going to be using here now.

If anybody would find them helpful to have to hand, then you're welcome to, we want one to hand while we go through the study. Now, as with last week, what we did, we began by reading out what is the position of this fellowship, local church, from the church rules.

I'm going to do that again this evening and read part of the church rules that is agreed and part of the common practice and acceptance of the members here. And then what we're going to do is we're going to look purely at Scripture.

[2 : 50] I've purposely not, last week or this week, sought to draw upon historical, as it were, weight or evidence for baptism, but really wanted purely to look at Scripture.

And hopefully that will be clearer for us and better for us. And then at the end, I've got some questions, but hopefully these things will become clear. I've got a few books as well for people if they want to read or think about these things a bit more in depth, because this is very much a light look at baptism, quite honestly.

And then also, of course, we want time for prayer, and there's several matters for prayer as well.

Just before I forget, there are, I'll remind you again, newsletters from the Griffins, that's it.

I was going to call them the Griffiths, and I get confused with people having babies and other things like that. And there's also the petition, that's the word I'm looking for.

Petition about... Somebody needs to read it. Okay, good. So last week we looked at an overview on what evangelicals believe about baptism, and the only thing that we looked at where there is some difference of opinion was the mode of baptism.

[4 : 10] We looked at immersion and pouring and sprinkling and why different modes are used by different Christians. So this week I want us to consider particularly the two practices of this local church, which are a credo baptism, or believer's baptism, as it was more commonly called, and pedo baptism or covenant baptism, baptism of infants of believers.

So let me just read, first of all, from the church rules. This is what is in the church rules under this matter of baptism. The church makes provision for the baptism of believers either by total

immersion in water or by a visible quantity of water being poured.

All baptisms on profession of faith will normally take place in the church's baptistry after appropriate instruction in the meaning and significance of baptism. The occasion of such baptism should always be separate from the church's principal services.

The church also makes provision for the baptism of the infants of believing parents, brackets, or parent, who are of that persuasion and are able to express an understanding of the covenant theology that underlies the practice.

Such baptisms should be allowed only when believing members of the family are substantially identified with the life and teaching of the church. The occasion of such baptisms should always be separate from the church's principal services, but may be on church premises at some suitable time, when a congregation may conveniently gather, attendance being optional.

[5 : 44] In the administration of baptism to infants, sufficient quantity of water should be used to make the symbolism of baptism visual. So that's what has been agreed by the members of this church and held for many years.

Baptism is one of several secondary issues that evangelical Christians have differing convictions about. By secondary issue, I mean a practice or interpretation from the Bible that does not alter the orthodox fundamental truth about the person of Christ, the work of salvation, the gospel, those things which are essential.

Other important differences that Christians have differing convictions about include how a local church should be governed. So amongst evangelicals, you will have independency, which is ourselves, congregationism, Presbyterianism, which is whereby a group of elders have governance over several churches, and Episcopalianism, which is what we would see in the Church of England, Church of Rome, which is a bishop over several churches.

Other areas of important difference concern the return of Christ, particularly regarding the thousand years spoken of in Revelation. And so you will have premillennial, postmillennial, amillennial, and somebody humorously put it panmillennial.

And when they asked, what does panmillennial mean? It means it will all pan out in the end. But no, that's not a real biblical position. And of course, we know that amongst believers, evangelical believers, there are differences on what we do on a Sunday, differences about what songs we should sing or shouldn't sing, whether we should consume alcohol or not, and many more things besides.

[7 : 32] Important things, but things that evangelical Christians have differed upon and should seek not to make a cause for division in the unity of Christ.

So what are the differences of conscience about baptism, particularly in regard to who should be baptized? So last week we looked at the object of baptism.

What is it all about? This week is the subject of baptism, or the subjects of baptism, who is to be baptized. And so I want to begin with what we might call the credo, or the believer's baptism position.

And we're going to look together at various passages in the New Testament for this. In the book of Acts, it is only those who have believed the gospel who received the sign of baptism.

So if you turn with me to Acts, as we did last week, we're going to look at every verse because I think it's important that we do that so we together can read it. Acts chapter 2.

[8 : 35] Famously, the day of Pentecost, verse 41. Those who accepted his message, that's Peter's preaching, those who accepted his message, were baptized.

Okay? So they believed the message, they accepted it, and they were baptized. Chapter 8 and verse 12. We're told there, Simon, sorry, but when they believed Philip, as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Again, gospel is preached, somebody believes it, and they are baptized. And then over to chapter 18, there's many other passages we can look at. We're not going to be looking at every single passage about every single aspect of baptism.

We want to get a general, clear view ourselves. Acts 18 and verse 8. Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord, and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized.

So again, in Acts, it's those who have believed the gospel who are baptized. We know that Jesus himself commanded the apostles to baptize those who believed the gospel.

[9 : 58] Go to the gospel of Mark and chapter 16. Mark's account of the Great Commission, the sending out of the apostles with the gospel.

In Mark and chapter 16 and verse 16, here's Jesus. Well, verse 15, he said to them, go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved. Whoever does not believe will be condemned. So Jesus commanded his apostles to preach the gospel and those who believed it were to be baptized. Now, it's clear that a person must be of a certain age to understand the gospel and believe it so that they can repent and believe. So it must be somebody of a certain age who can have the capacity, the ability.

We don't know what that age may be for each person. It's a different age, but certainly it's an age older than an infant whereby they are able to understand the gospel and to believe it.

[11 : 04] And, fifthly here, being publicly baptized, a person is testifying to the power of God and his gospel in their lives. By being baptized, they're saying, this is what God has done in my life and therefore it's a strong witness to any unconverted family or friends that attend.

So the credo baptism, believer's baptism, is what we see in Acts, that those who believed were baptized and we see also that to understand the gospel means we must be of a certain age and that baptism is a testimony to what God has done in a person's life.

Therefore, the conclusion, if I can put it that way, it's a negative conclusion, I appreciate, the conclusion of believer's baptism is therefore that infants cannot repent and believe the gospel, therefore, they should not receive the sign of baptism.

That's what is held as the believer's baptism position. Now, that's pretty straightforward. I think we all understand that.

And, what we're going to move on to then is the pedo baptism or the covenant baptism position. The reason I've called it the covenant baptism position is because, of course, the misuse of the word pedo in our society, whereby it's associated with perversion and immorality.

[12 : 31] So, I'm going to call it covenant baptism, even though pedo simply means child. So, you have a, what's the doctor who works with children? That's the one. Pediatrician.

So, that's not a problem there, but, so, okay. The reason that we read from Ephesians chapter two, if you want to turn back there for a moment, and that large passage is because we see there and understand there that the church of God is made up of both Old Testament Israel and the New Testament Christians.

Okay. The people of God, one people of God, are made up of Old Testament Israel, those who believed, and New Testament Christians who believed. That's why Paul makes it clear that the Gentiles were outside of the covenant, outside of the promises, outside of the citizenship of Israel, there in verse 12, but now they are in.

So, we see that there is one people of God. When we get to heaven, there will be Moses and Abraham and David and many, many more besides whose names are written in the scriptures and many who aren't as well, who were believers.

That's why, of course, Hebrews chapter 11 is such a lovely passage for us, speaks about those who had a similar faith to us in the Old Testament. But, of course, we have in our Bibles very clearly what is the Old Testament and the New Testament.

[14 : 03] And the word testament really is the same word as covenant, old covenant and new covenant. And the reason we have that wording is because of the words of the Lord Jesus himself where he made it clear that the new covenant that he was establishing was the perfect fulfillment of the Old Covenant.

Okay? Jesus came to bring to fulfillment and perfection the Old Covenant with the New Covenant. And that's why we have Matthew 5. If somebody would turn, if we'd like to turn there for a moment. If there's any questions that you've got, then please, if you can wait till the end, if you can remember them or put a mark by it, then that would be helpful just so we don't, just in case I may answer the question before we get to the end.

So in Matthew 5 and verse 17, Jesus says this, Do not think that I've come to abolish the law or the prophets. I've not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

Okay? So Jesus' view of the Old Testament was he was coming to fulfill it and to do so he introduced the New Covenant and we have that from the very wording of the Lord Jesus where he speaks about the New Covenant and the blood of the New Covenant when he's at the Lord's

Supper.

[15:23] We'll touch on that a bit later as well. But Hebrews particularly is helpful because in the book of Hebrews we have the New Testament explanation of the purpose and the meaning of the Old Testament.

and in Hebrews and chapter 8 and verse 6 Hebrews and chapter 8 and verse 6 one of several places where the writer reminds us and tells us that Jesus has introduced a New Covenant. Chapter 8 verse 6 but the ministry Jesus has received he's talking about comparing Jesus with the priests the priests of the Mosaic Law. The ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one it is founded on better promises.

So we have one of the ways I thought to try to understand this and explain it was using Windows not these Windows Windows Microsoft Windows if you've got a computer and you had a computer for 20 odd years then you'll know that going back about 20 years there was Microsoft 3.1 or something like that which was the running what's the word I'm looking for there?

Thank you? Say it again? Operating system. So you had Windows 3.1 the operating system. As you went over through the last 20 years that became changed its name and grew so now you've got Windows 8 which is but the very components of Windows 3.1 are still included in Windows 8 it's just a lot bigger and a lot better and a lot faster but it hasn't got rid of if I'm going to go that way what it started with it's an expansion it's an enlarging and that's how we're to understand the covenants in the Old Testament and really in one sense what theologians call redemptive history we're starting back in Genesis chapter 3 verse 16 with the beginning of the promise of the gospel and as we go through the Bible that's enlarging and widening so that in Abraham it's included in one man and one family widening until we get to Christ where we have of course salvation to the whole world but the very seed of the gospel the very beginning is right back there hasn't changed hasn't been altered and so through those covenants we have an enlarging an expanding okay that's what I understand that's what many Christians understand that's what we understand here when we're told that Jesus is the one who's brought in a superior covenant a better one with better promises so it's not restricted it's enlarged now under the old covenant all males with adults all children were circumcised as a sign of God's promises to them so if you go back to

[18:19] Genesis 17 and to Abraham and God's promises to him Genesis chapter 17 God makes a covenant with Abraham he's already come to come to faith of course we know that in the Lord because chapter 15 tells us that God accredited to him righteousness because he believed in the Lord but here in chapter 17 God ratifies that with a covenant and in chapter 17 verses 11 to 12 you are to undergo circumcision it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you for the generations to come every male among you who's eight days old must be circumcised including those born in your household and so on then over to verse 24 and 25 we find out what Abraham did

Abraham was 99 years old when he was circumcised his son Ishmael was 13 Abraham and his son Ishmael were both circumcised on the same day so there we have and then every male in Abraham's household including those born etc were circumcised so under the old covenant God gave a sign to Abraham that he was going to be faithful to his promises a sign of his promises a sign of that covenant agreement was circumcision now under the new covenant the covenant that Christ has brought in that sign has changed from circumcision to baptism we can see that in several places but we're going to turn to Colossians and chapter 2 which seems to make that the most clear so Colossians and chapter 2 this is Paul writing to

Christians remember as well to believers to Gentile believers verse 9 and following in Christ all the fullness of the deity lives in bodily form and you've been given fullness in Christ who is the head over every power and authority in him that's Christ you were also circumcised in the putting off of the sinful nature not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ in other words a spiritual circumcision of the heart that's what he's talking about the sign of circumcision outward was a sign of a spiritual inward work of God having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God who raised him from the dead and there we have the two together circumcision and baptism both speaking of spiritual realities we have been spiritually raised with Christ haven't we we haven't physically yet been raised with Christ it's talking about the spiritual work of regeneration in our lives so baptism replaced the sign of circumcision and a similar thing happens of course with the

Lord's supper we understand that we don't need to look at it but when Jesus has the Passover celebrates the Passover his disciples in Luke 22 he says to them this is the blood of the new

covenant in my blood that's why we don't have Passover meals do we as Christians even though it was commanded in the Old Testament we have the Lord's supper because it has been replaced by something else which points more directly to the Lord Jesus and so it is with baptism now we've seen already and we need to recognize that in both the Old and New Covenant the children of believers are included in the promises okay in the both covenants the Old Covenant and the New Covenant the children of believers are included in the promises we seal that back in Genesis 17 we'll just look at that again Genesis 17 and verse 8 Genesis 17 and verse 8 the whole land of Canaan where you are now an alien I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you I will be their God it's not just land I mustn't just think that it's just land that's concerned with here but God promises to be the God of the descendants of Abraham the children of Abraham and then in that Pentecost sermon of Peter in Acts and chapter 2 as he's preaching to Jews remember because we know that because we're told that they were gathered there from all around the world verse 5 of chapter 2 staying in Jerusalem God fearing Jews from every nation under heaven to these people Peter says verse 38 repent repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off for all whom the [23 : 45] Lord your God will call so the promise of the gospel the promise of the new covenant is made to the believer and to their children and we can again look in several places in the New Testament where that is also confirmed so both the old and the new children are included in these promises so when a Christian parent publicly baptizes their child they are testifying to their faith their dependent faith in God and his grace to sovereignly save that child in the future that's why they're baptizing them it's a powerful witness to any unconverted family or friends present they're doing it in the church because the parents are including their local church in the responsibility of teaching their children the way of salvation so it is not just as with baptism for an adult baptism for a child is an act of faith and it is a public testimony and it is a looking to the church and if you tell me just to 2

Timothy chapter 3 for a moment 2 Timothy chapter 3 verses 14 and 15 2 Timothy 3 14 and 15 speaking to Timothy who we know his mother and grandmother were both believers don't we as for you continue in what you've learned and have become convinced of because you know those from whom you learned it how from infancy you have known the holy scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus so the bringing up of the child within the Christian church and with Christian family is that they might know the scriptures and that they might come to the wisdom of salvation now the conclusion of all this for the covenant baptist for the pedo-baptist is this since under the old covenant the children received the sign of that covenant circumcision therefore they should receive the sign of the new covenant baptism okay okay so that's setting out the stall as it were on both those positions on baptism

I'm going to ask and answer some questions which arise from that and then I'm going to give opportunity if folk want to ask questions as well the first question is this does the new testament command the baptism of infants okay does the new testament command the baptism of infants no it doesn't but neither does the new testament forbid the baptism of infants nowhere is that found in the new testament does withholding baptism from a child alter its spiritual life then or in the future in other words if I don't baptize my children or my child will it affect their salvation affect their standing before god affect what will happen to them no of course not every child must come to a personal saving faith themselves to be right with god baptism has no effect we saw last week when we thought about that baptism has no spiritual effect upon our standing before god it does not impart any spiritual blessing it is a sign and a symbol well therefore should all babies be baptized or just those of believing christians and we know that of course this is one of the reasons why many christians feel uneasy with baptism of children because we see it being used indiscriminately in the church of england and other denominations as well getting the baby done wetting the child's head and for some of course particularly roman catholics there is the belief and many others as well that without baptism a child cannot go to heaven if they die in infancy right should all babies be baptized no only those of at least one believing christian parent because when a parent baptizes their child they are demonstrating their faith in god that he will in the future save their child and they do that on the basis of many promises in god's word one of them is isaiah if you turn there for a moment isaiah 44 isaiah 44 verses 3 to 5 here's one of god's promises to his people isaiah chapter 44 verses 3 4 and 5 for i will pour out water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground i will pour out my

spirit on your offspring and my blessing on your descendants they will spring up like grass in a meadow like poplar trees by flowing streams one will say I belong to the Lord another will call himself by the name of Jacob still another will write on his hand the Lord's and will take the name of Israel promise of salvation to descendants well then does baptizing a child absolve the parents of any further spiritual responsibility in other words if Christian parents or any parent brings their child to be baptized have they done all they need to do to see that child safely saved no when a Christian parent brings their child to be baptized they are committing themselves to teach and instruct the child by example and sound doctrine the things of Christ that's why it is a great privilege and blessing for children to be brought

up in a Christian home part of the blessings of God's covenant Ephesians and chapter six one of the places where Paul gives instruction concerning not only husbands and wives but also fathers and children Ephesians chapter six verse four fathers do not exasperate your children instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord that's why another reason why it is so foolish and false simply to allow baptism for every child because it is important and necessary for the parents to make promises which they do and sadly in various church services which they have no intention of keeping but that is not to be the case here my final question then which really sums up the whole of our time last week and this week is this in the light of these things how should we treat one another when our convictions differ okay how should we treat one another when our convictions differ over this matter well here's an example in Romans and chapter 14 it's not the exact same subject but it is a very helpful example which Paul gives particularly concerning conscience and conviction which differs between

Christians on the matter of eating meat sacrificed to idols let's just listen to these words and apply them to the present circumstances accept him whose faith is weak without passing judgment on disputable matters one's man faith allows him to eat everything but another man whose faith is weak eats only vegetables the man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not eat the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does for God has accepted him who are you to judge someone else's servant to his own master he stands or falls and he will stand for the Lord is able to make him stand one man considers one day more sacred than another another man considers every day alike each one should be fully convinced in his own mind he who regards one day as special does so to the

[32 : 56] Lord he who eats meat eats meat to the Lord for he gives thanks to God and he abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to the Lord for none of us lives to himself alone none of us dies to himself alone if we live we live to the Lord and if we die we die to the Lord so whether we live or die we belong to the Lord for this very reason Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the living and the dead you then why do you judge your brother or why do you look down on your brother for we all will stand before God's judgment seats so there should be dear friends and I'm very thankful to God I sincerely mean that that within our fellowship here a loving respect and acceptance of one another's conscience on this matter before the

Lord and a desire that in all that we do in whoever we baptize that we do it unto the Lord not because of tradition not because of ignorance not because of superstition but because we are of a fully convinced mind on the matter so as I say that is a brief outline I do say if there's anybody who has got a question of clarification particularly over what we've just done as they'd like to raise that now and we'll seek to do that if I can answer it I'll tell you I can answer it and divert you to another book or something else to help you with that he's going to be brave enough go on lines this is just an interesting fact I don't know if anybody remembers

Keith Morris who was the pastor at the evangelical church actually as far as I know when he was there he was a Baptist and then he left and went to Australia and became a pedo Baptist became a Presbyterian minister and I remember him he sent me an email and he said he told a story about a Presbyterian and this Presbyterian was a bit worried because he had taken a funeral of a Baptist so he went to the Presbytery and he said I'm a bit worried because I have taken this funeral of this Baptist minister is it okay and one of the people in the Presbytery said of course bury all the Baptists you can dreadful that's an awful thing to say quite honestly without wishing to be harsh upon you that sort of joke can be a cause of upset either way because a Baptist may say that about a Peter Baptist but that sort of joking unfortunately can be a cause for friction because ultimately in the end it's putting an unnecessary enmity between brothers in Christ I know sorry you sort of blanded on it I'm sorry about that going back to the question

I think I mentioned this to you on a Sunday it was about if you look it's a similar replacement of the Passover that's taking place with the Lord's Supper and it was just this is like one objection that some people have is saying circumcision was for children and then as I understand anyhow maybe you can clarify anyhow I don't know what the question is but circumcision obviously was done on males but then the Passover as far as understood children also took of Passover but then when we have this the Lord's Supper it's generally I mean some churches I know I think it's Methodism some Church of England maybe some ones they allow children to participate on the Lord's

[38 : 09] Supper but generally it's only celebrated by believers so I just wondered why then if they have the sign of circumcision so that not a sign of baptism it's a sign of the seal they have that but then they don't participate of the Lord's Supper until it's clearly said until you come to faith so they have one without the other and it seems some kind of inconsistency unless there's some reason in honesty I know that there are Christians who are in a covenant baptism position who would have their children take communion from when they were weaned if I put that way my own feeling is that this is what I practice with my own children is that they've not taken communion until I'm satisfied that they understand what they're doing because in one sense the taking of the bread and the wine is an act of faith in the cross and therefore does demand an understanding of the cross and what it has done and accomplished whereby baptism is a sign of the promise of

God that the gospel is for them when they believe so I see that there is a difference in the two but not other Christians don't and some may see that as inconsistent that's where my mind is settled on it so my children so I'm not naming names of my children because it's not fair on them but where they have come to a place and I've talked with them and sat down with them and said do you understand what you're doing do you understand why Jesus died for you on the cross and that you're faith in him and then they've said yes and I've allowed them to take communion and they understand the seriousness of it then when they haven't done that or haven't I haven't felt yet that they should do then I've held it from them would you tie that up with membership or would that follow up we're dealing with baptism here in my own situation in Presbyterianism it was usually at the time when you applied for membership that you then came to communion because it was you were a communicant member yeah that's

Presbyterianism isn't it 18 or 19 right and speaking from the other side having grown up in a Presbyterian family I would have to say after I left Scotland I've had a pretty rough ride from the other side I would have to testify to that but the Lord very clearly said to me don't argue back there is no purpose and it's exactly what you say in the last sentence and that has been my position and the Lord has blessed that I don't understand what's being said most of us would understand that the children in a believing house whether it's just one parent or not are in a privileged position and I think the Bible makes that clear that they are they belong to believers and they are protected in the sense aren't they and I are and I was taken by the shipwreck when Paul was on that ship and he prayed and the

Lord said all of them and that's as far as my understanding goes of it but I have no problem at all with both positions it's interesting what Gene said just putting oneself in Gene's position because it's the believers baptist who is the one who looks down on the pedo baptist and think well of course they're totally wrong and it's the pedo baptist you have to take that graciously only in England to be fair I think probably David may find himself on the opposite foot being a baptist in a presbyterian college he's not allowed to speak up about being a baptist that's right I'm saying that's right I'm just saying that's correct what you're saying I'm just speaking from our church which is mostly baptistic it's really good to hear Gene so we can put ourselves into her shoes and all the lights

I've experienced that since I've become a pedo baptist and I haven't always been a pedo baptist I was converted in a Pentecostal church and I was baptised by a merchant when I was 18 and as far as I knew that was the only bible believing position to take until several years later when I began to study the scriptures for myself and read the scriptures and become in contact with evangelical congregational men that I then questioned and came to that conviction myself personal conviction that the bible does in fact encourage baptism of believing children but from that position sadly and more often than not within FIEC I've actually received a lot of stick in public meetings as well which has been a shame which has been a shame in spite of the fact that within FIEC which is a shame because within FIEC as I said last week this is the FIEC book on what they believe and they very clearly state evangelicals churches hold to the infant baptism position and that's fine and that's the reason why the statement of faith of FIEC is open and doesn't say

[44 : 14] Bedeers baptism only or anything it's open in that way so it's a great shame and that's why my plea is that we continue as we are and in bringing this matter to a foreign sense was not and I hope it hasn't not to create greater division but hopefully by understanding one another even if we don't agree with one another by understanding one another understanding that these things come from a Bible believing conviction rather than just a tradition or superstition or whatever it may be or ignorance that we're able then to say you're a brother in Christ and I can see that you're doing this unto the Lord and therefore I respect and love you in that and I think without differences we can't learn to love one another can we if we all were in the mold exactly the same in everything where would there be the need for grace and love and understanding but anyway yes Steve I've got to be some way yeah of course thank you for that one thing my brother

Lord Clark was very close and he was really quite upset and he said no he's infant baptism he needed to do the baptised as an adult and the only worry is that with this that someone makes a judgement and if someone came here from another area you wouldn't know and yet a judgement would be made oh well you know they might say oh yeah well but it's then a judgement is passed whereas with someone makes a professional affair then it's clear cut doesn't it it's just does he not leave that moment to I say again Clive accepted it but he really was he felt that he was so can you explain to me what happened with Clive he made a professional affair and he felt that he didn't need he said it it's sort of rubbish in my previous thing that he was a little bit I wouldn't love him but he could be a little bit but he did get that and he felt that he should have just been okay to have his previous baptism in children and no it isn't okay okay well that's a shame

I mean I don't know anything about that situation at all I don't you know this is I think we've got to come back to in the end and this is what Paul is getting at here particularly in Romans 14 he's saying look who are we to judge another master's servants it's a personal thing between us and the Lord I mean Martin Luther was baptised as a Roman Catholic and brought up as a Catholic and when he was converted he was challenged about being baptised as a Protestant and he said no my baptism is fine now whether I agree with that or not not the matter what is the matter is personal conscience before the Lord and I think that one of the sadnesses is where we seek to impose our conscience before the Lord upon somebody else so if I was to go to somebody else I'd pick on Martin and say Martin you should baptise your girls when they were children that's wrong I believe I can say I believe this is what scripture says and you can say well I've read that and I'm not of that same conviction or conscience because I believe it's when they come to faith they're baptised then I don't believe I have a right to say to you one you can't be a member of my church because you don't hold to that or two that's a sin against the

Lord or breaking of a command of the same and I think that's a serious matter and I think as I said that's why I introduced it at the beginning again is this without wishing to be rude does it really matter what we do on the outward of the person whether we pour sprinkle immerse or do nothing at all how does that change their stand before the Lord if they're not born again with the spirit it makes no difference and so the great classic is of course the thief on the cross never baptised in any way shape or form now it is an important thing I'm not saying it's not important what we believe about baptism because it clearly is important but it shouldn't be so important to break unity between gospel believing people and again that's why I'm so very glad as a church here that has not been the case that there has always been that love which covered over those differences

I think I might just add to what Paul said going back further in time in the church we have had people who have said that they believe that they're infant baptism was legitimate but they've been converted so they were not baptised again and it was up to the person who made a judgement on their own situation that was listened to that was my position because I was baptised in the church of England as a baby but when I became a Christian at 17 and I wanted to you know buried with him in baptism wherein we rise to eternal life and I wanted the experience of being totally immersed along with others but I think I was the only one that had been baptised as a baby and it did upset my mother but she wasn't a Christian and she said it was what they did for me when I was a baby not good enough but it gave me an opportunity to explain to her whether she really understood and never knew but that was just my own personal decision in a perfect world which we don't live in in a perfect world baptism of infants would only take place in believing families so that problem wouldn't have come up but we're not in a perfect world so that's why we have this confusion because we have people baptising willy nilly or christening which again is a very poor word and shouldn't be used because it's

[50 : 25] Christianising the child she would say I've been christian well as I said last week this is the girl in the bank she's a Christian because she was christened as a baby but she has no personal fame so we don't live in a perfect world sadly or an ideal world where only Christian families baptise their children we live in this confusion so we've got to try and make the best of it and I think therefore we come back to personal conviction so for you the personal conviction was I should be baptised again I was baptised as a Roman Catholic baby my parents weren't believers you know I came to faith in Christ I didn't know any better but I think even if I did know better I still would have been baptised because I wouldn't have counted that as being an act of faith on my part my parents believe in the covenant promises they don't know anything about that my sister also the older sister she was witness to me she became a Christian she was christened as a baby but she actually went to a baptist church so she then was baptised after conversion

I was baptised in a catholic church very much against my father's wishes he was absolutely against the church well basically I didn't get much input at all because Hitler stopped everything all the priests coming into schools and my mother's people were extremely Christian very much over the top but that's the only sort of input to have that over school and things later on went to church and all they thought about yes I'm a Christian and then when I finally came to England I sort of had a bit of a with the Catholic priest he said I wasn't wearing out and I'd only just arrived and I said well I've just come from

Germany you don't have to do that he said oh yes you do and I said well actually I used to be very shy you wouldn't believe it but why I was strong enough to say yes but Jesus doesn't mind he does and he said oh in England he does so I never went for 30 years and I mean the Lord kept me it's not that I didn't believe in God and both my daughters joined the church and became had other baptism and they brought me in and it just means whether you have this teaching I mean it would be wonderful being up in the Christian family I think I've missed so much but when the Lord wants you he gets you and he keeps you lovely lovely thanks Sonia lovely differences of wearing hats or not wearing hats another thing that we Christians have a great ability to find lots of reasons to fall out of one another we've got so many more reasons to be united together in Christ haven't we very well I tons of people and you have the beauty proof all the makers ve so as harvested a maybe and those can.

love so you can fuerte way you can that and that about siento me