



November

Pastor's Page



Zion Lutheran
Church

110 East Grand

"As Long as They're Christians" Do Denominational Differences Really Matter? *Part V: Concluding Thoughts on Baptism*

Small Point of Clarification

Sometimes those who deny infant baptism do not fully understand what baptism is. Those of us who defend the Biblical teaching of baptism do not teach that baptism is some magic act. It is not magic water. Nor do we teach that Baptism saves apart from faith. As Martin Luther says in his Small Catechism,

Baptism is not simple water only, but it is the water comprehended in God's command and connected with God's Word... It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare...It is not the water indeed that does this, but the word of God which is in and with the water, and faith, which trusts such word of God in the water. For without the word of God the water is simple water and no baptism. But with the word of God it is a baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost, as St. Paul says in Titus, chapter three.¹

The Holy Spirit in the Word of God is where the power is located, not in the water by itself. Further, this gift is received by faith alone. As to say, there is only one way of salvation not two. It is salvation by grace alone through faith alone. Hopefully, this small point of clarification aids the reader in understanding the Scriptural teaching of infant baptism.

Conclusion

Upon closely analyzing the Bible it is clear that infant baptism is taught. The Word of God clearly says that all babies are born sinful, that is to say they inherit original sin from Adam. It clearly says that all sinners, who by nature are children of wrath, are under God's condemnation and are destined for hell. Thanks be to God that scripture also clearly speaks of the New Adam, Christ, Who came to redeem all of the fallen creation and die for the sins of the entire world. And, it is clear that the Bible teaches that in order to receive the benefits of Christ work on the cross for all, individual faith is necessary. As to say, all are saved by grace through faith. Scripture teaches that faith is not the logical decision of an adult, and that fallen human reason rejects the Gospel and finds it foolish. Scripture teaches that faith is more than understanding, and uses the faith of infants as the prime example. Faith is God's gift created by God's Word. Furthermore, the Word of God says that baptism (God's Word with water) saves our children and us all. Finally, Christ said to baptize **all** nations.

The Word of God speaks clearly on the issue of infant baptism and human reason must not be allowed to interfere. This essay is written out of love and is intended to rightly proclaim and observe *all the things* that Jesus commanded. For as it says in Ephesians 4:5 There is but, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism²."

Do denominational differences really matter? They do if Jesus's words really matter.

Baptized into Christ- Pastor

P.S. Like *Leinenkugels* does with good beer, I am going to put my series, "As Long as They're Christians" *Do Denominational Differences Really Matter?* into hibernation mode to be activated at a later time by examining a different doctrine.

¹ Trig, 248-9.

² AE's teach two baptisms: A Spirit Baptism and a Water Baptism. They faith to see they are one and the same.



Happy Birthday to all the active members who have November Birthdays!!

Joe Calkins	11/2
Nancy Sahr	11/2
Tyler Lyberg	11/4
Gertrude Boettcher	11/7
Richard Hanson	11/7
Patricia Taylor	11/7
Joseph Blake	11/11
Steven Raether	11/13
McKenzie Schwetz	11/13
Kimberly Krarup	11/15
Lindy Clark	11/16
Lois Raether	11/17
John Liddell	11/19
Emily Hakes	11/21
Taylor Schoelzel	11/22
Eric Benson	11/23
Lance Clark	11/23
Daniel Schwetz	11/23
Mavis Berry	11/24
Michael Ziebarth	11/28
Laurie Hurt	11/29



Happy Anniversary to:

Jerry & Karen Clark	11/3/1990
Pastor & Briann Stark	11/21/2003

we ask you to remember in our prayers the homebound members:

Lila Pahl
Erna Welke
Birdie Wolfgang
Mike Ziebarth



Funerals

Lillian Wilson -
October 6, 2012



PRAYER REQUEST

If you would like a prayer on Sunday morning, please contact the secretary during the week. If it is last minute, you can also catch pastor before service.



MISS A BIBLE CLASS OR SERMON?

Audio of the most recent Bible classes and sermons are on our website. Click the "Education" tab for Bible class or the tab for "Sermons."



CD'S OF SERMONS & BIBLE STUDIES

CD's of Sermons and Bible Studies will be made available for those who request them. Contact Brian Schweisthal with any requests. Brian's cell phone is 715-529-8342 and his email address is brians8881@gmail.com.



RADIO & FLOWERS:

If you would like to furnish altar flowers or sponsor a radio broadcast for a special occasion please call the office. **Altar flowers** are **\$30.00** at Gordys if **you pick up** yourself or **\$40.00** if you would like them **delivered** to the church. You also may bring your own flowers. There is a flower chart in the church on the left of the door as you enter from the education wing. Sign your name by the date you would like to furnish flowers. **The radio broadcast is \$76.00.** Call the office if you would like to furnish a broadcast or have any questions about flowers or the broadcast. You may pay in the church office or put in the offering plate & write "for flowers."

How a Christian Should View Divorce By Rev. Philip Hale (LCMS, Bancroft, NE)

We know that divorce is a major problem, but how does God's Word say that we should act in these difficult times? In this sinful world, many things do not go as we wish and we cannot escape sin. Yet, God does not give permission to sin. Our freedom in Christ, the forgiveness of sins, is not freedom from God, but freedom to serve Him in righteousness. We must separate a divorce in God's eyes, from a divorce that takes place in our legal system. Let's look at God's Word in regard to divorce.

First off, marriage is not a man-made creation. It is God's design and doing, going back to Adam and Eve. ***For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.*** The union of marriage is not to be broken by man and God gives no permission for it to be broken.

A legal divorce can either break the marriage union, or it can simply recognize a union that has already been broken. Christians have no permission to divorce, because they are not happy or fulfilled. They made a voluntary commitment and promised before God to love as long as they both shall live. And more importantly they are still joined together as one flesh. What seems attractive (freedom to do what one wants) will be very painful because they are cutting off part of their own flesh by divorcing. Those who divorce only to be happy and free will not find it---because he who sins is a slave to sin. God's wrath remains on them until they repent.

If a person realizes they have sinned by breaking their marriage they must repent. If they are already remarried, they must remain faithful to their current spouse but confess to God their sin of adultery (by divorcing without cause and remarrying) and of breaking a union that God made. If the one who sinned publicly by divorce is unmarried and if possible, they should seek to be reconciled to the one they divorced. Repentance is shown in action. While the marriage might not be repaired, it should be the innocent party's decision. If both are still unmarried and sexual immorality has not occurred, they are both still married in God's eyes. Therefore, every effort should be made to repair what man broke.

A legal divorce does not break the marriage in God's eyes. Jesus said: ***"I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."*** No one can decide a marriage is over when they want---marriage is God's domain and doing. So even though the government grants a no-fault divorce, before God one might still be married and by marrying again commits adultery. What we do with our bodies matters, because the Spirit who gives faith lives in us bodily. Any sexual act is spiritual, since we are physical and spiritual beings.

What has been said is spoken to one side---those who want to break off marriage without a biblical reason. On the other side is the spouse who wanted to keep their marriage vow and not break the one flesh union, but were not able to, due to circumstances outside their control. Marriage takes two people and unfortunately one person's sin can ruin marriage for both. This we must recognize: not all divorced spouses are equal. One may have had no choice, due to the other's sin.

Even though the "innocent party" was not perfect and always loving, outwardly they did not break the marriage. They are sorry for any sin against their spouse and wanted to uphold God's work in marriage. Christ died for them and they are innocent of any wrong doing by faith. If they tried to love and stay in the marriage, that is all God asks for. They are holy in Christ.

For those who try to make a marriage work and did not go along with the breaking of the union, there is freedom and forgiveness. While divorce will still be sad and painful, Scripture is clear that if the divorce is the other person's fault, you are free to let them go. St. Paul says: ***But if the unbeliever leaves, let it be so. The brother or the sister is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace. I Cor. 7:15*** Scripture says that a believer must stay in a marriage, whether married to a Christian or not. But if an unbeliever does not respect marriage, you are free to let them go. In other words, you have no permission to break a marriage, but if the unbelieving spouse does not want to be married, you are not at fault and free to let them go.

So if a spouse has committed adultery against you or left the marriage (desertion), you are free to seek a divorce. That is not "good," (divorce is never good) but it is allowable, since the marriage has already been broken. In this case you do not sin in seeking a divorce. Adultery or desertion itself breaks the marriage union, by joining one's body to one whom they were not joined to by God. In this case, a legal divorce can be sought by the innocent party, since the true divorce of the one flesh has already happen in sexuality immorality or by desertion.

Divorce is a problem, but often we don't know who wanted to escape and sinned by getting a divorce or who wanted to stay and be faithful. We cannot control another person and it takes two to be married. While no one is innocent in marriage or divorce and been completely loving, the outward faithfulness we must uphold. But we are not to pry into their affairs or judge those divorced. They might be innocent and deeply regret the breaking of God's work. Marriage faithfulness is a matter of the heart and the body. But the physical union can be broken by just one party in marriage, even if they sought to be faithful. We must support such people and not treat them as public sinners. Rather they were sinned against by the guilty party.

Living with another sinner in marriage is tough. That is why many would rather live in sin together as unmarried without a lifelong commitment. But that is indulging the flesh and despising marriage openly just as much as divorce.

Those who marry just to be happy are foolish. But the difficulties and restrictions in marriage are useful and godly if we do not reject Christ or His command concerning divorce. Even in a marriage that appears bad or broken to the world, there is great benefit to being faithful to your promise and loving yourself. Since in marriage people are made one flesh, loving a spouse is loving yourself. Marriage is ultimately about God's order and even the worst marriage is still God's doing and can in no way harm your faith or future life in heaven. Marriage is excellent discipline for this world---but remember marriage is only for this earth. There is no marriage in heaven.

Happiness on earth has nothing to do with faithfulness to God. As Christ did, we are shown that love is shown in great sacrifice and in not denying God in the most difficult situations. We have hope because Christ did not leave us or desert us, even though we have deserved Him by our unfaithfulness. But we have no permission to be unfaithful publicly in marriage. This God requires of us. But it is not too hard of burden for those who love Christ.

Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies. I Cor. 6:18-20

Worshipping the One True God In Unity

www.acelec.net

One of our members vividly remembers planning a vacation in California's wine country with his wife several years ago. It seems that our dear ladies have a way of cutting to the chase with us men. Knowing that he really, really does not like so-called "contemporary" worship services, she advised him: "Sweetheart, I really don't want to listen to you gripe and grouse about sitting through a contemporary service, so please get on the phone or the Internet and find a place where we can worship without that." As always, she was quite right.

So he got out his *Lutheran Annual*, looked up five LCMS congregations in the approximate area they thought they'd be in on the Sunday in question, and he began making the calls. It was an interesting experience. All five congregations referred him to a congregation of the ELS (Evangelical Lutheran Synod). Not one of the LCMS congregations had a Liturgical Divine Service (non-blended), nor did any of them indicate that they practiced closed Communion! He was upset, but sadly not surprised. The more he thought about the situation, the more he realized that this matter goes far beyond mere personal preference.

Worship is the central activity in which the Church of Jesus Christ engages. It is from worship that all other activities flow, and it is our Lord's service to us through the giving of His Word and Sacrament which empowers the Holy Spirit to generate in us all other Christian activity. To put it another way, worship is the one thing we really must get right!

Worship that pleases God really ought to reflect the nature of God Himself. And what is that divine nature? Above all, His nature is divine unity. It is simply inconceivable that there be any kind of variation within the Godhead. Certainly, the Triune God does not have internal debates about doctrine and practice. Assuredly, within the Godhead there is no difference in will, thought, or action. If any of that were the case, then God simply couldn't be God!

This concept and reality concerning the nature of God is expressed by our Lord in His high priestly prayer recorded for us in John 17:20-26, where He says: "*I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given*

me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.” (ESV)

Here Jesus prays that just as He is united with the Father, so must we also – because we are His people – be united as one. (Please note: Twice Jesus makes the point that this unity is for both this age and the next when He says, “...so that the world may know that you sent me.”)

Then it dawned on him: **Unity is the reflection of the divine God, but division/diversity is the mark of the sin-fallen world.** Who is it that seeks to divide? Who is it that desires a diversity of doctrine and practice? Who is it that relishes in breaking what was meant to be whole? Satan and none other!

No wonder St. Paul made it unmistakably clear to the divided Corinthian congregation that their divisions must cease when he wrote: *“I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.”* (I Corinthians 1:10 ESV)

Have you ever examined the various Old and New Testament passages which describe worship? They never portray worship as a place for individual preferences or personal license. Especially look at the Book of Revelation and the multiple glimpses God gives us there of what worship looks like in heaven. The picture painted for us there is that all God’s saints are before His throne of grace, and that all of them are saying precisely the same thing at the same time. All of them are perfectly united with the One they worship. And all of them have only one desire: to reflect that unity in their worship!

Perhaps this is why our Synod’s first Constitution described their desire as a Synod *“To strive after the greatest possible uniformity in ceremonies.”* (Constitution of the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, Article IV - Business of the Synod, 10) In the same original Constitution it also states, that as a condition of membership, we bind ourselves to *“The exclusive use of doctrinally pure church books and school books (Agenda, hymnals, readers, etc.)”* (Article II, 4)

The same paragraph then continues as follows: *“If it is impossible in some congregations to replace immediately the unorthodox hymnals and the like with orthodox ones, then the pastor of such a congregation can become a member of*

Synod only if he promises to use the unorthodox hymnal only under open protest and to strive in all seriousness for the introduction of an orthodox hymnal.” (Article II, 4)

Were our fathers in the faith only being pig-headed and hard-nosed, or was there a sound theological reason for writing their Constitution as they did? Just because these people of God lived over 100 years ago doesn't mean they weren't theologically astute. They understood quite well that the very soul of any Christian congregation is their worship together. There is where Christ serves His people with His gifts of Word and Sacrament. Therefore if we are to worship the One, True God, then we ought to engage in the kind of worship which gives proper testimony to His unity. The historic liturgies (which date back to the early Christian way of worshiping), do precisely this.

This is but one reason why the ACELC has written concerning our Lutheran faith: *“In accord with the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, Confessional Lutherans retain, honor, and will not dispense with the liturgical worship of the Church and will resist any attempt to conform the worship of the Church to the expectations of the world. This is done so that the unity of the faith and of our Triune God is expressed through the unity of our worship and the faith it conveys.”*

(Genesis 13:18; Exodus 12; Exodus 25:9; Exodus 28:1-2; Exodus 40; II Samuel 24:25; I Kings 8:22-66; II Chronicles 29:27-30; Luke 4:15; Acts 14:1; I Corinthians 14:26-33; Hebrews 10:24-25; Revelation 4; Revelation 5; Revelation 7:9-12; Revelation 15:2-4; Revelation 19:1-8; AC Article X, 1-2; AC Article XXIV, 5; AP XV:4; AP XXIV:1; AC XXIV:40; AC XXIV:34; LC I:94; AP XV: 20-21; AP VII/VIII:33; AP XXIV:99; AC, epilogue to XXI, 4,5) (Definition of Confessional Lutheranism In Light of Present Day Issues, 5)

It is time for us to recapture our own Lutheran heritage with respect to our Church's worship practices. So that the world will know the Father has sent the Son, let us be one just as the Son is one with the Father. Let the world show itself to be divided, but let the Church show the unity of God in her worship.

If you have a desire to know about the work of the ACELC, then we invite you to [visit our website](#), read the [documents, teaching materials and studies](#) which are posted there, and consider [joining us in this work](#) which, by the mercies of Almighty God, we have undertaken.

Wishing You Every Blessing In Christ,
[ACELC Board of Directors](#)

NEWS FROM BOARD OF EDUCATION

We are beginning to host several fundraisers in order to provide money to send/assist kids to go to Higher Things Retreats & Conferences; District Events; and Local Religious activities. The **first** of these are the 2013 CALENDARS which have arrived and were handed out to students at the Oct. Youth Night. We are encouraging each student to sell at least ten at \$6 each. We make \$3 on each calendar sold. Our **second** big push will be KWIK TRIP GIFT CARDS. They will go on sale the first 3 weeks in Dec., as gift-giving season is here. Then we will make it an on-going project offering sales each 3rd week of the month. Several denominations will be available on the gift cards. (This is an easy way to help the youth, without being an extra expense in your budget...as we all need gas, bread, milk, eggs, butter.) Another on-going way to assist would be to bring your empty beverage cans along to church with you when you come: A generous member has come forward. He is collecting the cans, RE-CYCLING them and giving the funds to the youth group savings account. Just place your cans in the 30 gallon green bucket in the church garage. This year our Stewardship Board has dedicated the money raised from the YOUNKERS COMMUNITY DAY EVENT to be received by the Youth Group. Please, as you can, support this effort. Sell Books, Purchase Books, Shop November 9th & 10th at Younkens.

CONFIRMATION CLASSES have been meeting each Wednesday after school. Pastor has two seventh grade girls: Ericka Houff and Krystal Paulson, two eighth grade boys: Eric Benson and Blayde Bowe in his class. Carol Gale has four

sixth grade students attending: Alyssa Potts, Jack Welke, Sam Krarup, and Jordan Blake. Please keep these students in your prayers, asking that the Holy Spirit strengthen their faith and guide their understanding. Each month on the first Wednesday we will be meeting for fellowship activities, at 5:45 pm to 7pm. We encourage the Sr. High teens to join us. We are also hoping to plan and attend events both locally and with other churches in the district, perhaps at Camp Luther....more details to come.

SUNDAY SCHOOL is doing nicely. We are averaging 12 to 15 students each week. We have three class levels. Pre-school thru Kindergarten, (Carol Gale); 1st thru 3rd grade, (Brienne Stark); and 4th thru 6th grade, (Lynn Admundson). Several people have stepped forward to serve as substitute teachers when needed. Thank you! We have also had many members supplying snacks and juice again...Thanks, the kids do appreciate the goodies. A reminder that we do have "Singing the Faith" CD's available to purchase. They can be yours for a donation of \$5 to \$8. They will help you to teach your little ones the words of the Catechism, thru song. We are working on the words of the Sacrament of Baptism this season. Children who are using the CD's have an easy time learning these truths. Each month on the 3rd Sunday, our Sunday school students will be providing special music during the Worship Service. Please bring the youth just a bit early on those weeks, so that we can get organized before entering the sanctuary. **PARENTS will it work to hold our annual Children's Christmas Worship Service on Sunday, Dec. 23rd or would Wed. Dec. 19th be a better date?** Tell your child's teacher>**NOW**. Practice will begin: Sun. Nov. 25th.

We will run the Sunday school hour until 11:30 each week until Christmas. Opening Devotions will contain the weekly lesson/ break for restrooms and snack/practice for the Service.



HIGHER THINGS YOUTH CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

All 8-12th graders are invited to attend our summer trip to West Lafayette, IN at *Purdue University* July 9-12, 2013. If you are interested in attending, please sign-up and turn in a \$100 deposit made out to Zion to our secretary, Tricia. **The deadline to sign-up is November 18th!**

YOUNKERS COMMUNITY DAY FUNDRAISER

We will once again be participating in the Younkens Community Day Fundraiser by selling Community Day booklets. The Community Day event will be held on November 9th & 10th. Each booklet includes a \$10 off coupon that can be used on an item priced at \$10 or more, a value worth double the \$5 price of the booklet! For every booklet we sell, we keep the entire \$5 purchase price. The coupons in the booklet can be used at any Bon-Ton, Boston Store, Carson's, Herberger's, or Younkens store or online for purchases of regular, sale price and clearance items. The timing couldn't be better to get a jump on your holiday shopping! If you would like to purchase a booklet, please see Kathy Michels. If you would like to help sell booklets at Younkens (each Saturday from noon until 2:00pm) please contact Kathy Michels after church or call 715-577-2941. The proceeds from this fundraiser will be used for the youth group.

ZION'S WOMEN'S SOCIETY NEWS

The Women's Society met on Thursday, October 11th, 2012. Twelve members and two guests were present. Rosa Blake was hostess and served delicious assorted cakes. It was a very enjoyable afternoon. Our next meeting will be at church on Thursday, November 8th, at 1:00 p.m. Johann Ehlers will be the hostess. Remember ladies, guests are always welcome to join us!

ADVENT

Advent begins Sunday, Dec. 2nd. "Advent" simply means "coming." During this penitential season we focus on the 3 "comings" of Jesus for us sinners: 1. His Advent at Christmas, or incarnation. 2. His coming in Word and Sacraments. 3. His coming on the Last Day to judge the living and the dead. In addition to Sunday worship, we will also have midweek Wednesday services at 6:30 p.m. During Advent and Lent the church historically has focused on studying the catechism. Therefore, our Wednesday sermons will be drawn from Luther's Small Catechism.

LWML NEWS: for those in the pews

On Tues. Oct. 16 we had our quarterly meeting at 7pm. We opened with a bible study from the Fall LWML Quarterly entitled: "Tell me the Story". Carol Gale reported having taken the 23 School Kits to the Lutheran World Relief truck in Eau Claire on Oct. 13. We are also sending \$46 to assist in shipping costs. The surveys, which had looked for answers to the most convenient time to hold meetings to be able to accommodate as many woman from the congregation as possible lead us to believe that remaining as we traditionally have held them is the best answer at this time. So we will continue with quarterly meetings to be held the *Third Tuesday @ 7pm to 9pm in Jan., April, July, and Oct.* We will hold both Bible Study and the Business meeting at that time. The survey also indicated that several ladies are interested in doing "projects" and that these might work well on Sat. afternoons. We decided to hold a Baby Shower for the Stark family. It will be at 2pm on Sun. Nov. 11 in the "Fireside Room". This event is being hosted by the ladies of Zion. Any member is invited to attend.

WANTED: Woman between the ages of 20 and 35 who would like to learn more about the LWML organization & would be able to take an all-expense paid trip to Pittsburgh in June 2013; and would be willing to give a report on what she learned to those of us back here. We are searching for a YOUNG WOMAN REP from our North-Wisconsin District to participate at the National LWML Convention.

At our January meeting we will be collecting and sending money to both of the seminaries in support of new pastors. We will also be holding elections for the Christian Growth Leader and the Vice-president. READ your quarterly MISSION TIDINGS, which you will find in your cubbies. I noticed an interesting article on Plastic Sleeping Mats that could be a project which Zion could work on to help the growing number of homeless in our county. Something both the youth and the adults could work on together... making a difference with no expense. At the Zone Fall Rally on Sat. Oct. 13 we were reminded to **SAVE ALL Postage STAMPS!** Bring them to church and we will get them turned for money. LWML uses this money to increase our MITES & paying mission grants through out the district and the world. Other ways that Zion gains money for missions are by turning in *Gordy's shopping receipts*. Just bring your slips in and put them in the drawer at the back entrance of our church. We can redeem them... last month we got a check for

\$171. Thanks to those who remember to bring those receipts and to Phyllis Pangborn for doing the paper work. The money enables us to help the less fortunate. Carol Gale, Pres. Zion's LWML