

241. Who is to be Baptized?

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. *Matt.* 28, 19.

When our Lord instituted Holy Baptism, He said: "Go ye and teach all *nations*, baptizing them." Nations are made up of men, women, and children. These are to be baptized, and these only — all nations, that is, all human beings, young and old. It is a sacrilegious practise of the Roman Catholic Church to baptize bells. That human beings are to be baptized is generally conceded; for the command of the Lord, "Baptize all nations," is clear. The question, however, is, Should all men be baptized, without distinction? The answer must be, No. We must distinguish between children and adults. Those who can be instructed are to be baptized after they have previously been instructed in the principal doctrines of the Christian religion; but little children should be baptized when brought to Baptism by those who have authority over them. Little children are baptized and thus regenerated; adults we first instruct, and when they profess to believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior, we baptize them in accordance with the command of our Lord: "Teach all nations, baptizing them," and: "Preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

Hence our practise is founded on the command and promise of Christ. The charge is: "Teach all nations, baptize them." The text does not say: First baptize, then teach. Christ says both should be done, each at the proper time. Those people who, on that first Pentecost Day, heard Peter preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ were first taught by him, and after they had "gladly received the Word, they were baptized." Lydia, at Philippi, was first instructed and then baptized; the keeper of the prison at the same city likewise. So this has always been the practise of the Church with regard to adults. Thus the command of the Master was understood and carried out by His disciples. Baptism, thus administered, is truly a means of grace, a gracious water of life. To such adults, Baptism is a seal of their covenant relation with God and greatly strengthens their faith.

Prayer.

Merciful God and Father, we thank Thee that by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism Thou hast regenerated us, who were conceived and born in sin, and hast received us as Thy children and heirs of eternal salvation; and we beseech Thee, graciously continue the good work which Thou hast begun in us that in true faith and with a holy life we may serve Thee and finally obtain the promised eternal inheritance. Amen.

Come, ye sinners, one and all,
Come, ye all have invitation;
Come, obey His gracious call,
Come and take His free salvation!
Firmly in these words believe:
"Jesus sinners doth receive."

This devotion is one of 318 taken from *Daily Bread* by F. E. Pasche, published by CPH in 1926, but now in the public domain. They have been copied and reformatted by Rev. Bruce G. Ley and made available for distribution by pastors and missionaries.

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