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Our Formula for Infant Baptism.

It is a well-known fact that the oldest liturgies and forms for occasional acts cannot be traced back beyond the beginning of the second century. If there were written forms in use at that time, they have either disappeared entirely or must be constructed from the oldest extant liturgies together with the accounts of the Apostolic Fathers, the early apologists, and the Greek and Latin Fathers before Nicaea. Another source of information is found in the *Apostolic Constitutions*, which are usually offered with the so-called *Apostolic Canons*, although in this case it seems quite evident that we are dealing with a codification of church formulas and rites which are the result of a gradual accretion, so that the determination of the nucleus or earliest form of a service or rite is not an easy matter.

In the case of the rite of Holy Baptism the study of the question is complicated by the fact that the rite of confirmation and that of Baptism ordinarily came together, since this was the ordinary form of admission to membership in the Christian Church. We have good reasons, of course, for assuming that the baptism of infants was not the exception, even in the early Church, for children who were born of Christian parents. We have statements from Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.*, Lib. II), from Origen (*In Ep. ad Rom.*), and from the Council of Carthage of 253 (*Ep. ad Fidum*), which clearly declare that Baptism was administered even to infants. But we have no account of the actual form of such baptism. The *Didache* merely states: Concerning Baptism, baptize thus: Having first rehearsed all these things, 'baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,' in running water; but if thou hast no running water, baptize in other water; and if thou canst not in cold, then in warm. But if thou hast neither, pour water three times on the head 'in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit.'" (Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 319 f.) The account of Justin Martyr also describes a very simple rite: "Then they are brought to a place where there is water, and [they] are regenerated in the same manner as we also were regenerated. For in the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe and of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the Holy Ghost they can receive Baptism with water." (*First Apology*, chap. 61.) In either case the author seems to refer to the baptism of adults, though this conclusion is not absolutely required. Two other witnesses of the ante-Nicene period may be mentioned, namely, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, which give the following parts of the baptismal formula: Renunciation, Creed, Anointing, Benediction of Water, Act of Baptism, Imposition of Hands, Lord's Prayer, Prayer of Thanksgiving; and Tertullian, who names the following ceremonies of Baptism: Invocation of the Holy Ghost and Benediction of Water, Renunciation, Immersion (three-

fold), Creed, Anointing, Imposition of Hands. It seems quite clear that at that time the formula of Baptism was still in a state of flux.

The last two witnesses also seem to have the *baptismus adultorum* in mind. The formula in this case was influenced by the various rites employed in the admission of adult candidates, or catechumens, to the Christian congregation. While the candidates for membership attended the classes for instruction, they passed through a number of stages in the course of which they were obliged to submit to various *scrutinia*, among which we find the *impositio manuum*, the *oratio super electos*, the *gustus salis*, the Ephphatha ceremony, the *abrenuntiatio*, and finally the *symbolum*, or the confession of the Creed. The formula of Baptism finally included: *Benedictio Fontis, Consecratio Fontis, Signum Crucis, Demissio Cerei in Aquam, Infusio de Chrismate, Symbolum, Immersio, Signatio in Cerebro de Chrismate, Datio Spiritus Septiformis, Signatio in Fronte*. It was not long before the ceremonies of the catechumenate were combined with those of Baptism, the first group, including the exorcism, taking place *ad ianuas ecclesiae*, or in the atrium, and the second group, with Baptism proper, inside the church.

Now, it is a significant fact, well in keeping with the conservative nature of liturgies, that, when the *baptismus parvulorum* became the rule rather than the exception, the rite, as intended chiefly for adults, was employed for children with only very slight adjustments, chiefly such as pertained to the Scripture-passages quoted. Generally speaking, in the *Ordo ad Baptizandum Pueros* the following parts of the formula were used at the doors of the church: Inquiry after Name, Small, or Minor, Exorcism, Sign of Cross and Prayer, Giving of Salt and the *Pax* with Prayer, Large Exorcism, the Lessons, *Pater noster* with *Ave Maria* and the Apostolic Creed, Ephphatha Ceremony, Entrance into Church; and the remaining ceremonies in the church, at the font: Renunciation, Creed, Anointing, Admonition to Sponsors, Baptism itself, Prayer of Thanksgiving, Clothing in Chrisom, or White Robe. Other ceremonies were found in a few localities, such as placing a lighted taper into the hands of the baptized child.

When Luther began his reformatory labors, also in the field of liturgies, he followed his customary conservative course. His *Taufbuechlein, verdeutscht*, of 1523 was practically a translation of the Liturgy of Baptism then in use in Wittenberg. After further efforts along the same lines he finally furnished a formula in German, which discarded all the ceremonies that in any way savored of superstition. This order included: Small Exorcism, Sign of the Cross with Prayer for Mercy and "Flood" Prayer, Large Exorcism, Lesson from Mark, Lord's Prayer, Ingression (to baptismal font), Renunciation and Creed, Act of Baptism, Putting on of Chrisom, Final Prayer.

Most of the Lutheran church orders adopted Luther's form of

1526. Its influence was immeasurable. The numerous independent *Kirchenordnungen* of the sixteenth century, almost without exception and with but the slightest changes, give it as their form for the administration of the Sacrament. The same is true of practically every agenda that makes any claim to Lutheranism. Even in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the disposition was just as strong to cling to the form which Luther had adapted from an order depending upon the most ancient sources. The Dresden Liturgical Convention of 1854, composed of representatives from Bavaria, Hanover, Wurttemberg, and both Mecklenburgs, unanimously adopted Luther's form. Even the Prussian Union Church in 1894 adopted this as its first form. In only one major point do we find a divergence, namely, concerning the questions addressed to the sponsors. Some few church orders omitted these questions entirely, the formula addressing itself directly to the child, while in a number of cases there was some uncertainty as to whether the questions as used ought to be addressed to the sponsors or to the child. Minor differences pertain to the motivation included in the opening paragraphs of the formula.

It is this last point which has caused some discussion during recent years, the contention being that our present formula of Baptism presents too much evidence of having originally been used for adults and that for this reason the motivation and argumentation is in part inadequate. Accordingly a tendency is noticeable which inclines not only toward an abbreviation of the baptismal formula as given in our *Agenda*, but also toward other alterations in the text. If this is done without the proper liturgical information, the result may be a loss in uniformity in the form of Baptism that may eventually cause an even greater *skandalon* than the practise of disfiguring our Common Service by unwarranted additions, abbreviations, and transpositions. And yet our Synod in its constitution states as one of its objects: "The endeavor to bring about the largest possible uniformity in church practise, church customs, and, in general, in congregational affairs."

On the other hand, there is no denying the fact that justified, constructive criticism ought to be given a hearing; for there is no justification for stubbornly adhering to a traditional formula just because it is ancient and contains no outright false statements. Hence we ask, What must a formula, such as that used for the Sacrament of Baptism for children, include in order to be liturgically acceptable? The following points may be considered requisites for a complete formula: Motivation, or reasons, for administering the Sacrament, specific doctrinal basis for Baptism in general and for infant baptism in particular, the act itself in full conformity with the words of Christ's institution, acceptance of the baptized infant into the Church.

The first point is the *motivation*, the reference to the Word of

God and the specific command and promise of Christ as connected with Holy Baptism. This is a very prominent feature in the introductory section of all Lutheran formulas. The second point is the *specific doctrinal basis*, particularly for infant baptism. In this respect Luther's liturgies are models, for they make the most emphatic distinction between sin and grace, between the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of the Savior. It will require only a sentence or two to make the application of these truths to infants as being likewise included in the blessings of the Sacrament. The third point is essential from the standpoint of doctrine and liturgies both, since without the word of God, the words of Christ's institution, the water is simple water and no Baptism, whereas with the word of God it is a Baptism. And the fourth point is implied, if not actually stated, in the final prayer of the formula, in which the acceptance of the newly baptized child into the congregation, and therewith into the Church, is directly asserted.

In keeping with these liturgical principles and with a proper observance of liturgical conservatism it may be possible to retain the ancient formula with just a few minor changes. With such minor alterations the formula for infant baptism would present the following appearance:—

Part I.

(At the lowest chancel step [instead of *ad ianuas*].)

Dearly Beloved: [We learn from the Word of God that all men since the fall of Adam are conceived and born in sin and so are under the wrath of God and therefore would be lost forever unless delivered from death and damnation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

This present child also is by nature sinful and under the wrath of God. But the Father of all grace and mercy hath promised and sent His Son Jesus Christ, who hath borne the sins of the whole world and therefore redeemed and saved little children, no less than others, from sin, death, and everlasting condemnation. He also commanded that little children should be brought to Him and graciously received and blessed them.

Wherefore I beseech you, for the love which you bear to Christ, to intercede for *this child*, to bring *him* to the Lord Jesus, and to ask for *him* the forgiveness of sins and the grace and salvation of Christ's kingdom, nowise doubting that our dear Lord favorably regardeth such work of love and certainly heareth our prayers.

And] Forasmuch as our Lord hath commanded Baptism, saying to His disciples in the last chapter of Matthew: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," and also hath given promise in the last chapter of Mark: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"; forasmuch, also, as the holy apostles of the Lord have written: "The promise is unto you and to your children" and again: "Baptism doth also now save us": it is meet and right that, in obedience to His command and institution and trusting in His promise, you should bring *this child* to be baptized in His name.

(Then the Minister may make the sign of the cross on the child's forehead and on the breast, saying: —)

Receive the sign of the holy cross both upon thy forehead † and upon thy breast †, in token that thou hast been redeemed by Christ the Crucified.

Let us pray (one or more of the following prayers may be used):

1.

Almighty and eternal God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we pray Thee, bestow upon *this child*, here presented for Holy Baptism, Thine everlasting grace by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Receive *him*, O Lord, according to Thy Word and promise and grant that *he* may obtain the everlasting blessing of this heavenly washing and come to the kingdom which Thou hast promised; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

2.

Lord, holy Father, almighty, eternal God, from whom cometh down every good gift and every perfect gift with the light of Thy truth, we pray Thy merciful goodness that Thou wouldest bestow Thy blessing upon *this child*, here presented for Holy Baptism, that *he* may be enlightened with the light of Thy knowledge unto eternal salvation. Purify and sanctify *him*, give *him* the right understanding, that *he* may be made worthy of receiving the grace of Thy Baptism and that *he* may have the firm hope of final redemption through faith in Thy promises; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

3.

Almighty and everlasting God, who according to Thy righteous judgment didst destroy the unbelieving world by the Flood and according to Thy great mercy didst save faithful Noah and his family; who didst drown obdurate Pharaoh with all his host in the Red Sea and didst safely lead Thy people Israel through the midst thereof, prefiguring thereby this washing of Thy Holy Baptism; and who by the baptism of Thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, didst sanctify and ordain Jordan and all waters for a saving flood and an abundant washing away of sin: we beseech Thee of Thine infinite mercy to look with favor upon *this child* and to bless *him* by Thy Spirit with true faith that by this salutary flood there may be drowned and destroyed in *him* all that *he* hath inherited from Adam (and *himself* added thereto) and that, being separated from the number of unbelieving, *he* may be securely kept in the holy ark of the Christian Church and ever serve Thy name with fervent spirit and joyful hope, to the end that, together with all believers, *he* may be accounted worthy to attain to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

(The Lesson.)

Hear the holy Gospel of St. Mark, which saith: "And they brought young children to Jesus that He should touch them; and His disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And He took them

up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them." (Mark 10, 13—16.)

In order that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost, may graciously receive *this present child*, take *him* up in His arms, put His blessed hands upon *him*, and endow *him* with the Holy Ghost, true faith, and a pious life, we shall now present *this child* to Him in devotion and faith by the prayer which He Himself taught His disciples.

(Then the Minister, laying his right hand upon the head of the child,—or of the several children in order,—shall say, and the sponsors and all those present may say with him:—)

Our Father who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Lord preserve thy coming in and thy going out from this time forth and even forevermore. † Amen.

* * *

(Admonition to the Sponsors.)*

Dear Christian Friends: It is expected of you as sponsors, in acting for *the child* here presented for Holy Baptism, while confessing in this sacred act the faith of the Christian Church in the Triune God, in whose name *the child* is to be baptized, to bear witness publicly in *the child's* stead that by Holy Baptism as a means of grace *he* obtains and possesses the saving faith in the one true God and renounces the devil and his wicked works. Moreover, after *this child* has been baptized, you should at all times remember *him* in your prayers, put *him* in mind of *his* baptism, and, as much as in you lies, lend your counsel and aid (especially if *he* should lose *his* parents) that *he* may be brought up in the true knowledge and fear of God, according to the teachings of the Lutheran Church, and faithfully keep the baptismal covenant unto the end. Do you intend gladly and willingly to do so?

Answer: Yes.

May God enable you both to will and to do this charitable work and with His grace fulfil what we are unable to do! Amen.

Part II.

(At the font.)

Dear Christian Friends and Sponsors: Since you, in this sacred act, are representing *the child* here presented for Holy Baptism, I ask you to answer, in the name and in the stead of *this child*, the questions which I shall now address to *him*, to signify thereby what God in and through Baptism works in *him*.

(Then shall the Minister say:—)

N., Dost thou renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways?

Answer: I do.

* This admonition may be read either here, at the end of the first part of the formula, or after the introductory paragraphs, or, with slight changes in wording, at the close of the entire act.

Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth?

Answer: I do.

Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost; Born of the Virgin Mary; Suffered unto Pontius Pilate; Was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven; And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead?

Answer: I do.

Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost; The holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; The forgiveness of sins; The resurrection of the body; And the life everlasting?

Answer: I do.

Wilt thou be baptized into this Christian faith?

Answer: I will.

(Then shall the Minister apply water three times upon the head of the child—or each child in order—as he names each person of the Trinity:—)

N., I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. † Amen.

(Then the Minister, still at the font, shall lay his right hand upon the head of the child—or of each child in order—and shall say:—)

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath begotten thee again of water and the Spirit and hath forgiven thee all thy sins, strengthen thee with His grace unto life everlasting. Amen.

Peace be with thee. † Amen.

(While the sponsors with the child remain at the font, but within the chancel, the Minister shall step to the altar for the final prayer.)

Let us pray:—

Almighty and most merciful God and Father, we thank and praise Thee that Thou dost graciously preserve and extend Thy Church and hast granted to *this child* the new birth in Holy Baptism and made *him a member* of Thy dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and *an heir* of Thy heavenly kingdom. We humbly beseech Thee that, as *he* hath now become *Thy* child, Thou wouldst keep *him* in *his* baptismal grace, that, according to all Thy good pleasure, *he* may be faithfully brought up to lead a godly life to the praise and honor of Thy holy name and finally, with all Thy saints, obtain the promised inheritance in heaven; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

* * *

A final paragraph concerning the use and the significance of the formula of Baptism may not be superfluous. For one thing, the tendency to abbreviate the formula should not reach the stage where essential paragraphs pertaining to motivation or doctrine are omitted. If sponsors are at all available, the admonition to the sponsors ought to be included, otherwise this significant feature of Lutheran baptism may soon become an empty form. It should also be noted that the Apostles' Creed as used in the formula is not a prayer, but a confession of the child and hence should be spoken in the form of questions.

Since we have retained the essential features of the ancient baptism, the symbolism of the sacramental rite is best set forth if the division indicated above is observed. Part I, originally performed at the doors of the church to signify that the candidate desired admission into the congregation, ought to take place at the foot of the chancel steps. After the invitation the child is taken to the font, where Part II of the formula is used, whereby admission to the congregation (and to the Church) is accomplished. And the final prayer at the altar signifies that the child has now been accepted into membership in the Christian Church, on which account the special blessing of the Lord is invoked upon the new member of the body of Christ.

P. E. KRETZMANN.

Divorce and Malicious Desertion.

III. Does Divorce on the Ground of Adultery Grant Permission for Remarriage?

The Church of Rome vehemently denies that adultery or fornication severs the marriage bond and grants permission for remarriage. The Council of Trent, in Session XXIV, "On the Sacrament of Matrimony," Canons VII and VIII, has declared as follows: "If any one saith that the Church has erred in that she hath taught, and doth teach, in accordance with the evangelical and apostolical doctrine, that the bond of matrimony cannot be dissolved on account of the adultery of one of the married parties and that both or even the innocent one who gave not occasion to the adultery cannot contract another marriage during the lifetime of the other and that he is guilty of adultery who, having put away the adulteress, shall take another wife, as also she who, having put away the adulterer, shall take another husband, — let him be anathema.

"If any saith that the Church errs in that she declares that for many causes a separation may take place between husband and wife in regard of bed or in regard of cohabitation for a determinate or for an indeterminate period, let him be anathema." (Translation by Waterworth, p. 193.)

The Church of England has never authoritatively sanctioned any other separation than that from bed and board, and this with an express prohibition of remarriage, Canon 107. Keil, on Matt. 5, 32, says: "By *πορνεία* the bond of marriage, indissoluble according to divine ordinance, is severed, but the marriage is not dissolved before God, so that the divorced spouses might enter into other marriages without transgressing the divine ordinance. Chapter 19, 6 the Redeemer expressly declares: 'What God hath joined together let not man put asunder.' Only death can sever the marriage tie. During