Dear Reader,

I am new to producing reading sermons. So, if you have any suggestions as to how I might improve my format or what I include – please email me at cdanielwilson@gmail.com. **I will warn you, that I do not use short sentences**. I will endeavor to work on this over time, but I don’t naturally write that way. However, you can easily break most of my longer sentences into 2 or 3 smaller ones where I have “…” or “–“ or commas. If you do the work on making it into smaller sentences – feel free to email it to me, and I am happy to share your work with others. I do have some of these available which people have sent me. I will eventually make them available as part of the normal manuscripts.

I have left my sermon manuscript formatted the way I normally write and read my sermons. They are colourful and written in conversational English. If you are a grammar nazi – then you will be frustrated with my punctuation and phrasing. However, once you read it out loud, you will normally be able to tell what I meant to say. SERIOUSLY, READ IT OUTLOUD. You will also see that I use a good bit of bold, italics, underlining and different colours to signal what are the most important things to say, and also to make it easier for my eye to pick up my place in the middle of paragraphs. I would recommend that you keep as many of those things as possible to help you keep your place. However, you will probably want to increase the spacing between lines. I highly encourage you to commit as much of the introduction or children’s illustrations to memory as you can, so that these can be delivered to the congregation with maximum eye contact.

**Where possible, I highly recommend that you listen to the sermon as I preached it at either the Nelson website or the website of North Shore.** I recommend that because that will also help hear the places where I added or skipped over material in the manuscript, and the places where I clarified my meaning. I have edited bits and pieces which I thought most important, but I have not sought to include all the additional material that comes to me while in the pulpit. I would practically have to use a transcription service for that. However, I hope and pray that this sermon will be a blessing to you and to your congregation. To God be the Glory!

Blessings in our Lord, Pastor Daniel Wilson

**My Suggestions for the Order of Service**

Song before the Service: **Song #144**

This service of Worship is particularly for those who Affirm that: ***OUR Help is in ...*** And God’s elders/pastors have always greeted God’s people in His name, ***saying*:** Grace & Peace to you from God-Father. God-Son & the Holy Sp. ***Amen.***

*Let us now Worship our God as we sing a* **\* Song of Praise: Song #147 vs.1-4, 6 “O Sing ye Hallelujah”**

***Call to Confession:*** God gave Israel His law in Deuteronomy 5 as a description of how to serve the Lord, and in Chapter 6, he explains how to serve the Lord as a household – ***So, Let’s read together the first 9 verses of Deut.6 –***

***HERE God describes the way His Word and Law should be the cornerstone of the Christian home*** *– everything in life ought to revolve around God/His Word. We must train ourselves and our children to see God and His purposes around every corner and in every activity…* ***IS THAT*****True of you?** *Even at our best, we fail to serve God rightly… But God is faithful, even when we fail.* **And He provides hope & salvation by calling us to humble ourselves in repentance and confession and He promises to accept us in Christ!**

So, let’s draw near to God in a ***Prayer of Confession:*** *O Lord God! You reign forever! We confess that we have sinned against you, and that we continue to sin against you every day! We do not focus our lives and homes on you as we should, and yet we delight in your great mercy and grace…Please forgive us of our sin! Forgive us for Jesus’ sake… for We come to you trusting that He died to pay the price of OUR Sin! Renew us, and sanctify us by your Spirit we pray.* ***In J’s name. Amen.***

**As surely as you sought God in that prayer of confession, thru faith in Jesus Christ, You are Forgiven by His Mercy!** God assures us of that fact in Isaiah 1:18 **[READ] *By faith in Jesus Christ we are forgiven & washed clean by the blood of Christ thru the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts!***

***Let us now rejoice*** *in God’s grace and ask God for His help as we remain seated and sing:*

**Hymn # #384 “O God, Great Father…** *unto you our children we bring***”**

***We come now to our time of congregation prayer: Prayer***

WE turn now to our first Scripture reading: **Hebrews 10:1-25**

**Let’s now cont. To worship as we bring to the Lord His Tithes and our Freewill offerings:** ***As the Deacons come ...***

*Let us continue to worship as we sing*: **# #385 “Our Children Lord in faith and prayer”**

Scripture Reading/Text: **Hebrews 12:4-11** **Sermon Title: “Baptism Blessings”**

**\* Song of Response: #391 “The Church’s one foundation”**

***Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God the Father, and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be and abide with you all forever more. Amen***

***Doxology*: Psalm #117**

# Morning Sermon: “Baptism Blessings” Heidelberg #32 – Sacraments #6

Reading: Hebrews 10:1-25 EXPLAIN: I won’t be preaching this text as much as applying the Biblical principles which we have been studying for over a month in the evening services. This is just another related text. **Hebrews 12:4-11**

**Introduction:** Children, have you ever had a toy given to you that was so neat and had so many parts that you didn’t know how to play with it? I remember when I was little, I was given a remote controlled car. But before I could play with it, my dad had to explain how to drive it, what I was allowed to do with it, where it could go etc… and I had to understand the toy before I could play with it… but once I understood everything it could do, and all the rules, then it was really fun to play with! And I could drive it around the yard and up and down the driveway, it was great!

I know that we have covered a lot of ground in this series on the sacrament of Baptism… and I know that some of you might be wondering, ***why do we need to go into so much detail***. Well, Our series on the Sacrament of baptism is kinda like that remote-controlled car. We have begun with a lot of facts and rules and instruction from God’s Word regarding baptism***, but now that we have built an understanding of what Baptism is and what it represents – now the fun begins.*** Now, we can take all those principles and ideas which we have been proving from God’s Word and we can see how practical and beneficial Baptism is to our daily Christian life. Consider for a moment what a Sacrament is… Our catechism states it well:

 *Sacraments are holy signs and seals for us to see. They were instituted by God so that by our use of them he might make us understand more clearly the promise of the Gospel, and might put His seal on that promise.*

 *And this is God’s gospel promise: to forgive our sins and give us eternal life by grace alone because of Christ’s one sacrifice finished on the cross.*

So, when we come to the sacraments, we are applying the Gospel promises.

This morning, we will be concluding our work on Baptism by asking the question: ***How do I apply the Gospel promises sealed by the Sacrament of Baptism?***

*We will answer that question by answering 3 smaller questions:*

1. **What are the Gospel Promises sealed by Baptism?**
2. **How do we apply the Promises to Ourselves/Adults?**
3. **How do we apply the Promises to Covenant Children?**

*We begin in our first point by asking:*

# What are the Gospel Promises sealed by Baptism?

**These Promises or Benefits of Baptism are only complete in the life of an adult believer.** That is because covenant baptism of infants or immature young people flow from the faith and obedience of the parents. They do not receive the full benefits of their baptism until they receive the Promised REALITY which was signified in their baptism: ***Namely:*** *The Baptism of the Holy Spirit in their heart resulting in fellowship with the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.* **And flowing from that fellowship with God, each member of the Trinity makes certain promises through this sacrament – and we were reminded of these in the Form for Jisu’s baptism last Sunday:**

1. In Baptism, God the Father witnesses to us that He makes an eternal covenant of grace with us and adopts us as His children and heirs. This flows from the continuation of the Promises God made to Abraham from Genesis 17 through Acts 2, all the way to us today.
2. God the Son assures us that He cleanses us with His blood and incorporates us into His body whereby we become partakers of His death and resurrection. Christ, our High Priest sprinkles the blood of the covenant upon our hearts through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, making us clean from all our impurities and idolatry (like we saw in Ezekiel 36). Nothing was ever made pure/holy w/o sprinkling or pouring blood and or water.
3. God the Holy Spirit assures us that He lives in us and sanctifies us to be members of Christ. ***As surely as*** you have put your faith in Christ and have been Baptized into the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, ***so surely does the Spirit assure you that He was the one who enabled you to believe, and He is the one who is working to make you more holy day by day.***

*Now if those are the Gospel Promises/benefits in brief, where is the practical bit?:*

# How do we apply the Promises to Ourselves?

* 1. **Take the example of a believer baptised as an adult:**

When someone comes to faith in Christ from a non-Christian background, then they receive the reality of Spirit Baptism **before** they are a part of the church. And so they when they become members of the church they profess their faith, and they are baptized … But that baptism is NOT the same as their profession of faith. Sometimes that confuses people … The public profession of faith before men is our acknowledgement that **we believe** in Christ. **But your Baptism is the church applying God’s sign and seal to that believer recognizing NOT what the believer is doing, but WHAT God has already done!** Do you see the difference? Baptism is an outward sign done to you, NOT BY You… ***This is what is so amazing about adult baptism,*** it is an acknowledgement that God has converted/saved a person who had no previous rights in the Kingdom of Christ! *An Enemy of God has been adopted into the family!*

**Apply:** If you were saved, and then baptized into the church, then you had the blessed privilege of experiencing the reality of the Holy Spirit Baptism in your heart before being recognized as a part of the church. ***(spiritual before sign)***

And now, when you struggle with assurance… If you begin to doubt whether you really are saved, or the devil whispers in your ear that you just aren’t good enough to be a Christian… You can apply the Gospel promises of your Baptism in a special way: **You can answer those doubting thoughts by remembering that you didn’t just go through a man-made ceremony –** *You received the reality of the Holy Spirit working in your heart, removing your heart of stone and replacing it with a heart of flesh…* You were welcomed as a child of God while you were still outside the church… **and then God DIDN’T leave you alone as a solo-Christian…** He incorporated you into ***His church***, **as a** member of the body of Christ, **as a** living stone in the true heavenly temple, *and He did this by giving you HIS SIGN and SEAL – Water Baptism!* IT is almost as if you were marked by the King of Kings as His property, No better than that, you were marked as HIS Child!! ***And so whether you “feel-it” emotionally right now or not - you belong to HIM!*** Satan has no hold on you… no claim to your thoughts or affections. With God for you, who can be against you? What can man do to you? For you have trusted in Christ and received His seal of approval!

Your baptism acts much like a seal of authenticity upon a famous painting. A Woman bought a cheap painting at a garage sale. She liked the colours and thought it might look nice in her trailer park home… However, on the back of the painting she found a seal and signature which looked real… and it turned out her $2 painting was a real Picasso worth nearly $2million!! *While it was treated like it was cheap and worthless, it bore the stamp of the artist which made it nearly invaluable!* **While you may feel cheap and worthless at times, if you have been baptized, then you bear the mark of the Almighty King of Kings – identifying you as His child.**

Your Baptism is a seal of assurance. It is God’s sign marking you as ALL Debts paid, even those that you are still incurring day by day! *What a wonderful treasure and gift your baptism is!*

**Now, what about those of you who were baptized as a young person or as an infant?** What is different about How you view *your* baptism? Well, that really falls as a sub-point under our Third point:

*We turn in our* ***third point*** *to our children:*

# How do we apply the Promises to our Children?

* 1. **While they are still little, there are certain ways to apply God’s promises:**

**1) You must take the step of faith/obedience and baptize your children** *(which is done quite naturally in our circles)*

We have studied the Word, and we have seen that as Paul taught, our children are Holy (THEY are **set apart**) *because of OUR faith!* And We have seen that *far from changing or excluding children from the covenant*, In Acts 2, Peter restated the covenant language, that the promise of the Holy Spirit/salvation was for us and our children and those who are afar off. ***We don’t just own those promises in a mental way, we must act in obedience to God’s age-old commands and actually apply the sign as the scriptures teach.*** To fail to do so is to reject the promises of God…

 You do this as an act of faith and obedience, not presumption. You don’t assume anything. You only trust and obey. And as you are faithful to God’s Covenant, He assures you that He will save your children according to His will and grace – as Peter said, the promise is for … **whomever the Lord will call.**

**2) You must raise your children in the fear and admonition of the Lord Jesus Christ**

Your baptized children have been marked by the King of Kings as members of His family. They are heirs to the Gospel promises *if they repent and believe….* And so you must teach them that God is their Father and King. His law is for them, and His law has put you in charge of them. So, you should passionately teach and train your children for the Lord! They are HIS children by Covenant – therefore, you must be good stewards. Your children must realize that you are in charge of them, because God put you in charge. They obey you because God said they had to in the 5th commandment! It is your Divine Right to rule your children!

And you can even tell them – “*when you were little you were baptized as a member of the church and as a child of God. This means that you MUST obey His law, and God commands you to honor and obey Mom and Dad*…”

In a sense you treat them as you treat a grown believer – giving them God’s command ***be perfect for I am perfect***… And we aren’t perfect – which means that every Christian is reminded EVERY Day that they still need Christ. ***However, we normally don’t require such perfection from adults, and so we get comfortable in the church*** (the OT prophets called this *being at ease in Zion* – which was a dangerous, possibly damnable position!). When we sit back and relax in our Christian walks, We are NOT trusting in Christ. If you raise your children like that, they will grow up and say – ***WHY do I need this?! Forget this, I will do what I want***… *You need to convince them from infancy that they are in desperate need of Christ –*

An integral part of this is through obeying God’s commands to punish and discipline your children. ***God has said in Proverbs:*** spare the rod, spoil the child, He that spares the rod, hates his son. This is why we read from Hebrews 12:***.Think about this: God says***: He who is without discipline (who isn’t punished) is ILLEGITIMATE, and not a son, But God disciplines every son He receives. You must train your children through discipline to understand BIBLICAL REALITY: **disobedience equals danger and pain**, *rejection of Christ equals* ***eternal*** *danger and pain*, **And as your children try and try to obey and fail again and again, you punish them and they will reach a point when they say – I can’t keep the law.** I can’t be perfect – **and that is when you have the perfect opportunity to teach them the Gospel!!** That Christ was perfect for them, that Christ was beaten/stricken and killed**,** in their place… and that by believing in Him, they can be saved. ***FAR too often, when children say “I can’t”* we as parents *condemn them further or give up – but that is when they need the Grace of God in Christ!***

**Why is this so important and What does it have to do with Baptism? Because in Baptism you have said that your children are heirs to the promise of salvation – that they are members of God’s covenant family.** You need to treat them and train them accordingly.

Yes, teach your children to obey – but don’t ONLY teach them to obey! Don’t make them little legalists. You must explain to your children practically and through your everyday discipline that THEY CAN’T BE PERFECT, **They can’t earn God’s favor…** *You know… children, you must obey Mom and Dad, but when you mess up – you need to trust that Jesus obeyed His parents in your place! And your Baptism is God’s assurance to you – that if you trust in Jesus, then God won’t look at your disobedience, but that He will cover your sin with the perfection of Jesus!*

We must speak to our children about their baptism – if only when we do a baptism, talk to your children about what you saw! Explain to them that Baptism is God’s assurance that God saves, and if they trust Him – He will save them – God will save them!

* 1. **So how do we view our infant baptism once we grow up and profess our faith?**

**Quite simply:** We see ourselves as completed members of God’s covenant! We have all the same assurances as the believer baptized as an adult. There is ABSOLUTELY NO reason for a person to be baptized again!

IN FACT, there are certain advantages to being baptized as an infant. *More than just being set apart as holy, and other than being trained in the Gospel our whole lives,* An adult professing member who was baptized as an infant, can see God’s hand in their salvation so powerfully.

THINK ABOUT IT: I was marked as a child of God before I responded in faith. Just as Paul teaches in Ephesians one, we were adopted in Christ before the foundation of the World *to be saved by faith!* **So, I know that my** *baptism as an infant* **pictured God’s plan**. He chose me, then made me. He marked me in Baptism, then saved me by faith!

Those baptized as infants can have a greater confidence that God chose us, put his mark upon us, preserved us and eventually drew us to Saving Faith! What a glorious picture of God’s saving power! And since God is the one who saved us… He is the one who deserves all the glory! AND that beautiful picture of God’s saving Grace ***becomes one of the greatest assurances in dark times, because before you believed – He had marked you as His own!***

 Which means that even before you know what He is doing in your life right now, you can KNOW that God is at work, to draw you to Himself! *Because you have faith in Jesus! So Trust Him!*

**AMEN. (Final assurance in His work, not yours!)**