



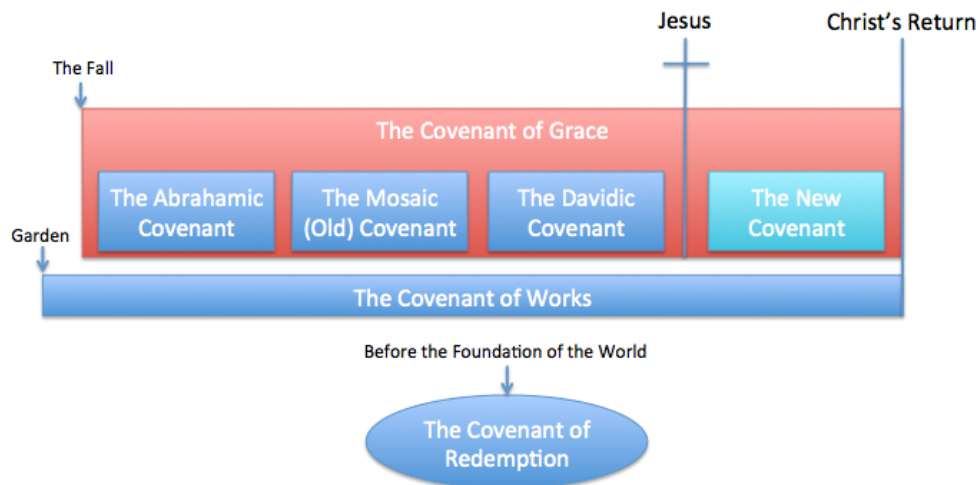
## Introduction

- Those who baptize infants are called paedobaptists.
- Those who believe baptism should follow saving faith are called credobaptists.

## Paedobaptism

“Same Substance – Different Administrations” – the covenant with Abraham is an actual administration or subset of the Covenant of Grace.

### Same Substance – Different Administrations



- An infant had no understanding of God or faith, but the male infant was marked as a part of the covenant community.
- Abraham received circumcision after he was justified so circumcision was a sign of his faith. Romans 4:1–12
- God commanded male children born after Abraham to be given this sign even before they had faith, and some who were circumcised, like Ishmael, never had faith.

## Genealogical Principle

- Because the covenant is also for the offspring of Abraham, a genealogical principle is established – Genesis 17:7
- It is wrong to say a mark of faith cannot be given before faith is present since that is what happened in the Old Testament.
- Should we mark our children as members of the covenant community with the hope that one day they will have saving faith? If so, since Christians do not circumcise for religious reasons, what is the appropriate mark?



- The New Testament parallel to circumcision is baptism. Colossians 2:11–12
- Just as circumcision did not save the child, baptism does not save the child. It simply marks him or her as part of the covenant community.
- Since the Abrahamic Covenant and the New Covenant are administrations of the same Covenant of Grace, you can have unregenerate members of the covenant community, that is, the church.

### Mixed Community

- None of the promises of the New Covenant are completely fulfilled.
- Jeremiah 31:34 will only be fully realized when Jesus returns at the end of the age.
- There is no reason to withhold baptism from the children of believers since the reality of a fully regenerate church will not be realized until Jesus returns.
- Since God does not prohibit infant baptism we should practice infant baptism.

### Credobaptism

- Why we disagree with paedobaptists is related directly to how we view the Covenant of Grace and how we view the relationship between the Old and New Testaments.

### Old/New Testament Continuity

- Paedobaptists tend to emphasize the continuity between the Testaments at the expense of discontinuity.
- Credobaptists hold to the continuity between the Old and New Testaments but believe that the Old Testament is always interpreted in light of the New Testament.
- Jeremiah 31:31–34
- Verse 34: They shall all know me.
- When you look at the visible church there is no way to know if someone is truly regenerate.
- If someone leaves the church, they never were a part of the church. 1 John 2:19; Romans 11:21
- The visible covenant community contains regenerate and unregenerate, but the true covenant community does not contain the unregenerate. 2 Timothy 2:16–19
- Galatians 6:15–16. What counts is a new creation, which is regeneration.
- Israel of God refers to the church
- No one enters the New Covenant apart from faith.
- Romans 11:19–20. Those who were just physical descendants of Abraham were broken off because of *unbelief*.
- Colossians 2:11–12. We are raised with him *through faith*.
- Circumcision in the Old Testament pointed to circumcision in Christ, not baptism. Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6
- The New Testament equivalent of physical circumcision is circumcision of the heart, which is regeneration. Ezekiel 36:26
- Children of faithful believers in the New Covenant do have advantages in that they are taught the Word of God and have fellowship with the church.



- 1 Corinthians 7:14. According to the paedobaptist, since children are made holy by a believing mother or father, they should be baptized. Why shouldn't the unbelieving spouse be baptized?

### Genealogical Principle

- There is a genealogical principle, and the genealogical principle holds in the New Covenant.
- This principle is realized only in Christ. 2 Corinthians 1:20. Matthew 12:46–50.
- We have been adopted as sons. Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; John 1:12–13
- Only those in Christ are children of Abraham. Galatians 3:27–29
- Those baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

### Regulative Principle

- Some paedobaptists argue that since God does not prohibit infant baptism then infant baptism is allowed.
  - Those in the Reformed camp typically hold closely to the Regulative Principle.
  - This is the normative principle of worship.
- Our disagreement ultimately comes down to hermeneutics, the principles of interpretation.
  - Credobaptists place more priority on the exegesis of the New Testament than on continuity with the Old Testament. Romans 6:4

### Conclusion

- The argument for credobaptism applies no matter how you understand the Covenant of Grace.
- The key distinction is how the Old Testament relates to the New Testament.
- The Presbyterian and Reformed understanding of the Covenant of Grace does not exclude interpreting the genealogical principle by prioritizing the teaching of the New Testament.
- Covenant Theology is not just a theological exercise.
- Covenants do not ultimately drive how we understand the Bible. The Bible ultimately drives how we understand the covenants.
- We embrace those who baptize infants as brothers and sisters in Christ.