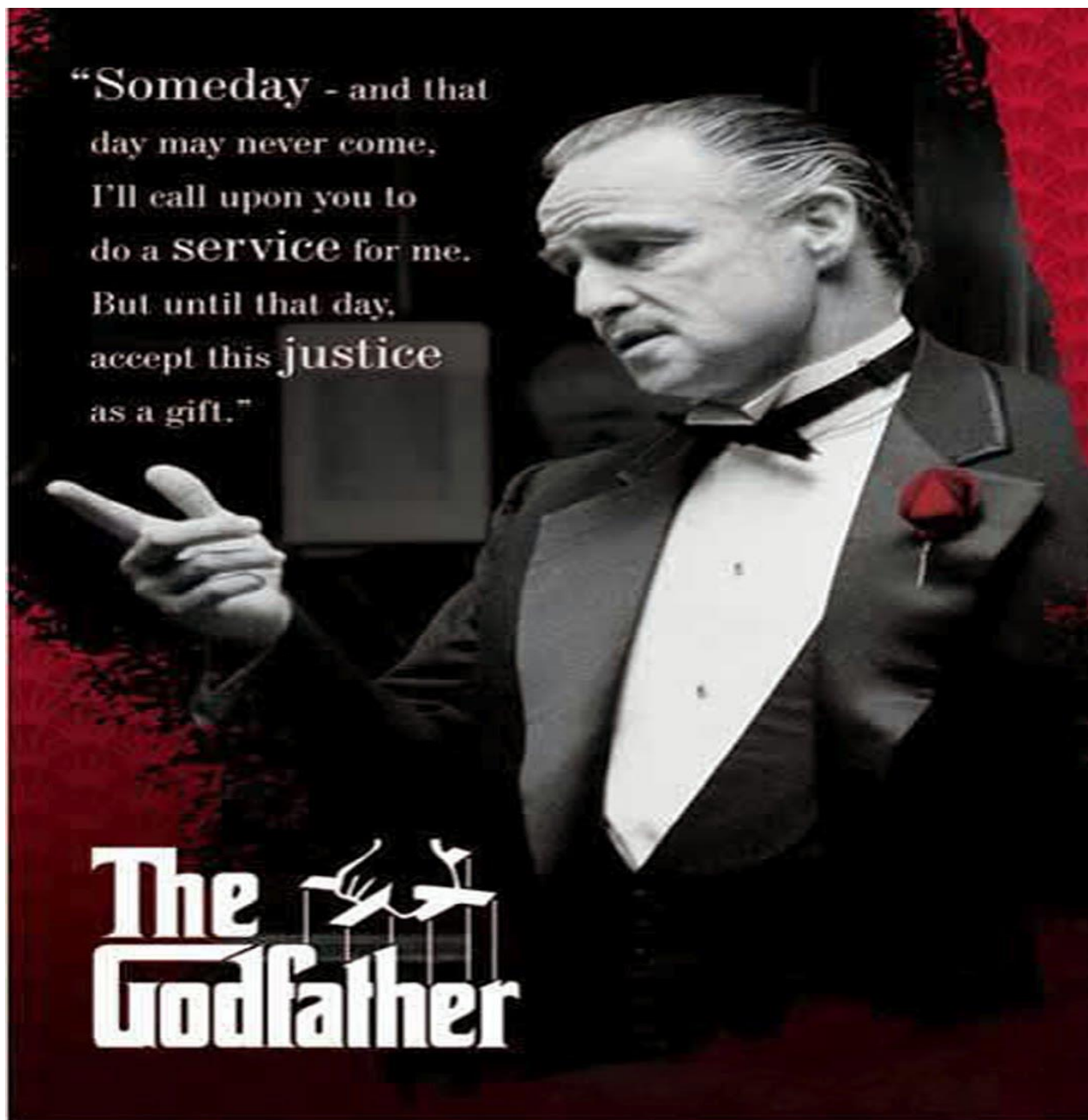


CATHOLIC GODPARENTS: HELP OR HINDER TO HEAVEN?

By David Lee Burris



As Auricular Confession Is A False & Unauthorized Proxy To Forgiveness, Catholic Godparents Can't Substitute In Proxy to Adult Believer's Baptism



INTER-DEPENDENT LINKAGE OF APOSTATE CHURCH DOCTRINE: FAITH TO EUCHARIST TO BAPTISM

The comparison between baptism and the Lord's Supper made by Saint Ambrose – who taught Augustine:

“Again, if a mouse is baptized in the name of the Trinity, it receives no more than if it were washed in simple water, because it is not capable of performing... a sacrament.

Therefore, it is equally reasonable to hold that a mouse consumes no more than if it had eaten plain bread.”

(Commentary on the Sentences, L. 4, dist. 13)

NOTE: From Catholic Answers Periodical on Infant Baptism –

“But fundamentalists try to ignore the historical writings from the early church which clearly indicate the legitimacy of infant baptism. They attempt to sidestep appeals to history by saying - *baptism requires faith and since children are incapable of having faith they cannot be baptized.*”

In my opinion, the Catholic Doctrine of Transubstantiation conflicts with the Doctrine of Infant Baptism. It is not logical to defend Communicant Faith by comparing it with Believer's Baptism *because this is no longer your practice*. This is not a mere matter of theologic disconnect but a **mutual exclusivity –** whereby rationale supporting the Eucharistic Worship Practice and that in justification of infant baptism – invalidate together.

INTER-DEPENDENT LINKAGE OF APOSTATE CHURCH DOCTRINE: INFANT BAPTISM TO ORIGINAL SIN



Reason For Resistance To Re -Baptism

Ana-Baptists: Light - End Of Tunnel – Oncoming Train
Opposition Invested: Out On Far Limb - Good / Evil Decision Tree

Counter -Intuitive Doubting :

“The Philosophy Of One
Century Is The Common
Sense Of The Next.”

Henry Ward Beecher

Derailment Of Entrainment Thought:

“The low, almost imperceptible
process, part biological, part
cognitive, by which people adapt
& eventually adopt, the prevailing
rhythms surrounding them.”

- *“Traditio” – ritual handed down generation to generation supposedly from church fathers. A situation similar to the twisted traditions addressed by Jesus in the Beatitudes; Ritual Tradition – incremental from deathbed exception to routine norm. The necessity of clinical baptism of Constantine by pouring was now the convenient option preferred by the healthy. The family baptism of believers in the early church is now an infant initiation equivalent to that of the circumcision administered by the priesthood of the old law. Both paedocommunion and paedobaptism are commonplace.*
- *Not any understanding adults have been baptized by immersion and as an act of obedient conscience for about 1,000 years. Incrementalism of Dialectic Synthesis; Negative cascading consequences of wrong previous decisions: Luther uses this as an argument that to accept this Anabaptist tenet would be to suggest that no one had been saved in a millennium and all were burning in Hell. This is inconceivable to him. He believes the infant practice an “adiaphora” or an innovation indifferent to God. He was especially against it due to the introspection associated with such an act.*

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- *Additionally, Luther feared the possibility people would want to repeat a ceremony meant to be done only once. Furthermore, there was a consensus in the conventional wisdom of the time that everyone should be baptized only once.*
- *Moreover, Zwingli also was incensed and added to the debate. Zwingli went so far as to suggest that infants can have faith - quoting as passage proof – Luke 1: 41. Agreeing to the re-baptism proposition to take care of oneself seems at the same time to be admitting that our dearly departed loved ones have in an innocent ignorance earned an eternal punishment. Furthermore, this is was not an asymmetrical argument with the AnaBaptists that could be somehow compromised. They even utilized this concept aggressively in terms of an evangelism tool with an terrible tendency and unfortunate consequences. Their expressed conviction at the least closed doors of opportunity – however, it usually aroused anger and sometimes heated hostility. Re-baptism, although absolutely accurate theologically – in the Middle Ages went against the grain - both emotionally and intellectually. The Dark Age mentality could not even admit to the witness of their own eyes when Galileo proved Aristotle wrong – their thinking had become locked and completely entrained.*

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- *Ritual Rationale – An argument of attack was seldom made according to spiritual rescue – a regime cleansing from an inheritance of original sin. Rather more frequently a weaker defensive position was taken identical to that offered for the “benign custom” of arranged childhood marriage. Both were treated as legally valid although empty signs that were not rendered efficacious until respectively either confirmed or consummated. Another after marriage illustration of comparison noted that after being matched as children any incidents of infidelity and adultery could be straightened simply by way of a willingness to forgive and/or reconcile – it did not require contractual remarriage – because the childhood marriage was still valid according to law.*
- *The Swiss Reformed specifically stated that infant baptism was a sign of future faith like was **circumcision** – an indication that the child will be raised in covenant community and loving family as a Christian and valid until the youth makes profession of faith which makes them also a member of the universal church. I speculate that this also is most probably that time period commencing the Roman Catholic practice of newborn Godparent selection. I do not believe there is any fixed date of doctrinal departure for this specific practice so this is only an educated guess on my part.*

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Boys Alone Circumcised!

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- *“Ex Opera Operato” – It was valid as ritual because it was worked in a certain way and with specific words repeated.*
- *Sequence of Sacramental Sin Structure: 1) Baptism Itself The External Sign; 2) Signifies The Inner Gift Of Rebirth In Christ; 3) Faith Brings Outward Sign & Inner Gift Together.*
- *Christian Identity Based Not On Belief But By “Christening” Served Institutional Interest: In state-church systems membership in the civil religion from birth was like an inheritance of ascribed citizenship. It proved the benefits of social control through complementary hierarchies – one of the temporal sword and one of the spiritual sword. The Lutheran & Anglican Reformations were especially Magisterial – with territorial realignments of church and state with trade in triad determining dominance.*
- *The AnaBaptists were of the people and envisioned a church without entangling alliances. This put them completely out of place on the whole of the European Continent.*

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ANA-BAPTIST & CHURCH CROSS INTEREST!

The Meaning of Baptism and the Catholic Ritual

by Moisés Pinedo

It is distressing to see how the doctrine of baptism is distorted in modern-day Christendom. With the passing of time, baptism, as a necessity for salvation, has been replaced by a “prayer of faith,” abstract manifestations of conversion, and ecclesiastical ceremonies based on traditionalism. Today, many ignore the concept, implications, and importance of baptism. Jesus said: “[U]nless one is **born of water** and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God” (John 3:5, emp. added). Paul wrote that there is “one Lord, one faith, **one baptism**” (Ephesians 4:5, emp. added). These New Testament passages and others make it clear that baptism is not merely a religious tradition or a commandment of men. Therefore, it is very important to understand it correctly.

It is essential to know the meaning of “baptism.” Depending on the context in which it is mentioned, “baptism” may mean many different things. For example, in an evangelical context, it is regarded as just a “public profession of faith” (Rhodes, 1997, p. 178). In a Catholic context, the word “baptism” brings to mind a ceremony, godparents, elegant robes, emotional parents, an infant in white, a fountain, and a few drops of water (as well as a pre-paid fee for the ceremony and the actual “baptism”). However, when we consider the real meaning of the word “baptism,” many of these erroneous concepts disappear.

In his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, W.E. Vine defined “baptism” and other related words:

BAPTISMA, baptism, consisting of the processes of **immersion, submersion and emergence** (from *bapto*, to dip).

BAPTIZO, to baptize, primarily a frequentative form of *bapto*, to dip, was used among the Greeks to signify **the dyeing of a garment**, or the **drawing of water by dipping a vessel into another**, etc. (1966, 1:96-97, emp. added).

From the definition of the word, it is easy to see exactly what was involved in the act of baptism: “immersion, submersion and emergence.” Unfortunately, the word “baptism” has been passed generation to generation as a transliteration, a phonetic representation of a word in another language. [Note similarity between Greek *baptisma* and the English “baptism”]. A study of the Greek etymology of this word opens the door to its real meaning and also gives us a better picture of how it was carried out in New Testament times. Baptism was **not** sprinkling or pouring, as Catholicism teaches, but immersion. The Bible points out some important implications concerning baptism.

First, baptism requires enough water to immerse completely a believer. The gospel accounts inform us that John the baptizer baptized in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:4-6; Mark 1:4-5; Luke 3:2-3; John 1:28). The Jordan was the largest and most important river in Palestine, and it contained enough water for the innumerable baptisms (immersions) that took place there. For example, in this river, Naaman the leper immersed himself seven times (2 Kings 5:14). If baptism were an act of sprinkling, it would have been unnecessary to baptize in the Jordan; instead, a single container of water would have been sufficient. However, as the apostle John noted, John the baptizer also baptized in the Aenon, “because there was much water there” (John 3:23).

Second, baptism is immersion since one goes down into and comes up out of the water. This fact is seen clearly in the various baptisms in the gospel accounts and the book of Acts. The gospel writers recorded the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22). Matthew 3:16 and Mark 1:10 tell us specifically that Jesus “came up from the water.” Certainly the phrase “to come up from the water” would have been omitted if Jesus was only sprinkled.

Acts 8:26-39 records one of the most illustrative accounts of the procedure of baptism. Luke wrote that while an Ethiopian was on his return trip from Jerusalem, he heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ from the mouth of Philip (a servant of God). Then, “they came to some water. And the eunuch said, ‘See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?’” (Acts 8:36). Luke does not record the source or location of that water, but we can infer that it was sufficient for Philip to immerse the Ethiopian. Luke clarifies how baptism was performed when he notes that “both Philip and the eunuch **went down into** the water,” and “they **came up out** of the water” (Acts 8:38-39, emp. added). From this biblical narrative, it is illogical to conclude that the baptism of the Ethiopian was some form of sprinkling. It is impossible to “go down into” and “come up out of” a few drops of water! There is no doubt that the Ethiopian was immersed.

Third, baptism represents the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It is not a random practice void of any logic pattern, or special meaning. God chose baptism as the perfect representation of the redemptive plan performed by His Son, Jesus Christ. In Romans 6:3-4, Paul explained the symbolic meaning of baptism: “Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore, we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” R.L. Whiteside noted about these verses:

In being buried in baptism there is a likeness of his death; so also there is a likeness of his resurrection in our being raised from baptism to a new life. Hence, in being baptized we are united with him in the likeness of this death and resurrection. We are therefore, partakers with him in death, and also in being raised to a new life. Jesus was buried and arose to a new life; we are buried in baptism and arise to a new life. These verses show the act of baptism, and also its spiritual value (1988, p. 132).

There is great spiritual value and meaning in the act of immersion. It not only re-enacts the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, but also unites the believer with Christ (Galatians 3:27). There is no other act of faith that is an effective (and biblical) substitute for being immersed into Christ. When a person is immersed, he is buried with Christ. Could sprinkling be described as a **burial**? When a person dies, do people sprinkle dirt on his head and declare him “buried”? Of course not! Rather, he is covered completely (immersed) with dirt. Similarly, to be “buried” with Christ, we must be covered completely (immersed) in water. Sprinkling falls far short of representing the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Both Paul and Peter, in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 and 1 Peter 3:21, added emphasis to the importance and significance of baptism.

Finally, it is important to note that the modern Catholic practice of “baptism,” i.e., sprinkling or pouring, is inconsistent with the Catholics’ own understanding of the meaning and method of biblical baptism. In the first chapter of the “Sacraments of the Christian Initiation,” the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* declares:

This sacrament is called *Baptism*, after the central rite by which it is carried out: to baptize (Greek *baptizein*) means to **“plunge” or “immerse”**; the **“plunge” into the water** symbolizes the catechumen’s burial into Christ’s death, from which he rises up by resurrection with him, as “a new creature” (1994, 1214, emp. added).

It appears that ignorance of the etymology and procedure of biblical “baptism” did not mislead Catholicism from the truth concerning baptism, but rather the emphasis that Catholicism places on tradition above biblical truth. **Catholics also declare:**

To facilitate the application of the new discipline, baptism by infusion—which consists in pouring water on the child’s head instead of immersing the whole child in a basin — gradually became common **because it was easier**; it became the almost universal practice in the fourteenth century. But although immersion fell into disuse, it still had its place in the rubrics (Cabié, 1988, 3:72, emp. added).

It is declared (with shameless audacity) that the commandment for immersion given by the Lord (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16) was replaced by the Catholic traditional rite of sprinkling or pouring out of convenience. These words can find accurate parallel in the words of condemnation pronounced by Jesus against the Pharisees when He said:

Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: “This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.” For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men... All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition (Mark 7:6-9).

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What Is the Origin of Godparents?

John P. Moore - Updated July 23, 2018

In the early Roman Empire, the sponsor confirmed the integrity of an adult who wanted to be baptized and helped the person through the process. The role changed somewhat when Christianity was recognized in the Roman Empire, and it **changed again when infant baptism was introduced in the Middle Ages.**

Origins in the Early Roman Empire

When Christianity was a new religion, in the early period of the Roman Empire, the role of godparent was much different now. The role was called "sponsor." Because Christianity was a persecuted religion at this time, one important function of the sponsor was to confirm the integrity and sincerity of the adult seeking to be baptized as well as prevent infiltration of the believer community by persecutors.

Late Roman Empire: Baptism Sponsors

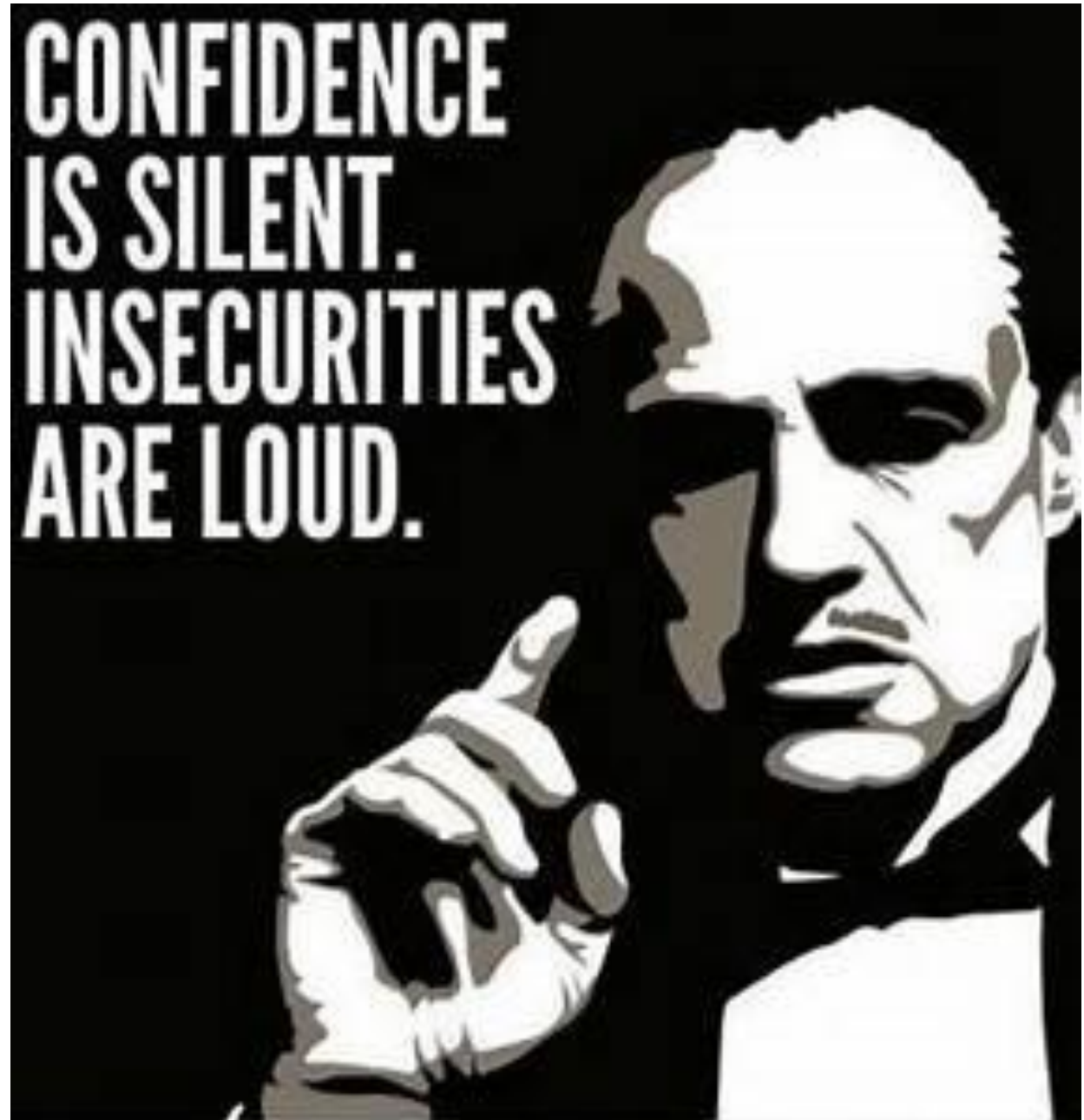
When the Roman Empire officially recognized Christianity, it was less important for the sponsor to vouch for the individual seeking baptism and christening. Yet, another function remained important: leading the person through the process of preparation for baptism. Because the individual seeking baptism was an adult and a pagan, or someone who grew up in a non-Christian culture, the preparation for baptism and christening was a complete course in Christian beliefs and practices. The baptism sponsors were the main guide in learning about Christian life.

Early Middle Ages: Baptism and Christening

After the end of the Roman Empire, more and more people in Europe converted to Christianity. In the early Middle Ages, adult pagan baptism became rare. At the same time, infant baptism and christening became a dominant trend, as Christian parents wanted to have their young children baptized. Also, the practice of having two sponsors -- one male and one female -- was born; this pair of baptism sponsors came to be known as godparents, which consisted of a godfather and a godmother.

Pre-Reformation Period - the role and function of the godparents had stabilized and was specified in Church law. They were chosen by the parents of the infant to be baptized, and **they spoke for the infant during the ceremony.** The Christian godparents were expected to help provide a Christian upbringing to the child, especially if the parents were absent or neglected their obligations. – *Internet Search*

INTER-DEPENDENT LINKAGE OF
APOSTATE CHURCH DOCTRINE:
GODPARENTS TO INFANT BAPTISM



Godparent, formally **sponsor (from Latin *spondere*, “to promise”)**, masculine **godfather**, feminine **godmother**, in Christianity, one who stands surety for another in the rite of baptism. In the modern baptism of an infant or child, the godparent or godparents make a profession of faith for the person being baptized (the godchild) and assume an obligation to serve as proxies for the parents if the parents either are unable or neglect to provide for the religious training of the child, in fulfillment of baptismal promises. Even when the parents provide their child with a religious upbringing, a godparent serves to encourage the child’s spiritual growth over time and stands as an example of another adult with maturity in the faith. In churches mandating a sponsor, only one godparent is required; two (in most churches, of different sex) are permitted.

The practice of sponsorship originated in the custom that required that an adult pagan seeking the rite should be accompanied by a Christian known to the bishop—a Christian who could vouch for the applicant and undertake his or her supervision. The Greek word for the person undertaking this function was *anadochos*, to which the Latin *susceptor* is equivalent. The word *sponsor* in this ecclesiastical sense occurred for the first time in Tertullian’s 2nd-century treatise *De baptismo*. The sponsors to whom he alluded may have been in many cases the actual parents, and even in the 5th century it was not felt to be inappropriate that they should be so; St. Augustine in one passage appears to speak of it as a matter of course that parents should bring their children and answer for them, & the oldest Egyptian ritual bears similar testimony. Elsewhere Augustine contemplated masters bringing the children of slaves, and of course orphans and foundlings were brought by other benevolent persons.

The comparatively early appearance, however, of such names as *compatres*, *commatres*, *propatres*, *promatres*, *patrini*, & *matrinae* seems to prove not only that the sponsorial relationship had come to be regarded as a very close one but also that it was not usually assumed by the natural parents. How very close it was held is shown by the emperor Justinian’s prohibition of marriage between godparents and godchildren. On the other hand, the anciently allowable practice of parents becoming sponsors for their own children, though gradually becoming obsolete, seems to have lingered until the 9th century, when it was at last formally prohibited by the Council of Mainz (813). For a long-time there was no fixed rule as to the necessary or allowable number of sponsors, and sometimes the number actually assumed was large. By the Council of Trent (1545–63), however, it was decided that one only, or at most two, these not being of the same sex, should be permitted. In the Roman Catholic Church the spiritual relationship established between the sponsor and the baptized, and the sponsors and parents of the baptized, continues to constitute an impediment to the sacrament of marriage.
– *Internet Search*

INTER-DEPENDENT LINKAGE OF APOSTATE CHURCH DOCTRINE: GODPARENTS TO EASY DIVORCE

D T D
I H S
V R C
O O O
R U V
G G E
E H Y
D T D
I H S
V R C
O O O
R U V
G G E
E H Y

⊙ The popes brought marriage under clerical control and forbade divorce for the common people, but they also declared marriage under five or six degrees of kindred to be invalid. The result was that divorce now took the form of “discovering,” when the parties wanted a divorce, that there had never been any marriage because they were related, say, through their great-great-great-grandparents.

⊙ Queen Eleanor got a divorce from the very religious king of France on that precise ground. Procedurally, you paid your abbots or bishops to scan the genealogical tree. But because relationship was counted by **sponsorship at baptisms** as well as by blood or marriage, you could almost always discover it. It made a mockery of marriage and set unlawful desires free!


D T D
I H S
V R C
O O O
R U V
C G E
E H R
Y

Queen Eleanor got a divorce from the very religious king of France on that precise ground. Procedurally, you paid your abbot

The Rich Compounded Fortunes Marrying the
DISCOVERY WAS EASY & DIVORCE WAS EASY!

spouse as well as by blood or marriage, you could almost always discover it. It made a mockery of marriage and set unlawful desires free!





"The relationships built through godparentage, which is usually local, can sometimes exist for the social elites across the Atlantic world, and wide networks can be established through the practice." – Vince Coussean

Godparents

In the early Christian church, BAPTISM was only intended for adults. Their "godparents" were witnesses and vouched for the person's commitment, as expressed by the Latin legal term *sponsor*. As early as the end of the second century, baptism for infants appeared in Christian communities; the practice was believed to chase away the evil spirits present in every newborn baby. At the end of the 4th century, Saint Augustine enforced the rule of child baptism. At the time, parents were their own children's godparents. Between the sixth and eighth centuries, as child baptism became more widespread in Europe, the idea spread that for a child to have a spiritual rebirth, it needed to have new parents. Godparenting by parents was abandoned and even forbidden by the Mayence Council of 819, a law that endures to this day. A spiritual relationship, quite distinct from a blood relationship, is therefore created. The Church gives a it very specific religious goal: to ensure the Christian education of the child.

The metaphor of baptism as a second birth was expressed concretely in the beliefs and customary practices that made up the godparenting ceremony. Godfathers and godmothers were supposed to re-create the child and pass along some of their own personal qualities. Spiritual heredity was passed on in the NAMING of the godchild, in observance of prescribed customs or prohibitions, and through the giving of ritual gifts. It was the duty of the godparents to help their godchildren become accomplished men and women until the child's marriage, which marked the end and the crowning of their ritual role. This relationship was considered sacred and was exhibited in the respect the godchild showed the godparents. **The godchild's obligations reflected those of the godparents, and they were considered to be linked into the afterlife. Through baptism, the godparent opened eternal life to the godchild, and in return the godchild found favor and approbation for the godparent's soul in heaven.**

The sharing of a child's double-birth created ties of co-parenthood between parents and godparents, the Christian form of ritual fraternities. This friendship was considered sacred, "to the life, to the death," with obligations of solidarity. Parents and godparents called each other "co-mother" and "co-father," addressed each other formally with mutual respect, and were forbidden to have sexual contact with one another, at the risk of committing INCEST. Such sexual prohibitions transformed the relationship into a spiritual parenting, considered superior to biological parenting. A sexual prohibition was enacted by Justinian in 530, and did not disappear in the West until 1983. In 692, the Council of Byzantium extended this restriction, and this lasted until 1917.

In medieval Europe, godparenting relations therefore created a network of friends, whether the godparent was chosen from the same social circle or among the more prominent people (clergymen or bourgeois) whose **reputations were measured by the number of godchildren they had**. In this case, their relationships were similar to those of patronage. Among Joan of Arc's eight godmothers, one was the wife of the mayor of Domremy, another the wife of the court clerk, and one of her four godfathers was town prosecutor with her father. Co-parents among Florentine merchants during the fifteenth century were useful politically, and mostly appeared in groups of two or three. But the record is held by a child who was given twenty-two godfathers and three godmothers in 1445. The Council of Trent (1545–1563) limited the number of spiritual parents to two godfathers and one godmother for boys, and two godmothers and one godfather for girls. It also limited the sexual prohibitions that had proliferated throughout the Middle Ages.

Though the close relationship between godparents and parents endured in southern Europe and South America, where ethnologists have studied it exhaustively, it slowly disappeared in western Europe during the Renaissance. First among the aristocracy, and then in the other social groups, only one godfather and godmother were chosen from the immediate family, one belonging to the father's family and the other to the mother's. In France the custom was that the eldest child should have his or her paternal grandfather as a godfather, and his or her maternal grandmother as a godmother. For the second born it would be the opposite (maternal grandfather, paternal grandmother). For later children, or if one of the grandparents had already died, the parents' brothers and brothers-in-law, then their sisters and sisters-in-law would be chosen, keeping a balance between maternal and paternal lines. The youngest children's godparents were often their own older siblings. This tying of parental spirituality to biological parenting—characteristic of western Europe—is related, among other things, to an imperative shared by many societies: that of having one's offspring named after their ancestors. Homonymy between godfathers and godsons first appeared in western Europe, in contrast with the Balkans, where godfathers were most often chosen outside the family. There a godfather would not name his godson after himself: the family would choose a first name for the child.

The tradition continues to favor choosing godfathers and godmothers from among close relatives or close friends, always considering the balance between maternal and paternal lines. The choice of a godparent generally creates emotion and gratitude in proportion to the importance ascribed to this symbolic gift of a child. It allows a family to transform a close friend into a relative, and relatives into friends. Often, privileged ties of complicity and affection develop between godparents and their godchildren. In the framework of varying contemporary family configurations typical of Western societies, godparenting appears as a privileged, choice-based relationship created for the protection of the child. It could not enjoy such vitality in modern secular societies if it didn't continue to convey values embedded in more than fifteen centuries of history. – *Internet Search*

EARLY 1970'S CHURCHES OF CHRIST APOSTATE SPONSORING IN MULTIPLYING MINISTRIES

Brethren Borrowing From Crossroads And Boston

Charles G. Goodall
Tampa, Florida

Israel of old looked at the nations about them and said to God,, "Give us a king." Brethren in recent years have looked at the denominations said to God, "Give us control" or "give us conversions." Specifically, Crossroads and Boston have provided such attraction. Brethren, who should know better, have "picked and sorted" among the Crossroads strategies, and made the trek to Gainesville or Boston allegedly to find out "the good things" that they are doing.

It is categorically untrue and deceptive to say that Crossroads and Boston are doing a "lot of good things." Jesus said of the false teachers of his day that "compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves" (Matt. 23:15). Crossroads and Boston are wrong, wrong, wrong! **They have the wrong system of evangelism and conversion(1), the wrong baptism, wrong approach to the Scriptures, the wrong organization, and the wrong edification system.**

Those in the Boston movement teach that "disciple's baptism" is necessary for salvation. **(2) Disciple's baptism requires that one understand before he is baptized that he must foresee that he must undergo a program which will require him to be a "discipleship partner" for a "discipler. " Gordon Ferguson, in the May 29 issue of the Boston Bulletin, said, "To baptize a person who has not made a decision to be a disciple (Boston style, CGG) is to baptize someone who not understanding repentance. . . Anyone who does not approach baptism with that understanding has been mistaught . . . Those who are offended by this teaching are for the most part those who are threatened by the possibility that they may not be Christians. " Nothing could be more absurd and further from the truth. Baptism of the New Testament required none of the Boston *methodology*. "Arise & be baptized, and wash away thy sins" (Acts 22:16) were the instructions given Saul of Tarsus.**

Boston teaches that they are obtaining a progressive revelation of God's word. **(3) They cite Philippians 3:15 as proof that God continues to reveal the truth to his followers. They maintain that "one church per city, every member evangelism, discipleship partners, training of ministers through discipling relationships, women leading women, congregation reconstructions, disciple's baptism, and evangelists discipling elders" have been revealed to them by God in modern times. They prefer the motto, according to Ferguson, "Where the Bible speaks we are silent, where the Bible is silent we speak." (4) The Bible, by contrast, teaches that we have been provided with every good work (2 Tim. 3:16) and that revelation has been given once and for all (Jude 3).**

The Boston system, with its Romish arrangement of "pillar churches," "reconstruction," "zone leaders," and "house church leaders," [\(5\)](#) is a long way from the autonomous New Testament church with elders conducting the oversight (Acts 14:23; Acts 20:28). Boston alleges, "The idea of a non-cooperative . . . separation from other congregations is absolutely non-Biblical & contrary to the purpose of God and sinful." [\(6\)](#)

Boston methodology subjects a convert to a system that enslaves the new member in order to expedite his growth. The system was conceived in Catholicism and exploited in communism. While Jesus, as God, may well have ordered the lives of the disciples while they prepared to be apostles, one would be totally inept to produce any suggestions from him or the apostles that he wants us to do that, much less what Boston does, with men today. The methods they use violate one's freedom in Christ as well as his free moral agency.

Someone says, "they are zealous, sincere & courageous." Paul said of those of a similar temperament, "For I bear them record they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Rom. 10:2-3).

The cold reality which my brethren who look with envy on Boston will not accept is that most people will not accept the truth. The disciples in effect asked Jesus near the end of his ministry, "Lord, is this all?" (Jn. 12:36-38).

The lessons of "many be called, but few chosen" and "narrow" is the way to salvation and "broad" is the path to destruction (Matt. 7:13-14; 20:16) are echoed through almost every chapter of the Bible. The stark reality is that mass conversions are not to be expected and that when they do occur the methods of those with astounding results should be viewed with great scrutiny and care.

Brethren in various congregations, who have viewed the methodology of Boston with favor, have introduced what is called "friendship evangelism" and have reflected unfavorably on what they call the "common approach." The "common approach" they feel emphasizes too much the commandments, the church, the kingdom and the use of proof texts especially when it comes to baptism in conversion. They espouse instead a method that would forego such exposure. In their terminology they prefer to focus on love, the king, and spiritual experiences without seeing others as the ones who are wrong with God and as sinners who displease him. This "friendship evangelism" would forego or postpone exposure to the reality that Christ has promised to save only those uniquely in his body (Eph. 4:23). What the system does is hide the uniqueness of the church from the convert until what those who use the approach consider a more favorable time. The result is that a congregation is able to work with a much larger base of "converts" and apparently with much greater success than neighboring congregations.

Brethren, always ready to be "where it is happening" suddenly flock to be a part of the excitement. The problem is that there is no guarantee those converted by such a system will remove themselves from influence and participation when they refuse to accept the uniqueness of the Lord's people. Instead, from their perception of a brotherhood of saved on a much larger scale, they are in a position to wreck havoc on a congregation.

Boston & Crossroads are changing almost daily. Recently Crossroads in Gainesville refused "reconstruction" from Boston and have struck out on their own.[\(7\)](#) They still use the same ungodly methods they always have, they are just not in the Boston hierarchy.

In conclusion, we observe the effect of using Boston methods is parallel to the effect of the social gospel appeal. We told our digressive brethren who tried to lure people with fried chicken and ice tea the converts would be as cold as the chicken and weak as the tea. Brethren who try to lure people with a feather touch & a pitcher of warmth will find the converts as flighty as the feathers & as empty as the pitcher. Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16). Conversions of the New Testament involved a radical and immediate exposure to the truths of the gospel. The result was, *See here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?*, "And now why tarriest thou, arise and be baptized," and ". . . the same hour of the night" he was taken to be baptized (Acts 8, 16, 22). Can we expect less in our day and time.

Endnotes

- 1. Charles Goodall, The Crossroads Heresy.**
- 2. Gordon Ferguson, Boston Bulletin, May 29, 1988.**
- 3. Gordon Ferguson, Boston Bulletin, May 1, 1988.**
- 4. Gordon Ferguson, Boston Bulletin, May 8, 1988.**
- 5. Maurice Barnett, The Discipling Movement, pp. 59-95.**
- 6. Gordon Ferguson, Boston Bulletin, June 5, 1988.**
- 7. (Note: Original document did not include corresponding number within article). The Growing Local Church, church workbook, p.14.**
- 7. The Christian Chronicle, April, 1988.**

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Crossroads' Repentance

Since the late 60's, the Crossroads heresy which was hatched by Chuck Lucas in Gainesville, Florida has aroused concerns, protests, and intense controversy among brethren of the "institutional" persuasion. While some who investigate the movement concluded that all the clamor was a false alarm, others found serious violations of the Scriptures. Objections to the system included: legislating precise conduct for Christians in matters where the Bible is silent, developing a prayer-partner system in which junior prayer-partners are placed in subjection to senior prayer partners, the inflicting of guilt for any infraction of Crossroads' rules, the whipping of members with information received from confessionals, etc. In spite of any good intentions that some may have had in promoting this discipling plan, it had clearly altered God's organization of the local church and bound traditions of men as commandments of God. In fact, some of the tactics were similar to those found in popular cults, such as Hare Krishna and the Moonies.

All of this brings us to recent developments in the Crossroads controversy. A few weeks ago, at one of the workshops held by our institutional brethren, the elders of the Crossroads church issued a public statement renouncing their past conduct and asking for forgiveness. A transcript of this repentance is duplicated below:

**Transcript of statement made by
Crossroads church of Christ elders:**

Our hearts are really full. The elders of the Concord Street Church have been so gracious and so helpful. Brother Bill and I really appreciate that and want to thank them, and from the bottom of our heart.

Most people who know me understand that I do not do many things without referring to God's word. So that is where I want to begin.

God's word teaches that we are to have a sincere love for our brothers, that we are to love one another deeply, with all our hearts (1 Peter 1:22). This love is not only to individuals, but also must extend to the brotherhood of believers (1 Pet. 2:17). If we do not love our brothers, we cannot love God. The elders of the Crossroads congregation have a statement on their hearts which we want to share with everyone in this conference.

The elders of the Concord Street congregation support our making this statement. We all hope that this will bring about the love, and restore the fellowship and the unity for which Christ prayed in John 17.

Over the years many things have been attributed to the Crossroads congregation as a body, which grew out of the abuse by some Christians which caused others to hurt. And though we did not approve of these abuses, we are sorry they occurred and ask your forgiveness for these sins. Some examples of these abuses involved one Christian trying to control another Christian, or one church congregation exercising control over another congregation.

We do not believe that any Christian has the right to control another Christian (Ephesians 5:21). We do not believe that . . . excuse me, we do believe that every Christian should practice all the one-another relationships passages in the Scriptures. We do not believe that any congregation has the right to control another congregation. We do believe that the elders of each congregation are to direct the affairs of their congregation (1 Timothy 5:17; and 1 Peter 5:2). We hope these examples will illustrate our hearts and our desire to repent of every abuse. We are sorry for them & pray for your forgiveness. This is signed by my bishop, brother Hogle, and myself. God bless you. Richard Whitehead, Elder Bill Hogle.

Naturally, we receive this news with mixed emotions. How far back these brethren intend to step is not specified. We do know other brethren in institutional churches are calling for restoration of Christian fellowship with these brethren. This certainly implies Crossroads is not renouncing sponsoring church arrangements, etc. Therefore, it will not be coming back as far as it needs to. At the same time, it is always somewhat encouraging to hear of any retreat from error. What this reversal will have upon “daughter churches” of the movement remains to be seen. Stay tuned.

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CATHOLIC GODPARENTS:

Q: HELP OR HINDER TO HEAVEN?

A: ANYTHING OR ANYONE THAT
POSITIONS ONE STEP REMOVED
FROM GOD'S HOLY WORD OR
FROM THE ONLY AUTHORIZED
INTERMEDIARY JESUS CHRIST IS
HINDRANCE TO HEAVEN!