

John Calvin



A sacrament has five dimensions

1. Visible signs and actions

Water that touches a body



2. God's promises

Forgiveness of sins

“The first thing that the Lord sets out for us is that baptism should be a token and proof of our cleansing . . . it is like a sealed document to confirm to us that all our sins are abolished, remitted, and effaced”



Dying and rising with Christ

Baptism also brings another benefit, for it shows us our mortification in Christ, and new life in him”



New identity in Christ

“We are children of God from the fact that we put on Christ”



3. To strengthen our weak faith

“As often as we fall away, we ought to recall the memory of our baptism and fortify our mind with it, that we may always be sure and confident of the forgiveness of sins”



4. Our declaration of allegiance to Christ

“It is the mark by which we publicly profess that we wish to be reckoned God’s people; by which we testify that we agree in worshipping the same God, in one religion with all Christians; by which finally we openly affirm our faith”



5. A stimulus to mutual love and
service

“We ought by [baptism] to testify .
. . . that we enter into God’s church
in order to live harmoniously with
all believers in complete
agreement of faith and love”



So, why do we baptize infants?

For the sake of the child as he or she grows up—“I belong to God”

For the sake of the parents, who
receive assurance that their child
belongs to the covenant