

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Infant Baptism

Infant Baptism - posted by seanjol (), on: 2008/12/8 19:10

I was looking for feedback from people on the practice of infant baptism. I grew up baptist and now attend a Presbyterian church that believes in this practice. I am somewhat reformed, if that is possible, but the infant baptism part really bothers me as some standard bearers of the reformation embraced infant baptism, namely Augustine, Luther and Calvin. I believe that the scriptures show a pattern of believe and be baptized and in my thinking, an infant cannot believe. I know that I have my mind pretty well made up on the subject but was hoping for insight to the contrary, or am I missing the boat. This is a subject that my pastor and I have talked about a great deal. Thanks in advance for your input.

Sean

Re: Infant Baptism - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2008/12/8 19:21

If you have spoken to your pastor about this, you are probably aware of the covenantal framework from which paedobaptists approach this topic. But, I'm just curious what you have learned about paedobaptism so far? I went to a PCA church my senior year of college and the pastor of that church is a dear friend.

Grace to you,
Taylor

Re: - posted by seanjol (), on: 2008/12/9 9:37

Likewise my pastor is a dear friend who I have a great deal in common with, just not paedobaptism. ;-) He really uses the argument that you alluded to in the covenantal framework. The argument goes that the bible is really congruent from the old testament to the new and that baptism was symbolically linked to circumcision. The thinking goes that there are several households mentioned where they believed and were baptized, although that is no guarantee that there were infants involved. I'm pretty sure that you have heard similar reasoning. Looking back on early church father quotes on the subject, it is almost as if they associate salvation with the practice which really bothers me. Thanks for the reply. I would be interested to know where you stand and if I am missing something. I have read a lot of MacArthur and Piper on the subject and they are well against it, not that they are the final authority on the subject. I just struggle to see it in the scripture.

Sean

Re:, on: 2008/12/9 10:22

Scripture is clear... "repent and be baptised for the remission of sin".

An infant can not repent. Repentance preceeds baptism. Therefore infant baptism is unscriptural. All this talk about covenantal whatever means nothing. Baptism is symbolic of dying to the old life and being raised up a new creature in Christ. Period.

Krispy

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2008/12/9 10:43

I have never been able to get a grip on the Reformed view of Covenant Theology. Even if baptism were an equivalent of circumcision how would this play out? The descendants of Abraham were clearly identifiable and circumcision therefore could be seen as an embracing of the covenant relationship.

However, how would this work out in practice? How would you identify one of the 'elect'? and if they cannot be identified would not infant baptism be a massive presumption?

Re: - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2008/12/9 11:07

I believe they would baptize the children of church members in good standing, as those are the spiritual seed of Abraham.

In the paedobaptist view, baptism is given an emphasis of God's promises to us "and to our children" to be our God and theirs. Thus, the children are baptized into the covenant community with hope in those promises.

Re:, on: 2008/12/9 11:22

Taylor... that's all fine and good, but there is no scriptural basis for this, is there?

Sounds like "traditions of men". As I stated before, in scripture repentance precedes baptism.

Krispy

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2008/12/9 11:32

Thanks Taylor
although I am not much the wiser. (that's not your fault)
Isn't this making 'election' hereditary?

Re: - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2008/12/9 11:36

Philologos - the paedobaptist does not equate infant baptism with necessarily meaning that the infant is elect, yet at the same time, they do trust God for the promises to "them and their children". Therefore, they appeal to passages that warn against spurning the covenant or apostasy from the covenant (see Hebrews) as warnings to those who have been baptized into the covenant community, because there is greater condemnation for those brought up under the spiritual care and admonition of the church.

Krispy - the paedobaptist would appeal to the fact that for the majority of redemptive history, God has dealt with believers and their children. Therefore, they place the burden of proof on the credobaptist to show why God stopped including the children of believers in the covenant. Also, regarding repentance preceding baptism. The paedobaptist would agree in the case of adults (which is who was being evangelized in the example you cited), as adult proselytes to Judaism would have had to surely repent of false religion before being circumcised.

I am not a thoroughly convinced paedobaptist myself, however, I am studying the subject and have read some on the topic.

Re: - posted by BeYeDoers (), on: 2008/12/9 12:31

I'm confused on the spelling...is it "paedobaptism" or "pseudobaptism"? :-P

I'm with Paul Washer when he says, "Infant baptism was the golden calf of the Reformation"

Re: - posted by seanjol (), on: 2008/12/9 12:59

Taylor said,

"the paedobaptist would appeal to the fact that for the majority of redemptive history, God has dealt with believers and their children. Therefore, they place the burden of proof on the credobaptist to show why God stopped including the children of believers in the covenant."

The old covenant does show God dealing with Abraham and his seed. When you get to the new covenant, or testament, salvation is shown being brought to Jews, Greeks, Romans, etc., many of whom had no part of the covenant of Abraham through circumcision. It would seem to me that when the apostles met in Acts 15 and they were dealing with the issue of circumcision and those of the covenant, that they would have said "now we don't require you Gentiles to circumcise your infants, baptize them and that will be a parallel symbol." They never said this.

I just don't understand a large group of theological thinking that places such emphasis on Sola Scriptura keeping this doctrine alive from Catholicism. Calvin and Luther after all were Catholic priests at one time.

I think that as with most doctrines, the burden of proof should be greater on finding the reasons for a doctrine (i.e. paedobaptism) than for the negative against it. When we tell others of how we are saved "by Grace through faith" we give scripture after scripture of how that is true. We don't say, we believe this and it is up to you to prove it wrong without giving them chapter and verse to back us up.

It really seems that in reformed circles, infant baptism is almost equated with infant salvation. That scares me greatly.

Re: - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2008/12/9 13:07

Sean,

I will try and respond more later.

But, just to point out something that is commonly thrown around in talking about this.

Paedobaptism is not "left over" from Catholicism. The practice was occurring very early in church history, even before the time of what we now call the "Catholic church".

Have you read Calvin's Institutes on baptism? That may help you understand what the reformers were thinking. I think it is about 30 pages long, if I remember correctly.

Regarding Brother Washer's comment about it being a golden calf of the reformation, if I understand correctly, did he equate it with the "pray a prayer" mentality of today? I think that, while I greatly respect Paul Washer, his comment is inaccurate historically. The reformers and Puritans stressed to the baptized children of believers to make their calling and election sure, which is evident in their writings. To equate it with the salvific prayer mentality of today is a stretch historically, in my opinion.

Re: - posted by seanjol (), on: 2008/12/9 13:09

Ron,

This is something I was telling my pastor the other day. We have a group of children who grow up in the church, were baptized as infants and are part of the covenant, many who show no fruit of salvation. It does seem to make election hereditary. Are the promises to you and your children concerning salvation? Is baptism a sacrament (sign) of salvation? The covenantal child that I think of so often as a negative to the presbyterian way of thinking is Esau. "Jacob I have loved yet Esau I have hated." Wasn't Esau part of the covenant? Is the covenant a one of particular blessing to those who partake in it or one of particular salvation?

I truly am not asking these questions as if I know, only asking them to show sincere doubt about a doctrine of a church that I am active in and love.

Re: - posted by seanjol (), on: 2008/12/9 13:20

Thanks for responding Taylor.

You are quite right about early church fathers.

Origen wrote:

"Every soul that is born into flesh is soiled by the filth of wickedness and sin. . . . In the Church, baptism is given for the remission of sins, and, according to the usage of the Church, baptism is given even to infants. If there were nothing in infants which required the remission of sins and nothing in them pertinent to forgiveness, the grace of baptism would seem superfluous" (Homilies on Leviticus 8:3).

"The Church received from the apostles the tradition of giving baptism even to infants. The apostles, to whom were committed the secrets of the divine sacraments, knew there are in everyone innate strains of sin, which must be washed away through water and the Spirit" (Commentaries on Romans 5:9).

In his writings you can clearly see the beginnings of the belief of salvation as being related to infants.

Cyrpian Wrote:

"If, in the case of the worst sinners and those who formerly sinned much against God, when afterwards they believe, the remission of their sins is granted and no one is held back from baptism and grace, how much more, then, should an infant not be held back, who, having but recently been born, has done no sin, except that, born of the flesh according to Adam, he has contracted the contagion of that old death from his first being born. For this very reason does he approach more easily to receive the remission of sins: because the sins forgiven him are not his own but those of another" (ibid., 64:5).

He is relating remission of sins to being baptized as an infant.

Augustine wrote:

"By this grace baptized infants too are ingrafted into his body, infants who certainly are not yet able to imitate anyone. Christ, in whom all are made alive . . . gives also the most hidden grace of his Spirit to believers, grace which he secretly infuses even into infants. . . . It is an excellent thing that the Punic Christians call baptism salvation and the sacrament of Christ's Body nothing else than life. Whence does this derive, except from an ancient and, as I suppose, apostolic tradition, by which the churches of Christ hold inherently that without baptism and participation at the table of the Lord it is impossible for any man to attain either to the kingdom of God or to salvation and life eternal? This is the witness of Scripture, too. . . . If anyone wonders why children born of the baptized should themselves be baptized, let him attend briefly to this The sacrament of baptism is most assuredly the sacrament of regeneration" (Forgiveness and the Just Deserts of Sin, and the Baptism of Infants 1:9:10; 1:24:34; 2:27:43).

He says that infants are ingrafted into Christ by this baptism. Is this supported in scripture?

Most of these men credit this doctrine as being handed down by the Apostles, yet they are so silent in the word of God on it.

Hopefully you saw what I wrote to Ron that I am not trying to argue or am I convinced. I seriously question a doctrine that is taught and believed by a church in which I am active and love dearly. I truly want to know if I am missing something.

Re: - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2008/12/9 13:23

Sean,

I want to know too! I am somewhat in the same boat as you, I am not convinced either way very strongly.

On one hand, I appreciate the covenantal, family emphasis of the paedobaptists. And, the fact that God has made promises to "me and my seed after me" is comforting and encouraging.

However, the seeming silence regarding baptism of infants in the New Testament cannot be lightly passed over either.

I will post more if I have anymore thoughts.

Grace to you,
Taylor

Re: - posted by seanjol (), on: 2008/12/9 13:24

Thanks. Will be in prayer.

Re: - posted by BeYeDoers (), on: 2008/12/9 13:42

Taylor, Brother Washer might be inaccurate "historically" but he is accurate scripturally. History, the early fathers, Augustine, Calvin, you name it, mean NOTHING. The doctrine of baptism in the New Testament is quite clear. Its only similarity to circumcision is that it is the outward covenant sign of belonging in the covenant. In the New Covenant, that is regeneration, which doesn't take place at birth or in infancy.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2008/12/9 14:07

Quote:
-----Philologos - the paedobaptist does not equate infant baptism with necessarily meaning that the infant is elect, yet at the same time, they do trust God for the promises to "them and their children".

That still sounds like hereditary election to me. If they are 'trusting' ie exercising faith I thought that was a gift of God? :-(

Don't trouble to explain it further... I don't want to put the thread on a tangent.

Re:, on: 2008/12/9 14:36

Quote:
-----History, the early fathers, Augustine, Calvin, you name it, mean NOTHING. The doctrine of baptism in the New Testament is quite clear.

I agree with this completely. This is like if people 2,000 years ago started saying that since one of the "mid-church fathers" named Benny Hinn taught there were not three persons in the godhead, but nine... it must be true.

Scripture is the FINAL authority on all matters.

Krispy

Re: Infant Baptism - posted by narrowpath, on: 2008/12/9 17:59

I think we should ask the question why churches perform paedobaptism.

I found that for one they are influenced by the catholic teaching that holds when an unbaptized(sprinkled) child dies it cannot go to heaven.

Secondly, paedobaptism was and is performed by Reformed state churches that cannot deny their subjects church membership and are therefore bound to perform it.

Paedobaptism causes a false view of salvation.

John the Baptist himself denied baptism to unregenerate applicants.

Re: - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2008/12/9 18:10

narrowpath,

I think both of your statements are incorrect, and I'll try and demonstrate why...

The reformed position (consult the confessions if you wish) is that elect infants enter heaven. It has nothing to do with if they were baptized or not. This is an entirely different discussion, but I just wanted to relay to you the confessional reformed position (according to the Westminster Standards).

I'm not sure what you mean by "Reformed state churches" - none of the reformed churches in America are state churches. And, the historic Presbyterians could deny someone church membership for living an observably ungodly life.

But, referring to your original question - "why do churches perform paedobaptism" - for which you provided your opinions, the reformed churches I have personally had experience in perform paedobaptism for covenantal reasons. They believe that baptism introduces people into the **visible** church, which doesn't necessarily mean they are elect, but does carry certain covenant privileges (Word preached, nurture of other Christians, etc.) Since the reformed churches believe that infants of believing parents are members of the church, as believers in the Old Covenant were members of the covenant community, they baptize them as such.

All - Regarding Scripture being the final authority: the paedobaptists completely agree. If you read their works, they provide sweeping Scriptural exegesis for their position, both from the Old and New Testament, and it is more than just "see - it says household".

Like I said, I'm not a convinced paedobaptist. I attend a credobaptist church. However, at the same time, Jonathan Edwards, J.C. Ryle, Thomas Watson, Thomas Manton, Jeremiah Burroughs, John Owen, etc. were not dumb men. They didn't just blindly follow the traditions of men - they had strong reasons for why they did what they did, and they all practiced paedobaptism. So, I only say that to discourage quick prejudice against paedobaptists as not knowing anything about their Bibles.

Grace to you,
Taylor

Re: - posted by narrowpath, on: 2008/12/9 19:09

Taylor,

I am from Germany, the motherland of the reformation where we have the protestant Lutheran and Catholic state churches that both perform infant baptism. In the times past, you were by birth either Catholic or Lutheran. In the UK where I live now, things are somewhat similar to Germany.

I admit that the reformed churches in UK and Germany did not believe that baptism spares infants from hell, nevertheless as far as Germany is concerned there is still much leaning towards the catholic mindset which uses infant baptism as an instrument to bind their subjects to their unholy state-church entity.

That is definitely different from the situation in the US.

I still wonder how one can preach election and salvation by faith and nullify it by practising infant baptism - but that is another blog.

Re: - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2008/12/9 19:37

narrowpath,

Gotcha. I didn't consider the Lutheran churches, as those are usually not included in one speaks of "reformed" churches. Reformed meaning the church subscribes to the Westminster Standards or Three Forms of Unity. I don't know much about the Lutheran churches.

Grace to you,
Taylor

Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2008/12/9 21:03

Not a reply, just adding to the thread...

Found the following (<http://www.gotquestions.org/infant-baptism.html>) here:

There is much confusion about baptism in the various Christian denominations. However, this is not a result of the Bible presenting a confusing message on baptism. The Bible is abundantly clear of what baptism is, who it is for, and what it accomplishes. In the Bible, only believers who had placed their faith in Christ were baptized - as a public testimony of their

r faith and identification with Him (Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3-4). Water baptism by immersion is a step of obedience after faith in Christ. It is a proclamation of faith in Christ, a statement of submission to Him, and an identification with His death, burial, and resurrection.

With this in view, infant baptism is not a Biblical practice. An infant cannot place his or her faith in Christ. An infant cannot make a conscious decision to obey Christ. An infant cannot understand what water baptism symbolizes. The Bible does not record any infants being baptized. Infant baptism is the origin of the sprinkling and pouring methods of baptism - as it is unwise and unsafe to immerse an infant under water. Even the method of infant baptism fails to agree with the Bible. How does pouring or sprinkling illustrate the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

Many Christians who practice infant baptism do so because they understand infant baptism as the new covenant equivalent of circumcision. In this view, just as circumcision joined a Hebrew to the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants, so baptism joined a person to the New Covenant of salvation through Jesus Christ. This view is unbiblical. The New Testament nowhere describes baptism as the New Covenant replacement for Old Covenant circumcision. The New Testament nowhere describes baptism as a sign of the New Covenant. It is faith in Jesus Christ that enables a person to enjoy the blessings of the New Covenant (1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 9:15).

Baptism does not save a person. It does not matter if you were baptized by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling - if you have not first trusted in Christ for salvation, baptism (no matter the method) is meaningless and useless. Water baptism by immersion is a step of obedience to be done after salvation as a public profession of faith in Christ and identification with Him. Infant baptism does not fit the Biblical definition of baptism or the Biblical method of baptism. If Christian parents wish to dedicate their child to Christ, then a baby dedication service is entirely appropriate. However, even if infants are dedicated to the Lord, when they grow up they will still have to make a personal decision to believe in Jesus Christ in order to be saved.

Re: sozo - posted by savannah, on: 2008/12/10 1:02

"But when the High Priests and the Scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done and the children who were crying aloud in the Temple, "GOD SAVE THE SON OF DAVID," they were filled with indignation. "Do you hear," they asked Him, "what these children are saying?" "Yes," He replied; "have you never read, 'OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF INFANTS AND OF BABES AT THE BREAST THOU HAST BROUGHT FORTH THE PRAISE WHICH IS DUE'?" (Matt. 21:15,16)

Infants may and do praise their God, as well as adults, according to His Word, not man's tradition nor rationale.

And it happened, as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the babe in her womb leaped, and Elizabeth was filled of the Holy Spirit. And she cried out with a loud voice and said, You are being blessed among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this to me that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For behold, as the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped in exultation. And blessed is she believing, because there will be a completion to the things spoken to her from the Lord. And Mary said, My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit exulted in God My Savior. (Lk.1:41-47)

The spirit of both infant and adult may exult in God as Savior, or Yeshua God's Salvation, according to His Word, not man's tradition nor rationale.

“We see in this passage that infants are capable both passively of being filled with the Holy Ghost and actively of responding with joy to the presence of Christ” (Revealed to Babes)

"The most mature believer does not so much apprehend Christ as he is apprehended by Christ (Philippians 3:12). It is not as important to the child of God what he knows of God as the fact that God knows him (Galatians 4:9). A covenant child is as capable of being apprehended and being known as is an adult." (Revealed to Babes)

Adults nor infants are capable of changing their own hearts...

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the intense love which He bestowed on us, caused us, dead though we were through our offences, to live with Christ--it is by grace that you have been saved-- raised us with Him from the dead, and enthroned us with Him in the heavenly realms as being in Christ Jesus, in order that, by His goodness to us in Christ Jesus, He might display in the Ages to come the transcendent riches of His grace. (Eph. 2:4-7)

1Co 7:14 "for the unbelieving husband hath been sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife hath been sanctified in the husband; otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy.
Children of believers are baptized not that they may become holy but because they are holy."

In 1 Cor 7:14 the word holy which is used to describe the children of believers is the greek word hagios.

From Strong's ; sacred (physically pure, morally blameless or religious, ceremonially consecrated): - (most) holy (one, thing), saint.
It is used 231 times in the N.T. Translated 'holy' 168 times, 'saints' 60 times, 'most holy' once, 'saint' once, and saints' (plural possessive) once.

Children of believers are baptized in faith. That faith is in God, His Grace, His Salvation, His Promise. Act 2:39 "For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all those afar off whom God will call."

Heb 11:1 Now faith is the persuasion of the things that are in hope, as if they were in act; and the manifestness of the things not seen.

Eph 2:8-10 For by grace you are saved, through faith, and this not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, that no one should boast; for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before prepared that we should walk in them.

God's salvation is by God's Grace, and the faith of God's elect is His gift and not by decisional nor baptismal regeneration.

Quote from 'gotquestions' article, "If Christian parents wish to dedicate their child to Christ, then a baby dedication service is entirely appropriate."

Baby dedication as practiced today has no warrant from the Word. It is but man's substitute for God's ordinance of baptism.

Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/10 2:08

I was baptized as an infant in the Reformed Church of America. As I grew up, I was in and out of different churches and really never thought anything more about baptism.

A few years ago, after I started attending church on a regular basis, I was helping the Pastor with some graphics for his sermon and as I read his sermon on baptism (it was a Baptist church) I became aware that there were different kinds of baptism. As we talked back and forth I rejected the idea of being baptized again as foolishness, but when he quoted me a Bible verse, and the next morning I opened my Bible to that very verse to continue my daily reading, I realized that the Lord would have me to be baptized. The very next Sunday I obeyed.

Within 30 days the Lord had me off of alcohol and nicotine. This is not something that I set out to do, but rather something that the Lord pressed upon me by taking away my ability to pray - this within a few days of showing me that there was power in prayer. With Him, I was able to quit both smoking and drinking, cold turkey, with no relapses or continuing cravings.

Only later did I make the connection between my baptism and the falling away of my sins. My profession of faith along with the baptism was a turning point. I am a new creation. Old things have passed away and all things have become new.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2008/12/10 8:19

One interesting feature of Infant Baptism is that the Reformed folk usually like to claim a family link with Augustine but he regarded Infant Baptism as a cure for Original Sin. Modern Reform seems to reject the Sacramentalism of Augustine but clings to his Monergism.

I think both are fatally flawed.

Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/12/10 10:51

These were the Bible verses that I read that morning:

And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. There were about twelve men in all.

- Acts 19:1-7 (ESV)

Re: - posted by iansmith (), on: 2008/12/10 10:58

Quote:

narrowpath wrote:

I am from Germany, the motherland of the reformation where we have the protestant Lutheran and Catholic state churches that both perform infant baptism. In the times past, you were by birth either Catholic or Lutheran.

Recently I was listening to Chris Rosebrough over at Fighting For the Faith (fightingforthefait.com). If you are not familiar with Chris and Pirate Christian Radio, they are definitely worth checking out -Chris' testimony has him going from being a Nazarene to being a Baptist to being a Lutheran. He seems very content with Lutheran doctrine, and for the most part has a strong biblical foundation -recently he did two programs defending infant baptism.

While his arguments in defense of infant baptism were compelling, there were still some holes. Namely, the fruit of infant baptism.

I studied history in college, and it doesn't take a history degree to say that some bad things happened in Germany in the 20th century. Even though the majority of the population was baptized as either Catholic or Lutheran, they still went on to support a fascist dictator and kill over 8 million Jews.

George Muller in the 19th Century recognized the error of infant baptism after confronted with the topic by a friend, the friend told him simply to see what the bible said about the topic, after reading Mr. Muller was convinced that he himself must be baptized as a believer! He went on to convince countless others from Lutheran, Presbyterian and Anglican backgrounds to have a believer's baptism!

George Muller, although not voiced directly in his biography made a link between the shallowness of the church in Germany and infant baptism... and you can see the fruits of it in 1914 and 1939.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2008/12/10 11:27

I have my own story along these lines...

As a young man I was heading for the Anglican ministry. The Anglicans practise infant baptism and I had been 'baptized' as a baby. I had a long association with many Pentecostals who were constantly encouraging me to be water baptized. One godly pastor said 'I don't see how God can open your eyes to Spirit baptism and not water baptism. In the end I said 'when I am sure that God is speaking to me personally about the issue I will be baptized even though it puts my future career at stake.'

Some months later, with my fiancée, I visited a 92 year old Plymouth Brother. We spent two weeks going through scriptures on a number of topics. I sometimes say I learned more in two weeks with him than 3 years later at Bible College.

One day he was agitated and began a study on the 'households' who were baptized in the Acts showing the faith of all those in the households. He concluded by saying he hoped it would not interfere with our fellowship.

I laughed and explained.. "Some time ago I said I would be baptized when God spoke to me personally about the issue. There are 3 people in this room and 2 have already been baptized in water... it is not hard to work out who God is speaking to."

A couple of months later I was baptized in water.