

Are Infants Eligible? (1)



Foundations (Day 124)
by Derek Prince

Yesterday, we've seen that there are four conditions for baptism – repenting, believing, a good conscience, which are summed up by a fourth requirement: becoming a disciple It will be seen immediately that these four conditions listed above for baptism automatically rule out infants. By its very nature, an infant cannot repent, cannot believe, cannot answer with a good conscience to God and cannot become a disciple. Therefore, an infant cannot be eligible for baptism.

It is sometimes suggested that there are instances in the New Testament where whole families or households were baptised together and that it is probable that infant members of these households were included with the rest in the act of baptism. Since this has an important bearing on the whole nature and purpose of baptism, it is desirable to investigate this suggestion with care.

The two households usually mentioned are the household of Cornelius in Acts 10 and the household of the Philippian jailer in Acts 16. Let us consider first the household of Cornelius. We are told that Cornelius was "a devout man and one who feared God with all his household" – that is, all the members of his household were God-fearing people (see Acts 10:2). Before Peter began to preach to them Cornelius said:

> "Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God." (Acts 10:33)

This indicates that all those present could hear Peter's message.

> "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God." (Acts 10:44-46)

This indicates that all those present could not merely hear Peter's message, but also receive the Holy Spirit by faith as a result of that message and speak with other tongues. In fact,

it was upon this very ground that Peter accepted them as being eligible for baptism.

> "Then Peter answered, 'Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptised who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?'" (Acts 10:46-47)

Furthermore, when Peter gave to the apostles and brethren in Jerusalem an account of what had taken place in the house of Cornelius (see Acts 11), he added another important fact concerning all the members of Cornelius's household.

> "Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. And he told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house, who said to him, 'Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter, who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.'" (Acts 11:12-14)

We learn from this that, as a result of Peter's preaching in the house of Cornelius, every member of the household was saved.

If we now put together the various pieces of information we have gleaned concerning the household of Cornelius, we arrive at the following facts actually stated about them: all of them were God-fearing; all of them heard Peter's message; all of them received the Holy Spirit and spoke with other tongues; all of them were saved. It is clear, therefore, that all of these were people capable of meeting the New Testament conditions for baptism and that there were no infants among them.

Devotional

Transcript: WD-B052-124-ENG
Last Updated: 03 Feb 2025
Website: derekprince.com

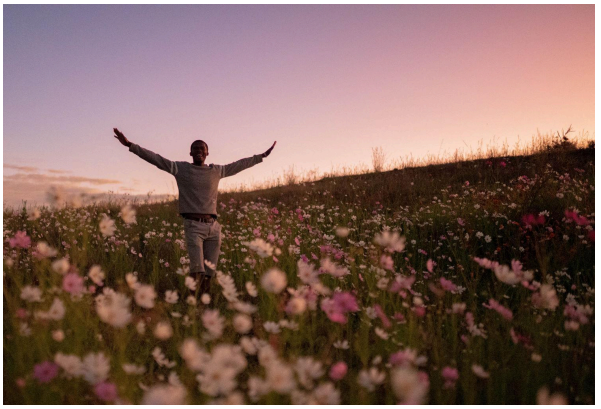


Bible Teaching Resources



Books

Illuminate and expand your understanding of the Bible with the Derek Prince collection of Christian books.



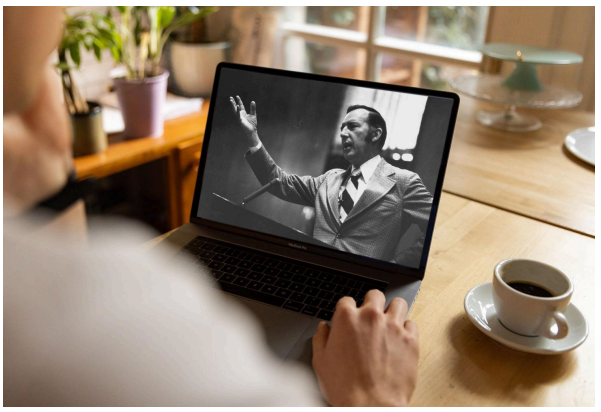
Daily Devotionals

Browse free biblically inspired daily devotionals by Derek Prince for practical teachings to uplift your Christian faith.



Legacy Radio

Listen to inspiring 10-minute messages and connect faith to life with the Derek Prince Legacy Radio podcast.



Sermons

Watch original and digitally remastered sermons by Derek Prince. Includes full message transcripts (free download).



Official App

Available free, download the official Derek Prince Ministries app and equip your faith, anywhere, anytime.



Proclamations

Declare life and experience the transformative power of God's Word with our Bible-based Proclamations.

Copyright © Derek Prince Ministries