

## **Spurgeon on the Error of Infant Baptism**

Where did the errors of the church of Rome come from? Were they all born in a day? No, they came by slow degrees. It happened thus:—I will trace but one error, against which as a denomination we always bear our protest, and I only take that as a specimen of the whole. Among the early Christians, it was the practice to baptize those who believed in Christ Jesus, by immersing them in the water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Well, the first wrong doctrine that started up, was the idea that perhaps there was some efficacy in the water. Next it followed that when a man was dying who had never been baptized he would perhaps profess faith in Christ, and ask that he might be baptized; but as he was dying they could not lift him from his bed, they therefore adopted sprinkling as being an easier method by which they might satisfy the conscience by the application of water. That done, there was but a step to the taking of little children into the church—children, unconscious infants, who were received as being members of Christ's body; and thus infant sprinkling was adopted. The error came in by slow degrees—not all at once. It would have been too glaring for the church to receive, if it had shown its head at one time with all its horns upon it. But it entered slowly and gradually, till it came to be inducted into the church. I do not know, an error which causes the damnation of more souls than that at the present-time. There are thousands of people who firmly believe that they shall go to heaven because they were sprinkled in infancy, have been confirmed, and have taken the Sacrament. Sacramental efficacy and baptismal regeneration, all spring from the first error of infant baptism. Had they kept to the Scripture, had the church always required faith before baptism, that error could not have sprung up. It must have died before the light of the truth, it could not have breathed, it could not have had a foothold in the Christian church. But one error must lead to another—you never need doubt that. If you tamper with one truth of Scripture, he that tempts you to meddle with one, will tempt you to tamper with another, and there will be no end to it, till, at last, you will want a new Bible, a new Testament, and a new God. There is no telling where you will end when you have begun.

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