

Luther and Calvin on Baptism

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In his Large Catechism, Luther wrote:

[I] affirm that Baptism is no human trifle, but that it was established by God Himself. Moreover, He earnestly and solemnly commanded that we must be baptized or we shall not be saved. No one is to think that it is an optional matter like putting on a red coat. It is of greatest importance that we hold Baptism in high esteem as something splendid and glorious. The reason why we are striving and battling so strenuously for this view of Baptism is that the world nowadays is full of sects that loudly proclaim that Baptism is merely an external form and that external forms are useless.... Although Baptism is indeed performed by human hands, yet it is truly God's own action (1978, pp. 98-99).

And Calvin wrote

"...God truly performs and effects by baptism what he figures." [and] "There is a union complementary with the thing figured, lest the sign be empty, because that which the Lord represents in sign he effects at the same time, and executes in us by the power of the Spirit. God works . . . through the sacraments as instruments... The Spirit is the author, the sacrament is truly the instrument used."

Source-

<http://www.hornes.org/theologia/rich-lusk/baptismal-efficacy-the-reformed-tradition-past-present-future>

The Lord's Service: The Grace of Covenant Renewal Worship by Jeffrey J. Meyers is a good source of material about Calvin's teaching about this