**The Importance and Necessity of Infant Baptism**

**In the Sayings of the Early Church Fathers**

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**The second canon of Carthage 418 states assuredly:**

“If any man says that in the kingdom of heaven or elsewhere there is a certain middle place, where children who die unbaptized live in bliss, whereas without baptism they cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, that is, into eternal life, let him be anathema”[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Saint Augustine** (354-430 AD) wrote:

And, of course, the mildest punishment of all will fall upon those who have added no actual sin, to the original sin they brought with them; and as for the rest who have added such actual sins, the punishment of each will be the more tolerable in the next world, according as his iniquity has been less in this world.[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Saint Augustine** also wrote:

“Now infants are strangers to this salvation and light, and will remain in perdition and darkness, unless they are joined to the people of God by adoption”[[3]](#footnote-3)

**Saint Augustine** again wrote:

“It may therefore be correctly affirmed, that such infants as quit the body without being baptized will be involved in the mildest condemnation of all. That person, therefore, greatly deceives both himself and others, who teaches that they will not be involved in condemnation”[[4]](#footnote-4)

**Saint Cyprian** (200-258 AD) recognizing how serious the pastoral responsibility is wrote:

“So you think that one who has just been born should not be baptized… However, we all thought very differently in our council… Rather we all believe that the mercy and grace of God is not to be refused to anyone born of man… As far as we can, **we must strive that no soul be lost**, if at all possible. For what is lacking to him who has once been formed in the womb by the hand of God.”[[5]](#footnote-5)

On the fate of unbaptized infants **Saint Gregory Nazienzen** (329-389 AD) wrote that they:

“…will be neither glorified nor punished by the righteous judge, as unsealed and yet not wicked.”[[6]](#footnote-6)

1. Hefele, C.J. *A History of the Councils of the Church*, Vol II, AMS Press 1972, reprinted from the edition of 1883 Edinburgh, p. 459. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. http://www.leaderu.com, Augustine’s Enchiridion, 93. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. N.&PN. Fathers, Series 1, Vol V, St. Augustine, “*On Forgiveness, of Sins, And Baptism*”, chapter 41, p. 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. N.&PN. Fathers, Series 1, Vol V, St. Augustine*, A Treatise on the Merits and Forgiveness of sins and on the Baptism of Infants*, Chapter 21, p. 22, 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. AN. Fathers, Vol. V, Epistle 58, *To Fidus On the Baptism of Infants*, point 2, p. 353, 354. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. N.& PN. Fathers, series2, Vol., VII, St. Gregory Nazienzen, Oration XL, *On Holy Baptism*, point XXIII, p, 367. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)