

## St. John Chrysostom: Baptismal Instructions

This is the revised main content from St. John Chrysostom's ·Baptismal Instructions,· reformatted for clarity and readability, with all introductions, publisher notes, annotations, and footnotes removed. The text focuses only on instructional discourse: --- \*\*The First Instruction: Addressed to Those About to Be Baptized\*\* This is a time of joy and gladness of the spirit. The days of your spiritual marriage are close at hand. To call what takes place today a marriage would not be mistaken; it is a marvelous spiritual marriage and a kind of enlistment in the army of Christ. I used both these images: ·I betrothed you to one spouse, to present you as a chaste virgin to Christ· and, ·Put on the armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.· Today, there is joy in heaven and on earth. I rejoice over one sinner who repents, how much greater joy is among angels and all creation when so many souls leave the devil and seek to be numbered in Christ's flock. Come, let me speak to you as a bride about to enter the holy chamber. Let me show you the immense glory of the Bridegroom, the kindness He shows to His bride. He does not count beauty, wealth, or pedigree; in spite of her deformity and the filth of her sins, He welcomes her. This reveals the boundless kindness of our Lord. Paul spoke of the betrothal to Christ, he meant those souls who have progressed in holiness. Let us reflect on how deformed the bride once was, worshiping idols and indulging in shameful acts. The Bridegroom saw her in this state, He did not turn away. Instead, He welcomed her, saying through the prophet and see, and incline your ear, and forget your people and your father's house. And the king shall greatly desire you. He calls her ·daughter· despite her rebellion, demanding no payment or judgment, only that she listens and forgets. Therefore, let each of you here forget your wicked ways. Listen and accept this admonition: forget your people and error and your father's house your former behavior. If you do this, the king will greatly desire your beauty. Teaching concerns the soul. Bodily ugliness cannot be changed, but the soul can be transformed by free will. Who ugly soul chooses, it can become beautiful and pleasing to God. \*\*Marriage Is a Great Mystery\*\* If marriage in physical world is a great mystery when the bride leaves all behind and becomes one with her husband how much more this spiritual marriage! In earthly marriage, the union is so close that the two become flesh, as Scripture says. In spiritual

marriage, this closeness is even more profound. Unlike earthly suitors, Christ seeks no wealth or status but offers heaven's wealth to souls poor and sinful. **\*\*The Contract and Gifts of the Spiritual Marriage\*\*** In earthly marriages, there are contracts and gifts. In this spiritual marriage, the contract is your obedience and agreement to the Bridegroom. The gifts Christ gives surpass all: He loves the Church, gives Himself up for her, sanctifies her, and cleanses her by baptism, so that she may be without spot or wrinkle and glorious. He offers freely, asking only that you forget the past and show a will for the good. **\*\*Believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit\*\*** Contribute your part: make a strong confession of faith, not only with your lips, but with your mind and heart. Lay the foundation of piety. Believe in the God of the universe, the Father, creator of all; in Jesus Christ, His only-begotten Son, consubstantial with the Father, who took on flesh, was crucified, and rose from the dead; in the Holy Spirit, equal in dignity to the Father and Son. Hold firmly to this faith, and do not be swayed by false teaching. **\*\*Embrace the Yoke of Christ\*\*** Those who believe must also shine through their conduct. No sin is so great that it cannot be wiped away by the Master, if only you resolve to change. "Come to me, all who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart." The call is to everyone: rich and poor, young and old, slave. The yoke of Christ neither constricts nor oppresses but teaches true wisdom. Learn meekness and humility from Christ. Such a person does not lose their temper, does not envy, steal, or seek wealth, but follows every virtue. Lay aside this yoke and forget our old ways. Guard your eyes and tongue from passions, and banish all works of adultery, idolatry, enmity, jealousy, and the like. Instead, pursue the fruits of the Spirit: charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, modesty, and self-control. Prepare yourself with constant prayer and reflection to receive this great gift. **\*\*The True Adornment of Woman\*\*** Let your zeal be for the beauty of the soul, not of expensive or cosmetics. Adorn yourselves with good generosity, modesty, meekness, wisdom, and a yearning for heaven. Avoid the use of cosmetics that aim to improve on God's creation or draw unhealthy attention. If unwilling to give up this habit at least refrain from such adornment when coming to the house of prayer. **\*\*Against Omens, Oaths, and Spectacles\*\*** Omens, superstitions, and all pagan practices. Avoid holding grudges, forgive your neighbors, and tear up every contract before reconciling with all before receiving the

King. Especially, avoid careless oaths; do not swear as Christ com Avoid talk of the theater, races, and cruel spectacles that encourage vice and violence. What pleasure is there witnessing such cruelty? \*\*Do Honor to the Name of Christian\*\* Do not be careless about your salvation. Throu kindness, you will be called a Christian and one of the Soon you will put on Christ; let this guide your actions a thoughts. Just as those who bear the imperial image revered, so should you, who are about to put on Christ Hi conduct yourself with all dignity, knowing He d among you. Value nothing more highly than entrance into the C Spend your days in prayer, reading, and spiritual con Be vigilant against the snares of the evil one, so that the of instruction fall into rich and fertile soil, and you may receive the gift of God and give Him glory forever. Amen