



20

Baptism at Bernice Puram

Questions

What do you think is going on here?

What do you think the pastor is asking the family?

What promises do the parents and godparents make for the child?

Have you been to a baptism or christening service? Was it the same as this one or was it different?

What are the differences between this baptism and the one in photograph 21?

Put photographs 17 and 20 together – which parts of the church can you see in this photograph which you did not see in photograph 17? Look out for:

- *Part of the pulpit on the right*
- *The musicians*
- *The large windows without glass to let the air in.*

Background

This photograph is taken in Rottschaefer Memorial Church in Bernice Puram, the same church as photograph 17. It is later in the same service and a young couple have brought their five month old daughter to be baptised. The child's sponsor (or godfather) is standing beside them.

The service was in Tamil, but you can find an English copy of the words at <http://www.csimichigan.org/PDF/HOLY%20BAPTISM%20OF%20INFANTS.pdf> The pastor is asking the parents if they believe in God and whether they will bring her up as a Christian. When they have made these promises the pastor takes the baby, pours water on her head and makes the sign of the cross on her forehead. The congregation then welcome the baby as a member of the church. You cannot see the font in this photograph because it is behind the pastor, but you can see it in photograph 17 if you look carefully.

When this little girl is old enough she will need to decide whether to become a full member of the Church of South India. She will then be confirmed like the girl in photograph 19.



