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<http://www.fbcweb.org/doctrines.html>

### **Personal Study of the Bible-79**

#### **Galatians 3:26-29 – 3 Benefits of Grace: “adult sons,” “no distinctions,” and “heirs”**

Read Galatians 3:26-29. In Paul’s discussion of contrasts between living under the Law or Grace, he touches on three grace benefits of salvation by faith alone in Christ alone, i.e., all being adult sons of God, all being equal before God, and all being heirs of God. Note the first benefit:

#### **Galatians 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.**

“Sons of God.” The first benefit of living under grace is that believers are “sons of God.” The term for sons (*υἱός, huíos*) refers to full-grown son. This is much stronger than “children” of God. The emphasis is not on regeneration; rather, it is on adulthood. In the Roman culture when a child reached the age of adulthood, his father would give him a *toga virilis*, a coat of manhood (on Roman activities regarding children, see <http://www.classicsunveiled.com/romel/html/romechildren.html>). This “coat of manhood” bestowed on the son all of the privileges of adulthood, like voting. At that point, the “son” became an adult, he was no longer bound by the slave tutor, which in the analogy is the Law. Note the word “all” above. This means that at the point of salvation every believer is granted full-grown son status (see Galatians 4:6). All believers in the church age have adult privileges with God.

“through faith.” Every believer receives the special privileges before God, not by works, but by faith. Although it is common in many religions of the world to speak of all men as being sons of God, this is false. One becomes a son of God *only* by faith in Christ. One is neither a son of God or child of God apart from regeneration from faith alone in Christ alone. Man’s status with God rests on Christ, not human works.

#### **Galatians 3:27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.**

This verse shows how we received the adult privilege. This does not refer to water baptism, but spiritual baptism, which takes place at the instant we place our faith in Christ. Through spiritual baptism, which water baptism symbolizes, the believer is entered into living union with Christ. The root meaning of baptism is identification. God completely and permanently identifies us with Christ at the point of salvation, Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:13.

## On overview of baptism

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# Baptism

## Introduction

The word baptize is from the Greek word **baptidzo** which means to identify or to be made one with. In early Greek, the word had both religious and secular meanings. In general, it refers to the act of identifying one thing with another thing in such a way that its nature or character is changed, or it represents the idea that a real change has already taken place.

As a reference to identification, baptize means to place a person or thing into a new environment, or into union with someone or something else, so as to alter his or its condition or relationship to the previous environment.

There are seven types of baptism mentioned in the Bible. Four of these are real baptisms and three are ritual baptisms.

### Real Baptisms

- The Baptism of Moses
- The Baptism of the Cross or Cup
- The Baptism of the Holy Spirit
- The Baptism of Fire

### Ritual Baptisms

- The Baptism of John
- The Baptism of Jesus
- The Baptism of the Christian Believer

These seven baptisms are described in the sections below.

## Real Baptisms

A baptism is called real if it involves actually identifying a person with something or someone.

### The Baptism of Moses

The baptism of Moses was a double identification, the children of Israel are identified both with Moses and with the cloud (Jesus Christ) as they passed through the Red Sea. No water involved and remember, they went through the sea on dry land when the waters were parted. 1 Cor. 10:1, 2.

## **The Baptism of the Cross or Cup**

Jesus Christ drank the cup filled with our sins. Another way of expressing it is that all the sins of the world were put into one cup and poured out on Christ while He was on the cross.

God the Father judged our sins while they were on Christ. Christ was identified with our sin and He bore our sins on the cross. He was made sin for us. 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:24.

In Matt. 20:22 Jesus speaks of the cup he is to drink as he makes a reply to the mother of Zebedee's children.

In Matt. 26:39, He prays to the Father to "let this cup pass from me . . ." Nevertheless, He determined to drink from the cup, as seen in John 18:11, "the cup which my Father has given me, shall I not drink from it?"

## **The Baptism of the Holy Spirit**

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a real baptism. When a person accepts Christ as savior, he is placed into the body of Christ. He is identified as a believer. The mechanics are given in 1 Cor. 12:13.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit did not occur in Old Testament times. The first occurrence was on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit placed the new believers into the body of Christ.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the basis for positional truth. Believers are placed in Christ, and in this position have access to many kinds of privileges and blessings. Ephesians 1 has a good description of what it means to have "all blessings in heavenly places in Him."

The baptism of the Holy Spirit was prophesied by John the Baptist, Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16. And it was prophesied by Jesus Christ, John 14:16, 17; Acts 1:5.

The implications of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, for all believers in the family of God, are given in Gal. 3:26-28.

The principle of retroactive identification with Christ is brought out in Rom. 6:3, 4 and Col. 2:12. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not an experience. It is not accompanied by speaking in tongues or any other kind of feeling or behavior. The things that happen to believers at the moment of salvation are accomplished by the Holy Spirit, not by us, and these things are not experiences.

## **The Baptism of Fire**

A judgment is coming at the second coming of Christ when all nonbelievers are taken from the earth. They will join the rest of the unbelievers in torments also called Sheol, Hades and Hell to wait for the last judgment also called the great white throne judgment described in Revelation 20 at the end of the millennium. This removal of unbelievers for judgment is the baptism of fire.

Fire is a symbol for judgment all through the Bible. Examples are the fire which burned the sacrifice on the Hebrew altar and the fire from God which burned the watered down sacrifices of Elijah and the prophets of Baal.

The doctrine of the baptism of fire is stated in Matt. 3:11, 12; Luke 3:16, 17; and 2 Thess. 1:7-9. The Lord Jesus taught several parables regarding the end times when believers and unbelievers will be separated. The believers are to go into the millennium, the unbelievers are cast off into fire.

These parables are analogies to the baptism of fire:

Wheat and tares - Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43.

Good and bad fish - Matt. 13:47-50.

The wise and foolish virgins - Matt. 25:1-13

The sheep and the goats - Matt. 25:31-46

## **Ritual Baptisms**

A baptism is called a ritual baptism, or a ceremonial baptism, when water is used as a symbol for something else. It is a representative identification. The individual is placed in the water, which means, symbolically, that he is identified with that which the water represents.

### **The Baptism of John - Matt. 3:6-11**

Here the water is symbolic of the kingdom of God which John was preaching. When a person was baptized by John, he was testifying to his faith in the Messiah and his identification with Christ's kingdom. The new believer was identified with the water, but the water represented a spiritual identification.

The phrase kingdom of God is a general term referring to all believers from the time of Adam until the end of the millennium. At the time of John the Baptist, all believers were pre church age Christians, although many lived on into the church age which began at the day of Pentecost.

### **The Baptism of Jesus**

When Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist, water was symbolic of God's will in salvation, namely that Jesus would go to the cross.

## **Believer's Baptism**

Believer's baptism is a symbolic act in which a believer proclaims his union with Jesus Christ. It represents death to sin, to the old way of life and resurrection to a new spiritual life.

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**Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**

The second privilege that Christians receive at the point of salvation is that they all become equal with all other believers. Regardless of distinctions in gifts, offices, and gender, all believers are equal as far as status before God. God does not recognize human distinctions among those who are in Christ. All human categories such as rich or poor, slave or free, male or female, smart or slow, lose their differences in the way God views us spiritually.

**Galatians 3:29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.**

The third privilege Christians have is that they are "heirs" of God. This points to eternal security, which the believer receives at the point of salvation, John 6:47; 10:27-28; Rom. 6:23; Heb. 5:8-9; 9:12. God gives all believers eternal security at the point of salvation.

## **Overview of Eternal Security**

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### **ETERNAL SECURITY**

God gives us all believer eternal security, which depends upon

- The power of God, John 10:29; Romans 8:31-32, 38,39
- The promises of God, John 3:16-36; 5:24.
- God's love, Rom. 5:6-10.
- God's immutability, 2 Timothy 2:12,13.

God's has the power to deliver salvation for us (John 10:29; Romans 8:31-39). He preserves it for us (1 Peter 1:4,5; Jude 1, 24).

God will never condemn the Christian (Romans 8:1; Ephesians 1:3; 2:6) because our Defense Attorney defends our case (Hebrews 9:24; 7:25; 1 John 2:1,2).

The indwelling Holy Spirit seals our salvation (Ephesians 1:13,14; 4:30).

Eternal security depends, not on us, but upon the power of God (John 10:29; Romans 8:31-32)

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*In 'Ehyeh,*

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