

Introducing The Reason

W. Curtis Porter

There are many statements in the New Testament that show baptism to be a condition of salvation. Among them, is the language of Paul in Gal. 3:27. Here he says: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." There are many blessings to be obtained in Christ. Reconciliation is in Christ. 2 Cor. 5:19. The promises of God are in Christ. 2 Cor. 1:20. Redemption is in Christ. Rom. 3:24. The forgiveness of sins is in Christ. Col. 1:14. Our inheritance is in Christ. Eph. 1:11. All spiritual blessings are in Christ. Eph. 1:3. And salvation is in Christ. 2 Tim. 2:10.

Since all these blessings are in Christ, a man must obtain them "in Christ" where they are. They cannot be obtained out of Christ, for they are "in Christ." Consequently, a man must get into Christ in order to reach these blessings. He cannot reach them out of Christ. Whatever, therefore, is necessary to put a man "into Christ" must be essential to the obtaining of these blessings. But Paul says we are "baptized into Christ." In fact baptism is the only thing in the New Testament that is said to put us in "into Christ." It is said by Paul in the text already given and also in Rom. 6:3. Hence, baptism stands between the sinner and the blessings enumerated. Since baptism puts a man "into Christ," and he cannot reach these blessings out of Christ, he must be baptized in order to come into possession of these blessings. And note all the blessings mentioned—reconciliation, the promises of God, redemption, the forgiveness of sins, our inheritance, all spiritual blessings and salvation. Unless a man can be saved without these blessings—one of which is said to be salvation—he cannot be saved out of Christ; and, as he cannot be saved out of Christ, he cannot be saved without baptism, for Paul says we are "baptized into Christ."

In order of offset these plain facts denominational preachers try to twist Gal. 3:27 around in such way as to prove men are children of God before they are baptized. They will read Gal 3:26—the verse preceding—which says: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." And then follow with verse 27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." They will ask: "As many of *you* who? What is the antecedent of *you*?" They will drop back to verse 26 for the antecedent of "you" and find it to be "children of God." "Ye are all the children of God by faith." Then they will read: "As many of you—you who?—you children of God as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." So they will conclude that children of God are the ones to be baptized; hence they are children of God by faith before they are baptized. If this proves that men are children of God before they are baptized, it proves they are children of God out of Christ, for it is baptism, according to Paul, that puts into Christ. Yet the reasoning is faulty. I gladly admit that antecedent of "you" in verse 27 is "children of God" in verse 26. But this does not prove they were children of God before they were baptized. In fact, the very language proves otherwise. Let us look at it. Such preachers ignore the tense of the verbs entirely. In verse 26 Paul says: "Ye *are* all the children of God by faith in Christ." This is present tense. "Ye *are* the children of God"—that is, ye *are* the children of God

now—at the time Paul wrote. But why could Paul say: "Ye *are* the children of God?" The next verse shows why: "For as many of you as have been (or as the Revised Version puts it—"were") baptized into Christ have put on Christ." So here is something in the past. "Ye *are* the children of God"—present tense—because "ye were baptized into Christ"—past tense. Since therefore, in the past they *had been* (they *were*) baptized into Christ, Paul could say "ye *are*—at the present—children of God." This proves, therefore, that men *are* the children of God by Faith because they "have been" (were) in the past baptized into Christ. Thus the fact that baptism is essential to salvation is further proved by this verse.

But there is another point worthy of consideration here. It is found in the little word "for."—"for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ." This is not the preposition "for," which we find in Acts 2:38, that comes from the Greek "eis" and means "in order to." This "for" in Gal. 3:27 is a conjunction. It comes from the Greek word "gar." Liddell & Scott's Greek-English Lexicon and Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon both say that the word means "to introduce a reason." It therefore, has the meaning of "because." When a statement is thus introduced by this word, as in Gal. 3:27, it "introduces the reason" for a statement previously made. Let us note it again in Gal 3:27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." This is introducing a reason for something already mentioned. But what was previously mentioned? It is found in verse 26: "Ye are all the children of God by faith." All right, that's the statement—what is the reason for it? Well, Paul says *the reason* you are children of God by faith is *you have been baptized* into Christ. So men were children of God by faith because they had been baptized into Christ. Since being "baptized into Christ" was "the reason" they were "children of God by faith," then those who had not been baptized into Christ were not the children of God by faith. This argument cannot be shaken by the sophistry of denominational preachers. I have tried it with the best of them in the fires of public discussion, and it has always stood unharmed.

It might be objected that the same word "for," from the Greek word "gar," is also found in verse 26: "For ye are all the children of God by faith." And it might be concluded from this that my argument on the word will not stand. However, the use of the word in verse 26 proves—rather than disproves—my contention concerning its meaning in verse 27. In verse 26 it has the same significance—it introduces a reason for a preceding statement. In verse 25, the preceding statement, Paul says: "But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." And the reason introduced in the next verse is: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." This proves the statement made in verse 25. Because they were children of God by faith in Christ they were no longer under the law, they were no longer subject to that law—the law of Moses. Any allegiance to the law of Moses had been surrendered when they became the children of God "by faith in Christ." The gospel of Christ had superseded the law of Moses. And an acceptance of

(Continued on page 8)

INTRODUCING THE REASON

(Continued from page 6)

that gospel was a giving up of allegiance to the law. So the language of verse 26—"ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ" gives a reason for the preceding statement—"ye are no longer under a schoolmaster." And the language of verse 27—"as many of you have been baptized into Christ"—serves as a reason for the statement of verse 26—"ye are all the children of God by faith." Thus the meaning of the word becomes evident, and we have proof positive that only those are "children of God by faith" who "have been baptized into Christ." The reason is thus introduced by the word "for"—Greek "gar"—and the facts thus introduced cannot be overthrown.