

Baptism and Sons of God

Baptism, being sons of God, and putting on Christ are inseparable. Gal. 3:26-27 states these relationships in beautiful terms: "For you are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." This passage teaches in a clear way that we must be baptized to be a son of God and to put on Christ.

There is a causal connection between verses 26 and 27, between being a son of God and being baptized. Verse 27 begins with the word *For*, and shows the cause or gives the reason for the preceding statement. Being baptized into Christ causes us to be sons of God.

There is also a change in the tense of the verbs in verses 26 and 27. The *are* in "You are all sons of God" in verse 26 is a present tense verb. Verse 27, uses a past tense verb, *were baptized*. Saying that they were baptized into Christ at some former time shows that baptism preceded their being sons of God at the time Paul was writing the letter to them. In the meaning of the passage, if they had not been baptized, they would not have been sons of God. Without the cause, *baptized into Christ*, there cannot be the effect, *being sons of God*.

In verse 27, Paul uses the preposition *into* in the expression "baptized into Christ." This preposition suggests that something on the outside needs to come into something. In this case, those outside need to come into Christ. Paul teaches that this movement from the outside of Christ into Christ is through baptism: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ (Gal 3:27).

Once we are in Christ, we are sons of God, receiving the blessings of God, including salvation. Peter teaches, "And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved (Acts 4:12)." As His sons, God "has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly (places) in Christ (Eph. 1:3)." We are God's sons, we are saved, and we have every spiritual blessing in Christ, because of our baptism into Christ.

It is important to be baptized according to the purpose given in the Bible. Not only are we baptized into Christ, but we are baptized unto the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). We are baptized to wash away our sins (Acts 22:16). We are baptized into the death of Christ (Rom. 6:3-5). All God's blessings flow to His children because of their baptism into Christ, as taught in Gal. 3:26-27.