Baptized Into Christ
(Galatians 3:27)

I. The *eternal* salvation of sinners is entirely of God, independent of the will and work of man. This is true grace. **ROM 5:19; 9:15-16; EPH 1:5; 2TIM 1:9; TIT 3:5; 1PE 5:10-12.**
   A. This establishes *relationship* to God. God the Father makes and adopts sons.
   B. This differs from the establishing of *fellowship* with God whereby disobedient sons reconcile themselves to their heavenly Father by faith and repentance.

II. Grace demands that the child of God should pursue personal holiness and righteousness in practice. **TIT 2:11-13.**
   A. The elective purpose of God and the sacrificial atonement of Christ are not only for the deliverance of the elect from the *penalty* of sin but also from the *power* of sin in this life. **TIT 2:14; MAT 1:21; 2TI 2:10.**
   B. Therefore, grace should never be looked upon as a license for sin or refusing submission in full to Christ. The person that does so is only deceiving himself. **JAM 1:22; ROM 3:8; JUDE 1:4.**

III. Obedience to the gospel command of baptism is the signal event of change in a child of God's life: it involves both repentance from sin and submission to the lordship of Christ. **ACT 2:38.**
   A. Baptism is a figure or picture of that which saved us: the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. **1PE 3:20-21; ROM 4:25.**
      1. Without the resurrection from the grave, there is no salvation. **1CO 15:16-17**.
      2. Note that baptism is the "...*answer* of a good conscience...," not the *generator* of a good conscience. Christ's salvation has power to "...purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (**HEB 9:13-14**).
      3. Before baptism comes faith (**ACT 8:36-37**): faith is the evidence of everlasting life, not the cause of it. **JOH 5:24; 6:47.**
      4. Baptism is therefore a *testimony* of an already received cleansing, in principle similar to **MAR 1:40-44**.
   B. Baptism affirms that an individual was *legally* represented in Jesus Christ, Who satisfied the demands of the law of God for the individual's sin by His death. **GAL 3:13; 2CO 5:21**.
   C. Since God's elect were *legally* represented in Christ, they *legally* died for sins IN Him. **GAL 2:20; ROM 5:8; 8:34.**
   D. Baptism by *immersion* represents not just the death of Christ for us but also His burial and resurrection. Sprinkling or pouring cannot properly portray this.
   E. An analogy is drawn from baptism which demonstrates that a person having been baptized should begin a dramatic change of his life. **ROM 6:1-5.**
      1. Christ died. The dead are freed from sin. **ROM 6:7**.
      2. In baptism we identify with our death in Christ. Thus, sin should no longer have dominion over us and our old man (our sin nature) should be considered as dead. **ROM 6:6-7; 1PE 4:1-2.**
      3. Christ arose from the dead, never again to be subject to death. In accord with this we should arise from the waters of baptism to *walk in newness of life* in submission to the resurrected Prince of Peace, not according to the prince of this world (Satan). **ROM 6:4, 8-14; 8:1-2.**
      4. If we legally rose with Christ (which our water baptism declares), our overall perspective of life should reflect that. **COL 3:1-7; ROM 12:1-2.**

IV. Believers are said to be *baptized INTO Christ* (**ROM 6:3; GAL 3:27**). There are five ways that a person can be IN Christ.

A. *Electively.* A person may be chosen in Christ entirely of the will of God. **EPH 1:3-6.**

B. *Legally.* A person may be seen legally in Christ, having his sins forgiven and Christ's righteousness applied to him. Again, God alone is active in considering a person in Christ in this sense. **EPH 1:7-9; HEB 10:9-10.**

C. *Vitally.* This is when a person is made alive in his inward parts by regeneration and thus able to delight in God and obey Him. This also is solely by the will and work of God. **ROM 7:22; 2CO 5:17; EPH 2:10**.

D. *Finally.* This is when Christ returns to fully redeem all of His saints in the resurrection. Again, God is the active force alone in this great change and gathering. **EPH 1:10-11; 1TH 4:16-17; PHIL 3:20-21.**

E. *Practically.* In this phase, the child of God plays an active role. He *works out* what God by grace had *worked in* and thereby gains assurance of his sonship and salvation. **COL 2:6; PHIL 2:12-13; 2PE 1:5-11**.

1. A person who has been baptized *into* Jesus Christ (**ROM 6:3**) has *put on* Christ. One is *in* what is *on*. **GAL 3:27**.
2. When a person obeys the gospel, he is:
   a. "...added to the church..." (**ACT 2:41-47**).
   b. "...added to the Lord..." (**ACT 5:14; 11:24**).
3. The church is even called *Christ* in **1CO 12:12.**
4. The local church is the body of Christ (**1CO 12:27**) which itself is IN Christ (**1TH 1:1**). This is how a person is baptized into Jesus Christ: by being baptized into the local church, His spiritual body in this world of which He is the Head.
5. Having been baptized into the church / into Christ, a child of God is made to drink into the Spirit of God who indwells the church. **1CO 12:12-13.**
   a. Through the Spirit he is brought into fellowship with God and fullness of joy. **ACT 2:42 c/w 1JO 1:3-4.**
   b. Through the Spirit he is builded together with other church members for a unique habitation of God. **EPH 2:20-22.**
   c. Through the Spirit he is made a priest of God in His house to offer spiritual sacrifices. **1PE 2:4-5 c/w HEB 13:15-16.**
   d. Through the Spirit's ministry via the word he matures in his understanding and conversation. **EPH 4:11-16.**

F. The O.T. exodists were only baptized *unto* Moses (**1CO 10:1-2**) but N.T. exodists from unbelief and sin are baptized *into* Christ.