

18. Spiritually is the filling ministry of the Holy Spirit. Corruption of this status quo is accomplished by many who assume the keeping of certain rituals produces spirituality.
19. Water baptism is a ritual practiced for the pre-canon period of the Church Age. Absent the doctrines of retroactive and current positional truth, immersion into and emersion out from water was a visual aid demonstration of these doctrines.
20. Grace Doctrine Church does not baptize because it was retired with the completion of the canon.
21. Baptism teaches the doctrines of retroactive and current positional truth. Since these doctrines are communicated in Scripture, the ritual is no longer required as a visual aid.
22. The following is our position on the subject as Proclamation number 26 among our *Forty Proclamations*:

Water baptism was a visual aid practiced by the apostles in the first century before the canon of Scripture was completed. The ritual was designed to visually demonstrate to new believers the reality of the baptism of the Holy Spirit that occurs at the moment of salvation. Being immersed into water is a picture of retroactive positional truth by which the believer is identified with Christ in His spiritual death, physical death, and burial, dramatizing the principle that the power of the sin nature is broken. Emersion out from the water is a picture of current positional truth by which the believer is identified with our Lord's resurrection, ascension, and session, dramatizing the future reality of the resurrection body. Once the canon of Scripture was completed, believers could learn these doctrines without dependence upon the ritual. When a believer understands the doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the ritual of water baptism can be meaningful; however, without this knowledge, it becomes a ritual without reality.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Forty Proclamations: The Theology of Grace Doctrine Church* (St. Charles: Joe Griffin Media Ministries, 2011), 15. For a detailed explanation of baptism, see Griffin, 2005 Shreveport Bible Conference: *Baptism: Controversies and Schisms*:

<http://www.joegriffin.org/Pages/ClassArchive.aspx?SeriesID=SBC05&ArchiveTitle=Shreveport+Bible+Conference%3a+Baptism%3a+Controversies+%26+Schisms>

23. Baptism is a ritual that only has reality when it is conducted following a thorough presentation of the doctrines of retroactive and current positional truth.
24. However, when a believer understands these doctrines, then the ritual becomes superfluous.
25. Those who assign some importance to the ritual usually contend it is a part of one's salvation, a means of establishing fellowship in a congregation, the obtainment of one's remission of sins, a sign of the outward indication of an inner change that has already occurred, identification with the person of Jesus Christ, or an initiation, not into the Christian life, but as into the Christian church.

### **Spirituality is the function of the royal priesthood.**

1. In the Church Age, a believer filled with the Holy Spirit is not subject to the Mosaic Law. He is placed under a higher law with is the status of spirituality.
2. The believer is free of any association with the Mosaic Law or the Levitical sacrifices.

**Galatians 5:8** - If you are led by the Holy Spirit, you are not under the Law.

**Romans 8:2** - The law of the Holy Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

**v. 3** - For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did; sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh,

**v. 4** - so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Holy Spirit.

**Romans 13:8** - Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. (NASB)

**v. 14** - If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he shall receive a reward.

## Is Jesus the Messiah?

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3. The purposes of the Mosaic Law and the Levitical code were to convince the Israelite that he was condemned while the rituals revealed the salvific provision of the Messiah.
4. The filling of the Holy Spirit provides the believer with status quo spirituality. This places him inside the bubble where his environment is maintained sinless under the Spirit's power and leadership.
5. The filling of the Holy Spirit distinguishes the production of divine good from dead works, the former classified as "gold, silver, and precious stones" (1 Corinthians 3:12, 14).
6. The carnal believer, because he is outside the bubble, produces dead works, illustrated by "wood, hay, and stubble" in 1 Corinthians 3:12, 15.
7. Gold, silver, and precious stones are produced by divine energy while wood, hay, and stubble are energized by human energy.
8. Both are appraised at the Evaluation Tribunal of Christ, the former "receiving a reward" while the latter "will suffer loss."

**1 Corinthians 3:13** - Each man's work [ ἔργον (érgon): performance] will become evident [ φανερός (phanerós): in an open, public demonstration ]; for the day [ of the evaluation tribunal; BER: Believer Evaluation Report ] will show it [ future tense of δηλώω (dēlóō): will reveal the report ] because it will be revealed with fire [ πύρ (púr): See footnote.<sup>2</sup> ]; and the fire itself will test the quality [ proving a thing whether it is worthy or not ] of each man's work.

<sup>2</sup> "In 1 Corinthians 3:10–15, the works of men are represented as a building of which only the inflammable parts ("gold, silver, precious stones") can withstand fire; the worker (builder) "himself shall be saved; yet as by fire," means that he will escape from the fire which destroys those of his works which are wood, hay, [and] stubble." (Spiros Zodhiates, gen. ed., *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. [Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993], 1255).