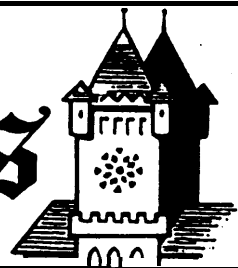


The Geneva Papers



No. 11

%982, Geneva Divinity School

November, 198:

STUDIES IN BAPTISM

By Ray R. Sutton

No. 10: Baptism and Clothing

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ... (Gal. 3:27). And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him... Col. 3:10). And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 2:24).

New clothing is put on at baptism. The old garments, life in the flesh and sin (Eph. 4:24), are removed and a new-clothing-life is worn. What is this new garment exactly? The answer to that question is the subject of the present study. The last essay developed the idea that baptism was a clothing rite. Thus, clothing, baptism, and salvation are all related.

Scripture connects baptism and salvation, and since the former is a rite of passage into new garments, a believer receives new clothes. In the broadest sense, he puts on Jesus Christ, but the *fabric* of Jesus is" multifaceted. Sad to say, the twentieth century church displays garments that are quite foreign to the clothing described in Scripture. Before examining the apparel of the twentieth century church, however, the garments of Jesus — to, be worn by the church when it passes through the waters of baptism — need to be considered.

Jesus is the image of God (Heb. 1:3), and He bears the Father's glory (Jn. 1:1 4). These two ideas, image and glory, lead to an important robe descriptive of the very image Jesus projects. In Exodus 28 the robe of Aaron is called the *glory* of God. Being the high priest, he was to wear a garment that manifested an image *compatible* with the inside of the Tabernacle, lest God strike him dead. In other words, the glory of God was present throughout the Tabernacle, and the clothing of the priest was designed to *match* that glory image. To establish this point clearly, the inside of the Tabernacle must be described.

The inside of the Tabernacle pictured the *universe* ordered around the throne of God. The ceiling was blue, representing the sky, and cherubim, representing the hosts of heaven, were embroidered on it. The cosmos was thus being presented, but all utensils and other items pointed to Jesus Christ at the right hand of God, the Shekinah Glory. The imagery cannot be mistaken, God's universe is ordered around the holy Trinity; thus, the Tabernacle was a microcosm of His creation as it was intended to be arranged. This same microcosm was projected on the priest's garments.

The order was reversed. "For whereas the Glory was stationed within the tabernacle, it was external to the priest so that it was his outer garments that directly reflected the light of the Glory standing over against him. Thus, the inner priestly garments (like the tunic) corresponded to the outer skin-coverings of the tabernacle. Then, over the tunic was the robe, a firmanent of blue, and over it was the ephod, the direct refulgence of the effulgence of the Glory, and thus an equivalent of the inmost tabernacle curtains that reflected back the Shekinah light within the holy of holies." (*Images of the Spirit*, Kline, p. 44)

Both matched because they bore the order ordained to exist in God's presence, and this is glory. Therefore, since we are priests and kings (Rev. 1 :5), our clothing must be the same — clothing in the broad sense. Scripture uses clothing language in moral not physical terms, although the latter would definitely be a manifestation of the former. So, in this essay clothing is being used in broad, moral ways, and the moral equity of the image on the glory-robe of the Old Testament priest extends to the New Covenant.

Order around the throne of God is liturgical (worship) and moral (righteousness). One need only look at the worship scene in the Book of Revelation to see these features. Angels and departed saints engage in liturgical acts such as answering back to God in unison, and singing. Historically, this has been called *antiphonal* (answering back) worship. The church through the ages has sought to model what is done in heaven on earth because of the corresponding models mentioned earlier. Its worship has been antiphonal with much congregational *participation*, but according to the patterns found in Scripture. Its morality has mirrored such descriptions as "holiness to the Lord."

One other aspect of this scene around God's throne cannot be overlooked. The saints along with Christ are said to be *reigning* with Him. Isaiah says, "For he (Christ) put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak" (Isa. 59:17). The apostle Paul draws from this passage in his own description of the clothing of the saint when he says, "Put on the whole armor of God" (Eph. 6:13-1 7). Thus, the clothing of the Christian is militaristic because the saints in heaven are reigning. The world is to look like the images cast in the Tabernacle, the high priest's garments, and Jesus Christ. This feature of the scene around God's throne can be called *dominical*.

Having worked from the robe of the priest in the Old Testament as an image-bearer of the glory of God, to the archetypal bearer of God's image, Jesus Christ, we now see the kind of clothing the *church* should be wearing.

Worship, obedience, and dominion are the threads which, if woven together, project God's glory. At baptism, we were clothed in such clothing when, we put on Christ.

The church in the twentieth century has apparently put on other clothing. Its worship is hardly antiphonal and in accordance with the patterns and precepts of Scripture; antinomianism abounds; and the church is hardly triumphant, Jude speaks of garments "polluted by the flesh" (23), so it could be said of the clothing of the twentieth century church that it is spotted by the flesh. If she would return to the Christ who bought her with His blood, those garments would "be washed white as snow. But this is unlikely as long as its worship is characterized by chaos and views such as "spontaneous means spiritual;" as long as dispensational ethics, advocating a radical discontinuity between the law of Sinai and the Law of Christ, dominate even the Reformed churches; as long as negative millennialism, which maintains the church will not be victorious before Christ returns, leads the church to incredulous passivity. The twentieth century church will go down in church history as it did in the fourteenth century. But if she will clean her baptismal garments allowing her Lord to wash her feet (Jn. 13:6-10), the church will be heard to once again say, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness" (Isa. 61:10).

CHRISTIANITY AND THE CALENDAR

by James B. Jordan

No. 16: The Sabbath and Culture

"None shall appear before Me empty-handed" — God, in Exodus 34:20.

"Nothing in my hand I bring; simply to Thy cross I cling" — Augustus Toplady, in "Rock of Ages."

We are concerned in this essay with the apparent contradiction between the two statements above, the first a command of God to His people, good for all time, and the second a universally recognized expression of true Christian sentiment.

The way to reconcile the matter is to recognize the difference between the inception of life and the consummation of life, or to specify, the first judgment and the final judgment. As the Reformers rightly saw, our salvation is based not on our works, but solely on the work of Christ imputed to us. The first judgment, then, is apart from our works. God judges us on the basis of Christ's work, apart from our (sinful) works, and declares us righteous in His court (Rom. 3).

The final judgment, however, entails a judgment of our works as well. Indeed, the description of the last judgment in Matthew 25:31ff. is most clear: those who inherit the kingdom of the Father do so because they acted righteously, and those who are rejected are rejected because of their sins. Indeed, Romans 2:7 characterizes the redeemed as "those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality." Such persons are "rendered according to their deeds," and their reward is "eternal life" (Rom. 2:6,7).

Does this truth conflict with the doctrine of salvation by the work of Christ alone? Not at all, but we do have to think Biblically and not use some variety of non-Christian "time-

less" logic to approach the question. There are two judgments, made at different times. The final judgment, including works, is made possible precisely on the basis of the first judgment, which is apart from works. It is the fact that God declares us saved (apart from works) which makes it possible for us to receive the Holy Spirit and to do good works.

This double judgment or double resurrection pattern is found throughout Scripture. The reference to two resurrections in Rev. 20 and John 5:24-29 illustrates it. The basic paradigm (model), however, is set out in Numbers 19:19, where the ceremonially dead man is declared "cleansed and resurrected twice, once on the third day and again on the seventh. This third day—seventh day pattern is found frequently in the Bible (e.g., Gen. 22:4; 42:18, Hos. 6:2, Jonah 1:17; John 2:19). It is the resurrection on the third day, in the midst of history, which makes possible the good works which are judged at the resurrection of the seventh day, at the end of history.

This is a redemptive specification of the basic sabbath pattern. According to Genesis 1:26-2:3, man was created on the sixth day, and the next day was the sabbath. Man was to join God in rest, even though man had never labored. This first sabbath was, for man, apart from works, but based on God's works. Just so, our initial salvation from sin is, for us, apart from works, but based on God's works.

Just as God rested after His labors, so man also is to rest after his as well. God ceased actively working, and rested in the fruits of His works, delighting in and enjoying them. God's nature-forming activity ceased, but He did not suddenly ignore nature on the sabbath; rather, He delighted in it. Similarly, on the final sabbath man will cease actively working, and his culture-forming activity will end, but the fruits of his labor will continue to be relevant. Both man and God will delight in true human culture.

Thus, the foundation of the sabbath is that we are created and redeemed apart from anything we have done. This is why the first part of all Christian liturgy is a confession of sin, thus a confession that we bring nothing in our hands. Having been declared forgiven in the absolution, however, we then offer ourselves and our works to God. We offer the sacrifice of praise, and we bring our tithes and offerings to Him. We bring bread and wine, which is lifted up to Him as a heaven-offering, and then received back down from Him as His sacramental memorial gift to us.

How, then, does the sabbath time of the Lord's Day relate to culture? Seemingly under the influence of Stoicism some sections of the Reformed faith have tried to maintain that we are completely to ignore the fruit of our labors on the Lord's Day. The entire day is to be occupied, they have tended to maintain, with mental ("spiritual") religious exercises. Delighting in God's works (nature) and man's works (culture) is wrong during sabbath time, they argue.

The Scriptures, however, seem to teach the opposite. The Lord's Day is not the day to rehearse music, but it is the best of all days to perform it to the glory of God. The Lord's Day is not the day to paint, but it is quintessentially the day to appreciate (judge) paintings, to delight in them. We may even say that the Lord's Day is the best of all days to enjoy nature, by walking about in God's handiwork, or even bathing in the warmth of His sun, or (dare we say it?) delighting in the carnal, earthly, physical pleasures of playing (without laborious exertions) in His ocean. During

sabbath time we rest *from* our works, and we rest *in* God and *in* His and our good works.'

Similarly, just as the Israelite offered himself to God in worship, and then offered his works as well (the "cereal offering, Lev. 1,2), so our worship should utilize the finest of our cultural and artistic labors. Cain was cursed for offering his 'works apart from the whole burnt sacrifice (Gen. 4), but on the basis of the death of Christ, God *requires* that we bring our cultural labors to His throne for evaluation. This is part of the very essence of sabbatical worship, for the Lord's Day, or Day of the Lord, is always the time for the judgment of man's works.

Our churches, with their bare walls, their pillbox architecture, their drab music, their passive congregations - do they reflect a Biblical pattern, or perhaps more the influence of stoicism? To be sure, sensitivity to Scripture must regulate the Church's decisions as to what to allow to be sacrificed in worship (cf. 1 Cor. 14:26ff.). Ail in all, however, the Bible teaches that God delights to be worshipped in careful beauty.

Dom Gregory Dix speaks of Biblical worship as one "whose foundation principle is that worship as such is not a purely intellectual and affective exercise, but one in which the whole man — body as well as soul, his aesthetic and volitional as well as his intellectual powers — must take full part. It regards worship as an 'act' just as much as 'experience'" (The *Shape of the Liturgy* [New York: Seabury, 1982], p. 31 2).

True sabbath keeping is not stoic but festive. It is not a time for avoidance of God's world and righteous culture, but a time of appreciation for these, as they speak of Him. Nor, under a Biblical regulative principle, is true Sabbath worship characterized by stoic passivity, mental mysticism, or a shunning of artistic culture. Rather, if we worship God as He has directed, we find that He desires the finest of our skills — architectural, poetic, musical, etc. — to be devoted to His particular praise.

We are not to come before Him empty-handed. Culture flows out of the first sabbath and back into the final sabbath. The weekly sabbath has both a backward and a forward look.

AN ECONOMIC COMMENTARY ON THE BIBLE

by Gary North

No. 11: False Signals

A naughty [worthless] person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward [false] mouth. He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers. Frowardness [perversity] is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he soweth discord. Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy (Prov. 6:12-15).

Moral worthlessness eventually translates into economic poverty. The person described here is someone who continually deals falsely with others. The universality recognized wink, the crossed fingers, the special signals to partners in deceit: all are part of a pattern of unreliability. The person says one thing, but he communicates a different message to others who are part of the "inner circle" who understand the secret signs.

Secret signs and communications establish a psychological distinction between "them" — the suckers — and "us", those "in the know." The deceiver is in fellowship with others who understand the meaning of the special signs. They see themselves as adversaries of those who do business with them. Others may trust their words and contracts, but they do not feel bound by their words. 'A promise is not binding, and a contract is not to be fulfilled, unless it is immediately beneficial to the one who has made the promise.

The spread of such an outlook is disastrous for any society. Men must make decisions in life concerning the future. They are inescapably interdependent with other people. They attempt to achieve their goals through the voluntary cooperation of others, who are simultaneously pursuing their own goals. This dovetailing of personal plans is made possible by voluntary contracts. One man relies on another to assist him in completing his plans.

Deception increases the costs of everyone who is relying on the deceiver to fulfill the terms of his contract. The man is unreliable, yet other people have made plans in terms of his word. Even if they are not being defrauded deliberately, their plans will go awry. It will take extra time or capital to complete those plans because of the nonperformance of the deceiver.

This person actively spreads strife. He divides people from each other. Again, this increases other people's costs of cooperation. They find it more difficult to deal with each other because of mutual suspicions. One evil person is capable of disrupting the plans of many others. The dominion covenant is thwarted because the strife undermines the productivity that is the product of the division of labor. It takes longer, and becomes more expensive, to subdue the earth.

What is significant is the suddenness of his downfall. Normally, men receive warnings. They see other people grow wary of them. Their business revenues decline. They find it difficult to gain cooperation with other individuals, who fear they will go bankrupt and not perform their contractual obligations. In other words, as men conduct their daily affairs unwisely, other men call attention to their shortcomings, directly or indirectly. They either learn from experience or else they see their income declining steadily.

There is another important factor to consider. The free market economy creates incentives to correct antisocial behavior. The man may learn directly from his profit-and-loss statements that he must restructure his business dealings. If he fails to repent (turn around), then some other person may be able to step in and offer to help the faltering business — for a fee, of course. Finally, competitors may step in and offer to buy up the business. Step by step, the free market economy allows other men to confront the inefficient man with the reality of his failures.

In contrast, the deceiver falls overnight. He ignores all signals of an impending crisis. Whatever signals he receives are either ignored by him — he trusts no signals, being a misuser of signals — or misinterpreted. Perhaps his partners in deception are now "setting him up." They are doing to him what he did to others. Because he trusts the signals of his accomplices, he becomes vulnerable to them. Because he thinks fraud can overcome the pressures of the free market, he ignores signals from honest men. After all, they are the suckers. A smart man never gives a sucker an even break. Price controls are a form of false signals.

The government tells the voters that they will be able to buy goods and services at below-market prices. But the bureaucrats are winking: at economic law, or at black market operators, or at the insiders. Controls misinform the public about the supposed availability of goods and services at prices that are artificially low (ceilings) or high (floors). Those "on the inside" know better. They can arrange their economic affairs accordingly. Those who are not in the know — the majority of voters — become the suckers. The result: economic shortages (from price ceilings) or gluts (from price floors), and the eventual disruption of the whole economy.

Price ceilings are especially insidious: the voters are deceived into believing that they can count on other citizens (sellers) in working out their respective plans. But sellers resist selling at a loss; they want payoffs, or special barter deals, or whatever. This creates resentment and

strife. It subsidizes envy. The controls generate improper responses to the true conditions of supply and demand. Eventually, the whole economy collapses or becomes stagnant. The more the false signals, the more devastating the collapse.

Calamity comes swiftly and without remedy. Nobody trusts the deceiver. He cannot gain cooperation from others because of the pattern of deception he has established. His "capital reserve" — a good reputation — is depleted. Without it, he finds it difficult to rebound from disaster. He needs cooperation, but he cannot find people who will sell it to him. He has priced himself out of the market. Dealing with him is too risky. Until the very end, he believes himself to be immune from false signals. This is his undoing: he fails to respond to accurate signals — signals that tell him to change his ways or else be judged.

Happy Thanksgiving !

Geneva Divinity School wants to wish all "of you the best" of Thanksgiving. We have much to be thankful for. — We are well into our third year of existence, and the Lord has been most gracious in providing for our every need. I am sure, that along with us, you can recall a great many things that you are thankful for. In that vein, we offer this prayer, which I trust, you will pray with us:

ALMIGHTY GOD, Father of all mercies, we, your unworthy servants, do give you most humble and hearty thanks for all your goodness and lovingkindness to us, and to all men. We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all, for your inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we beseech you, give us that due sense of all your mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful; and that we show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

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