

## THIRD PART, QUESTION 69

### Of the Effects of Baptism (In Ten Articles)

We must now consider the effects of Baptism, concerning which there are ten points of inquiry:

- (1) Whether all sins are taken away by Baptism?
- (2) Whether man is freed from all punishment by Baptism?
- (3) Whether Baptism takes away the penalties of sin that belong to this life?
- (4) Whether grace and virtues are bestowed on man by Baptism?
- (5) Of the effects of virtue which are conferred by Baptism?
- (6) Whether even children receive grace and virtues in Baptism?
- (7) Whether Baptism opens the gates of the heavenly kingdom to those who are baptized?
- (8) Whether Baptism produces an equal effect in all who are baptized?
- (9) Whether insincerity hinders the effect of Baptism?
- (10) Whether Baptism takes effect when the insincerity ceases?

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#### Whether all sins are taken away by Baptism?

IIIa q. 69 a. 1

**Objection 1.** It seems that not all sins are taken away by Baptism. For Baptism is a spiritual regeneration, which corresponds to carnal generation. But by carnal generation man contracts none but original sin. Therefore none but original sin is taken away by Baptism.

**Objection 2.** Further, Penance is a sufficient cause of the remission of actual sins. But penance is required in adults before Baptism, according to Acts 2:38: "Do penance and be baptized every one of you." Therefore Baptism has nothing to do with the remission of actual sins.

**Objection 3.** Further, various diseases demand various remedies: because as Jerome says on Mk. 9:27,28: "What is a cure for the heel is no cure for the eye." But original sin, which is taken away by Baptism, is generically distinct from actual sin. Therefore not all sins are taken away by Baptism.

**On the contrary,** It is written (Ezech. 36:25): "I will pour upon you clean water, and you shall be cleansed from all your filthiness."

**I answer that,** As the Apostle says (Rom. 6:3), "all we, who are baptized in Christ Jesus, are baptized in His death." And further on he concludes (Rom. 6:11): "So do you also reckon that you are dead to sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Hence it is clear that by Baptism man dies unto the oldness of sin, and begins to live unto the newness of grace. But every sin belongs

to the primitive oldness. Consequently every sin is taken away by Baptism.

**Reply to Objection 1.** As the Apostle says (Rom. 5:15,16), the sin of Adam was not so far-reaching as the gift of Christ, which is bestowed in Baptism: "for judgment was by one unto condemnation; but grace is of many offenses, unto justification." Wherefore Augustine says in his book on Infant Baptism (*De Pecc. Merit. et Remiss. i*), that "in carnal generation, original sin alone is contracted; but when we are born again of the Spirit, not only original sin but also wilful sin is forgiven."

**Reply to Objection 2.** No sin can be forgiven save by the power of Christ's Passion: hence the Apostle says (Heb. 9:22) that "without shedding of blood there is no remission." Consequently no movement of the human will suffices for the remission of sin, unless there be faith in Christ's Passion, and the purpose of participating in it, either by receiving Baptism, or by submitting to the keys of the Church. Therefore when an adult approaches Baptism, he does indeed receive the forgiveness of all his sins through his purpose of being baptized, but more perfectly through the actual reception of Baptism.

**Reply to Objection 3.** This argument is true of special remedies. But Baptism operates by the power of Christ's Passion, which is the universal remedy for all sins; and so by Baptism all sins are loosed.

**Objection 1.** It seems that man is not freed by Baptism from all debt of punishment due to sin. For the Apostle says (Rom. 13:1): “Those things that are of God are well ordered [Vulg.: ‘Those that are, are ordained of God’].” But guilt is not set in order save by punishment, as Augustine says (Ep. cxl). Therefore Baptism does not take away the debt of punishment due to sins already committed.

**Objection 2.** Further, the effect of a sacrament has a certain likeness to the sacrament itself; since the sacraments of the New Law “effect what they signify,” as stated above (q. 62, a. 1, ad 1). But the washing of Baptism has indeed a certain likeness with the cleansing from the stain of sin, but none, seemingly, with the remission of the debt of punishment. Therefore the debt of punishment is not taken away by Baptism.

**Objection 3.** Further, when the debt of punishment has been remitted, a man no longer deserves to be punished, and so it would be unjust to punish him. If, therefore, the debt of punishment be remitted by Baptism, it would be unjust, after Baptism, to hang a thief who had committed murder before. Consequently the severity of human legislation would be relaxed on account of Baptism; which is undesirable. Therefore Baptism does not remit the debt of punishment.

**On the contrary,** Ambrose, commenting on Rom. 11:29, “The gifts and the calling of God are without repentance,” says: “The grace of God in Baptism remits all, gratis.”

**I answer that,** As stated above (q. 49, a. 3, ad 2; q. 68,

Aa. 1,4,5) by Baptism a man is incorporated in the Passion and death of Christ, according to Rom. 6:8: “If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall live also together with Christ.” Hence it is clear that the Passion of Christ is communicated to every baptized person, so that he is healed just as if he himself had suffered and died. Now Christ’s Passion, as stated above (q. 68, a. 5), is a sufficient satisfaction for all the sins of all men. Consequently he who is baptized, is freed from the debt of all punishment due to him for his sins, just as if he himself had offered sufficient satisfaction for all his sins.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Since the pains of Christ’s Passion are communicated to the person baptized, inasmuch as he is made a member of Christ, just as if he himself had borne those pains, his sins are set in order by the pains of Christ’s Passion.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Water not only cleanses but also refreshes. And thus by refreshing it signifies the remission of the debt of punishment, just as by cleansing it signifies the washing away of guilt.

**Reply to Objection 3.** In punishments inflicted by a human tribunal, we have to consider not only what punishment a man deserves in respect of God, but also to what extent he is indebted to men who are hurt and scandalized by another’s sin. Consequently, although a murderer is freed by Baptism from his debt of punishment in respect of God, he remains, nevertheless, in debt to men; and it is right that they should be edified at his punishment, since they were scandalized at his sin. But the sovereign may remit the penalty to such like out of kindness.

**Objection 1.** It seems that Baptism should take away the penalties of sin that belong to this life. For as the Apostle says (Rom. 5:15), the gift of Christ is farther-reaching than the sin of Adam. But through Adam’s sin, as the Apostle says (Rom. 5:12), “death entered into this world,” and, consequently, all the other penalties of the present life. Much more, therefore, should man be freed from the penalties of the present life, by the gift of Christ which is received in Baptism.

**Objection 2.** Further, Baptism takes away the guilt of both original and actual sin. Now it takes away the guilt of actual sin in such a way as to free man from all debt of punishment resulting therefrom. Therefore it also frees man from the penalties of the present life, which are a punishment of original sin.

**Objection 3.** Further, if the cause be removed, the effect is removed. But the cause of these penalties is original sin, which is taken away by Baptism. Therefore such

like penalties should not remain.

**On the contrary,** on Rom. 6:6, “that the body of sin may be destroyed,” a gloss says: “The effect of Baptism is that the old man is crucified, and the body of sin destroyed, not as though the living flesh of man were delivered by the destruction of that concupiscence with which it has been bespattered from its birth; but that it may not hurt him, when dead, though it was in him when he was born.” Therefore for the same reason neither are the other penalties taken away by Baptism.

**I answer that,** Baptism has the power to take away the penalties of the present life yet it does not take them away during the present life, but by its power they will be taken away from the just in the resurrection when “this mortal hath put on immortality” (1 Cor. 15:54). And this is reasonable. First, because, by Baptism, man is incorporated in Christ, and is made His member, as stated above (a. 3; q. 68, a. 5). Consequently it is fitting that what takes

place in the Head should take place also in the member incorporated. Now, from the very beginning of His conception Christ was “full of grace and truth,” yet He had a passible body, which through His Passion and death was raised up to a life of glory. Wherefore a Christian receives grace in Baptism, as to his soul; but he retains a passible body, so that he may suffer for Christ therein: yet at length he will be raised up to a life of impassibility. Hence the Apostle says (Rom. 8:11): “He that raised up Jesus Christ from the dead, shall quicken also our [Vulg.: ‘your’] mortal bodies, because of His Spirit that dwelleth in us [Vulg.: ‘you’]”: and further on in the same chapter (Rom. 8:17): “Heirs indeed of God, and joint heirs with Christ: yet so, if we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him.”

Secondly, this is suitable for our spiritual training: namely, in order that, by fighting against concupiscence and other defects to which he is subject, man may receive the crown of victory. Wherefore on Rom. 6:6, “that the body of sin may be destroyed,” a gloss says: “If a man after Baptism live in the flesh, he has concupiscence to fight against, and to conquer by God’s help.” In sign of which it is written (Judges 3:1,2): “These are the nations which the Lord left, that by them He might instruct Israel. . . that afterwards their children might learn to fight with their enemies, and to be trained up to war.”

Thirdly, this was suitable, lest men might seek to be baptized for the sake of impassibility in the present life, and not for the sake of the glory of life eternal. Wherefore the Apostle says (1 Cor. 15:19): “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”

**Reply to Objection 1.** As a gloss says on Rom. 6:6, “that we may serve sin no longer—Like a man who, having captured a redoubtable enemy, slays him not forthwith, but suffers him to live for a little time in shame and suffering; so did Christ first of all fetter our punishment, but at a future time He will destroy it.”

**Reply to Objection 2.** As the gloss says on the same passage (cf. ad 1), “the punishment of sin is twofold, the punishment of hell, and temporal punishment. Christ entirely abolished the punishment of hell, so that those who are baptized and truly repent, should not be subject to it. He did not, however, altogether abolish temporal punishment yet awhile; for hunger, thirst, and death still remain. But He overthrew its kingdom and power” in the sense that man should no longer be in fear of them: “and at length He will altogether exterminate it at the last day.”

**Reply to Objection 3.** As we stated in the Ia IIae, q. 81, a. 1; Ia IIae, q. 82, a. 1, ad 2 original sin spread in this way, that at first the person infected the nature, and afterwards the nature infected the person. Whereas Christ in reverse order at first repairs what regards the person, and afterwards will simultaneously repair what pertains to the nature in all men. Consequently by Baptism He takes away from man forthwith the guilt of original sin and the punishment of being deprived of the heavenly vision. But the penalties of the present life, such as death, hunger, thirst, and the like, pertain to the nature, from the principles of which they arise, inasmuch as it is deprived of original justice. Therefore these defects will not be taken away until the ultimate restoration of nature through the glorious resurrection.

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**Whether grace and virtues are bestowed on man by Baptism?**

IIIa q. 69 a. 4

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**Objection 1.** It seems that grace and virtues are not bestowed on man by Baptism. Because, as stated above (q. 62, a. 1, ad 1), the sacraments of the New Law “effect what they signify.” But the baptismal cleansing signifies the cleansing of the soul from guilt, and not the fashioning of the soul with grace and virtues. Therefore it seems that grace and virtues are not bestowed on man by Baptism.

**Objection 2.** Further, one does not need to receive what one has already acquired. But some approach Baptism who have already grace and virtues: thus we read (Acts 10:1,2): “There was a certain man in Cesarea, named Cornelius, a centurion of that which is called the Italian band, a religious man and fearing God”; who, nevertheless, was afterwards baptized by Peter. Therefore grace and virtues are not bestowed by Baptism.

**Objection 3.** Further, virtue is a habit: which is defined as a “quality not easily removed, by which one may act easily and pleasurably.” But after Baptism man retains proneness to evil which removes virtue; and experiences

difficulty in doing good, in which the act of virtue consists. Therefore man does not acquire grace and virtue in Baptism.

**On the contrary,** The Apostle says (Titus 3:5,6): “He saved us by the laver of regeneration,” i.e. by Baptism, “and renovation of the Holy Ghost, Whom He hath poured forth upon us abundantly,” i.e. “unto the remission of sins and the fulness of virtues,” as a gloss expounds. Therefore the grace of the Holy Ghost and the fulness of virtues are given in Baptism.

**I answer that,** As Augustine says in the book on Infant Baptism (De Pecc. Merit. et Remiss. i) “the effect of Baptism is that the baptized are incorporated in Christ as His members.” Now the fulness of grace and virtues flows from Christ the Head to all His members, according to Jn. 1:16: “Of His fulness we all have received.” Hence it is clear that man receives grace and virtues in Baptism.

**Reply to Objection 1.** As the baptismal water by its cleansing signifies the washing away of guilt, and by its

refreshment the remission of punishment, so by its natural clearness it signifies the splendor of grace and virtues.

**Reply to Objection 2.** As stated above (a. 1, ad 2; q. 68, a. 2) man receives the forgiveness of sins before Baptism in so far as he has Baptism of desire, explicitly or implicitly; and yet when he actually receives Baptism, he receives a fuller remission, as to the remission of the entire punishment. So also before Baptism Cornelius and others like him receive grace and virtues through their faith in Christ and their desire for Baptism, implicit or explicit: but afterwards when baptized, they receive a yet greater

fulness of grace and virtues. Hence in Ps. 22:2, “He hath brought me up on the water of refreshment,” a gloss says: “He has brought us up by an increase of virtue and good deeds in Baptism.”

**Reply to Objection 3.** Difficulty in doing good and proneness to evil are in the baptized, not through their lacking the habits of the virtues, but through concupiscence which is not taken away in Baptism. But just as concupiscence is diminished by Baptism, so as not to enslave us, so also are both the aforesaid defects diminished, so that man be not overcome by them.

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**Whether certain acts of the virtues are fittingly set down as effects of Baptism, to wit—incorporation in Christ, enlightenment, and fruitfulness?**

IIIa q. 69 a. 5

**Objection 1.** It seems that certain acts of the virtues are unfittingly set down as effects of Baptism, to wit—“incorporation in Christ, enlightenment, and fruitfulness.” For Baptism is not given to an adult, except he believe; according to Mk. 16:16: “He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved.” But it is by faith that man is incorporated in Christ, according to Eph. 3:17: “That Christ may dwell by faith in your hearts.” Therefore no one is baptized except he be already incorporated in Christ. Therefore incorporation with Christ is not the effect of Baptism.

**Objection 2.** Further, enlightenment is caused by teaching, according to Eph. 3:8,9: “To me the least of all the saints, is given this grace. . . to enlighten all men,” etc. But teaching by the catechism precedes Baptism. Therefore it is not the effect of Baptism.

**Objection 3.** Further, fruitfulness pertains to active generation. But a man is regenerated spiritually by Baptism. Therefore fruitfulness is not an effect of Baptism.

**On the contrary,** Augustine says in the book on Infant Baptism (De Pecc. Merit. et Remiss. i) that “the effect of Baptism is that the baptized are incorporated in Christ.” And Dionysius (Eccl. Hier. ii) ascribes enlightenment to Baptism. And on Ps. 22:2, “He hath brought me up on the water of refreshment,” a gloss says that “the sinner’s soul, sterilized by drought, is made fruitful by Baptism.”

**I answer that,** By Baptism man is born again unto the spiritual life, which is proper to the faithful of Christ, as the Apostle says (Gal. 2:20): “And that I live now in the flesh; I live in the faith of the Son of God.” Now life is only in those members that are united to the head, from

which they derive sense and movement. And therefore it follows of necessity that by Baptism man is incorporated in Christ, as one of His members. Again, just as the members derive sense and movement from the material head, so from their spiritual Head, i.e. Christ, do His members derive spiritual sense consisting in the knowledge of truth, and spiritual movement which results from the instinct of grace. Hence it is written (Jn. 1:14,16): “We have seen Him. . . full of grace and truth; and of His fulness we all have received.” And it follows from this that the baptized are enlightened by Christ as to the knowledge of truth, and made fruitful by Him with the fruitfulness of good works by the infusion of grace.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Adults who already believe in Christ are incorporated in Him mentally. But afterwards, when they are baptized, they are incorporated in Him, corporally, as it were, i.e. by the visible sacrament; without the desire of which they could not have been incorporated in Him even mentally.

**Reply to Objection 2.** The teacher enlightens outwardly and ministerially by catechizing: but God enlightens the baptized inwardly, by preparing their hearts for the reception of the doctrines of truth, according to Jn. 6:45: “It is written in the prophets. . . They shall all be taught of God.”

**Reply to Objection 3.** The fruitfulness which is ascribed as an effect of Baptism is that by which man brings forth good works; not that by which he begets others in Christ, as the Apostle says (1 Cor. 4:15): “In Christ Jesus by the Gospel I have begotten you.”

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**Whether children receive grace and virtue in Baptism?**

IIIa q. 69 a. 6

**Objection 1.** It seems that children do not receive grace and virtues in Baptism. For grace and virtues are not possessed without faith and charity. But faith, as Augustine says (Ep. xcvi), “depends on the will of the be-

liever”: and in like manner charity depends on the will of the lover. Now children have not the use of the will, and consequently they have neither faith nor charity. Therefore children do not receive grace and virtues in Baptism.

**Objection 2.** Further, on Jn. 14:12, “Greater than these shall he do,” Augustine says that in order for the ungodly to be made righteous “Christ worketh in him, but not without him.” But a child, through not having the use of free-will, does not co-operate with Christ unto its justification: indeed at times it does its best to resist. Therefore it is not justified by grace and virtues.

**Objection 3.** Further, it is written (Rom. 4:5): “To him that worketh not, yet believing in Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reputed to justice according to the purpose of the grace of God.” But a child believeth not “in Him that justifieth the ungodly.” Therefore a child receives neither sanctifying grace nor virtues.

**Objection 4.** Further, what is done with a carnal intention does not seem to have a spiritual effect. But sometimes children are taken to Baptism with a carnal intention, to wit, that their bodies may be healed. Therefore they do not receive the spiritual effect consisting in grace and virtue.

**On the contrary,** Augustine says (Enchiridion lii): “When little children are baptized, they die to that sin which they contracted in birth: so that to them also may be applied the words: ‘We are buried together with Him by Baptism unto death’”: (and he continues thus) “‘that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life.’” Now newness of life is through grace and virtues. Therefore children receive grace and virtues in Baptism.

**I answer that,** Some of the early writers held that children do not receive grace and virtues in Baptism, but that they receive the imprint of the character of Christ, by the power of which they receive grace and virtue when they arrive at the perfect age. But this is evidently false, for two reasons. First, because children, like adults, are made members of Christ in Baptism; hence they must, of necessity, receive an influx of grace and virtues from the Head. Secondly, because, if this were true, children that die after Baptism, would not come to eternal life; since according to Rom. 6:23, “the grace of God is life everlasting.” And consequently Baptism would not have profited them unto salvation.

Now the source of their error was that they did not recognize the distinction between habit and act. And so, seeing children to be incapable of acts of virtue, they thought

that they had no virtues at all after Baptism. But this inability of children to act is not due to the absence of habits, but to an impediment on the part of the body: thus also when a man is asleep, though he may have the habits of virtue, yet is he hindered from virtuous acts through being asleep.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Faith and charity depend on man’s will, yet so that the habits of these and other virtues require the power of the will which is in children; whereas acts of virtue require an act of the will, which is not in children. In this sense Augustine says in the book on Infant Baptism (Ep. xcvi): “The little child is made a believer, not as yet by that faith which depends on the will of the believer, but by the sacrament of faith itself,” which causes the habit of faith.

**Reply to Objection 2.** As Augustine says in his book on Charity (Ep. Joan. ad Parth. iii), “no man is born of water and the Holy Ghost unwillingly which is to be understood not of little children but of adults.” In like manner we are to understand as applying to adults, that man “without himself is not justified by Christ.” Moreover, if little children who are about to be baptized resist as much as they can, “this is not imputed to them, since so little do they know what they do, that they seem not to do it at all”: as Augustine says in a book on the Presence of God, addressed to Dardanus (Ep. clxxxvii).

**Reply to Objection 3.** As Augustine says (Serm. clxxvi): “Mother Church lends other feet to the little children that they may come; another heart that they may believe; another tongue that they may confess.” So that children believe, not by their own act, but by the faith of the Church, which is applied to them: by the power of which faith, grace and virtues are bestowed on them.

**Reply to Objection 4.** The carnal intention of those who take children to be baptized does not hurt the latter, as neither does one’s sin hurt another, unless he consent. Hence Augustine says in his letter to Boniface (Ep. xcvi): “Be not disturbed because some bring children to be baptized, not in the hope that they may be born again to eternal life by the spiritual grace, but because they think it to be a remedy whereby they may preserve or recover health. For they are not deprived of regeneration, through not being brought for this intention.”

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### Whether the effect of Baptism is to open the gates of the heavenly kingdom?

IIIa q. 69 a. 7

**Objection 1.** It seems that it is not the effect of Baptism, to open the gates of the heavenly kingdom. For what is already opened needs no opening. But the gates of the heavenly kingdom were opened by Christ’s Passion: hence it is written (Apoc. 4:1): “After these things I looked and behold (a great) door was opened in heaven.”

Therefore it is not the effect of Baptism, to open the gates of the heavenly kingdom.

**Objection 2.** Further, Baptism has had its effects ever since it was instituted. But some were baptized with Christ’s Baptism, before His Passion, according to Jn. 3:22,26: and if they had died then, the gates of the

heavenly kingdom would not have been opened to them, since none entered therein before Christ, according to Mic. 2:13: “He went up [Vulg.: ‘shall go up’] that shall open the way before them.” Therefore it is not the effect of Baptism, to open the gates of the heavenly kingdom.

**Objection 3.** Further, the baptized are still subject to death and the other penalties of the present life, as stated above (a. 3). But entrance to the heavenly kingdom is opened to none that are subject to punishment: as is clear in regard to those who are in purgatory. Therefore it is not the effect of Baptism, to open the gates of the heavenly kingdom.

**On the contrary,** on Lk. 3:21, “Heaven was opened,” the gloss of Bede says: “We see here the power of Baptism; from which when a man comes forth, the gates of the heavenly kingdom are opened unto him.”

**I answer that,** To open the gates of the heavenly kingdom is to remove the obstacle that prevents one from entering therein. Now this obstacle is guilt and the debt of punishment. But it has been shown above (Aa. 1, 2) that

all guilt and also all debt of punishment are taken away by Baptism. It follows, therefore, that the effect of Baptism is to open the gates of the heavenly kingdom.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Baptism opens the gates of the heavenly kingdom to the baptized in so far as it incorporates them in the Passion of Christ, by applying its power to man.

**Reply to Objection 2.** When Christ’s Passion was not as yet consummated actually but only in the faith of believers, Baptism proportionately caused the gates to be opened, not in fact but in hope. For the baptized who died then looked forward, with a sure hope, to enter the heavenly kingdom.

**Reply to Objection 3.** The baptized are subject to death and the penalties of the present life, not by reason of a personal debt of punishment but by reason of the state of their nature. And therefore this is no bar to their entrance to the heavenly kingdom, when death severs the soul from the body; since they have paid, as it were, the debt of nature.

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#### Whether Baptism has an equal effect in all?

IIIa q. 69 a. 8

**Objection 1.** It seems that Baptism has not an equal effect in all. For the effect of Baptism is to remove guilt. But in some it takes away more sins than in others; for in children it takes away only original sins, whereas in adults it takes away actual sins, in some many, in others few. Therefore Baptism has not an equal effect in all.

**Objection 2.** Further, grace and virtues are bestowed on man by Baptism. But some, after Baptism, seem to have more grace and more perfect virtue than others who have been baptized. Therefore Baptism has not an equal effect in all.

**Objection 3.** Further, nature is perfected by grace, as matter by form. But a form is received into matter according to its capacity. Therefore, since some of the baptized, even children, have greater capacity for natural gifts than others have, it seems that some receive greater grace than others.

**Objection 4.** Further, in Baptism some receive not only spiritual, but also bodily health; thus Constantine was cleansed in Baptism from leprosy. But all the infirm do not receive bodily health in Baptism. Therefore it has not an equal effect in all.

**On the contrary,** It is written (Eph. 4:5): “One Faith, one Baptism.” But a uniform cause has a uniform effect. Therefore Baptism has an equal effect in all.

**I answer that,** The effect of Baptism is twofold, the essential effect, and the accidental. The essential effect of Baptism is that for which Baptism was instituted, namely, the begetting of men unto spiritual life. Therefore, since all children are equally disposed to Baptism,

because they are baptized not in their own faith, but in that of the Church, they all receive an equal effect in Baptism. Whereas adults, who approach Baptism in their own faith, are not equally disposed to Baptism; for some approach thereto with greater, some with less, devotion. And therefore some receive a greater, some a smaller share of the grace of newness; just as from the same fire, he receives more heat who approaches nearest to it, although the fire, as far as it is concerned, sends forth its heat equally to all.

But the accidental effect of Baptism, is that to which Baptism is not ordained, but which the Divine power produces miraculously in Baptism: thus on Rom. 6:6, “that we may serve sin no longer,” a gloss says: “this is not bestowed in Baptism, save by an ineffable miracle of the Creator, so that the law of sin, which is in our members, be absolutely destroyed.” And such like effects are not equally received by all the baptized, even if they approach with equal devotion: but they are bestowed according to the ordering of Divine providence.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The least baptismal grace suffices to blot out all sins. Wherefore that in some more sins are loosed than in others is not due to the greater efficacy of Baptism, but to the condition of the recipient: for in each one it looses whatever it finds.

**Reply to Objection 2.** That greater or lesser grace appears in the baptized, may occur in two ways. First, because one receives greater grace in Baptism than another, on account of his greater devotion, as stated above. Secondly, because, though they receive equal grace, they do not make an equal use of it, but one applies himself more

to advance therein, while another by his negligence baffles grace.

**Reply to Objection 3.** The various degrees of capacity in men arise, not from a variety in the mind which is renewed by Baptism (since all men, being of one species, are of one form), but from the diversity of bodies. But it is otherwise with the angels, who differ in species. And

therefore gratuitous gifts are bestowed on the angels according to their diverse capacity for natural gifts, but not on men.

**Reply to Objection 4.** Bodily health is not the essential effect of Baptism, but a miraculous work of Divine providence.

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### Whether insincerity hinders the effect of Baptism?

IIIa q. 69 a. 9

**Objection 1.** It seems that insincerity does not hinder the effect of Baptism. For the Apostle says (Gal. 3:27): “As many of you as have been baptized in Christ Jesus, have put on Christ.” But all that receive the Baptism of Christ, are baptized in Christ. Therefore they all put on Christ: and this is to receive the effect of Baptism. Consequently insincerity does not hinder the effect of Baptism.

**Objection 2.** Further, the Divine power which can change man’s will to that which is better, works in Baptism. But the effect of the efficient cause cannot be hindered by that which can be removed by that cause. Therefore insincerity cannot hinder the effect of Baptism.

**Objection 3.** Further, the effect of Baptism is grace, to which sin is in opposition. But many other sins are more grievous than insincerity, which are not said to hinder the effect of Baptism. Therefore neither does insincerity.

**On the contrary,** It is written (Wis. 1:5): “The Holy Spirit of discipline will flee from the deceitful.” But the effect of Baptism is from the Holy Ghost. Therefore insincerity hinders the effect of Baptism.

**I answer that,** As Damascene says (De Fide Orth. ii), “God does not compel man to be righteous.” Consequently in order that a man be justified by Baptism, his will must needs embrace both Baptism and the baptismal effect. Now, a man is said to be insincere by reason of his will being in contradiction with either Baptism or its effect. For, according to Augustine (De Bapt. cont. Donat. vii), a man is said to be insincere, in four ways: first, because he does not believe, whereas Baptism is the sacrament of Faith; secondly, through scorning the sacrament

itself; thirdly, through observing a rite which differs from that prescribed by the Church in conferring the sacrament; fourthly, through approaching the sacrament without devotion. Wherefore it is manifest that insincerity hinders the effect of Baptism.

**Reply to Objection 1.** “To be baptized in Christ,” may be taken in two ways. First, “in Christ,” i.e. “in conformity with Christ.” And thus whoever is baptized in Christ so as to be conformed to Him by Faith and Charity, puts on Christ by grace. Secondly, a man is said to be baptized in Christ, in so far as he receives Christ’s sacrament. And thus all put on Christ, through being configured to Him by the character, but not through being conformed to Him by grace.

**Reply to Objection 2.** When God changes man’s will from evil to good, man does not approach with insincerity. But God does not always do this. Nor is this the purpose of the sacrament, that an insincere man be made sincere; but that he who comes in sincerity, be justified.

**Reply to Objection 3.** A man is said to be insincere who makes a show of willing what he wills not. Now whoever approaches Baptism, by that very fact makes a show of having right faith in Christ, of veneration for this sacrament, and of wishing to conform to the Church, and to renounce sin. Consequently, to whatever sin a man wishes to cleave, if he approach Baptism, he approaches insincerely, which is the same as to approach without devotion. But this must be understood of mortal sin, which is in opposition to grace: but not of venial sin. Consequently, here insincerity includes, in a way, every sin.

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### Whether Baptism produces its effect when the insincerity ceases?

IIIa q. 69 a. 10

**Objection 1.** It seems that Baptism does not produce its effect, when the insincerity ceases. For a dead work, which is void of charity, can never come to life. But he who approaches Baptism insincerely, receives the sacrament without charity. Therefore it can never come to life so as to bestow grace.

**Objection 2.** Further, insincerity seems to be stronger than Baptism, because it hinders its effect. But the stronger is not removed by the weaker. Therefore the sin

of insincerity cannot be taken away by Baptism which has been hindered by insincerity. And thus Baptism will not receive its full effect, which is the remission of all sins.

**Objection 3.** Further, it may happen that a man approach Baptism insincerely, and afterwards commit a number of sins. And yet these sins will not be taken away by Baptism; because Baptism washes away past, not future, sins. Such a Baptism, therefore, will never have its effect, which is the remission of all sins.

**On the contrary,** Augustine says (De Bapt. cont. Donat. i): “Then does Baptism begin to have its salutary effect, when truthful confession takes the place of that insincerity which hindered sins from being washed away, so long as the heart persisted in malice and sacrilege.”

**I answer that,** As stated above (q. 66, a. 9), Baptism is a spiritual regeneration. Now when a thing is generated, it receives together with the form, the form’s effect, unless there be an obstacle; and when this is removed, the form of the thing generated produces its effect: thus at the same time as a weighty body is generated, it has a downward movement, unless something prevent this; and when the obstacle is removed, it begins forthwith to move downwards. In like manner when a man is baptized, he receives the character, which is like a form; and he receives in consequence its proper effect, which is grace whereby all his sins are remitted. But this effect is sometimes hindered by insincerity. Wherefore, when this obstacle is removed by Penance, Baptism forthwith produces its effect.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The sacrament of Baptism is the work of God, not of man. Consequently, it is not dead

in the man, who being insincere, is baptized without charity.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Insincerity is not removed by Baptism but by Penance: and when it is removed, Baptism takes away all guilt, and all debt of punishment due to sins, whether committed before Baptism, or even co-existent with Baptism. Hence Augustine says (De Bapt. cont. Donat. i): “Yesterday is blotted out, and whatever remains over and above, even the very last hour and moment preceding Baptism, the very moment of Baptism. But from that moment forward he is bound by his obligations.” And so both Baptism and Penance concur in producing the effect of Baptism, but Baptism as the direct efficient cause, Penance as the indirect cause, i.e. as removing the obstacle.

**Reply to Objection 3.** The effect of Baptism is to take away not future, but present and past sins. And consequently, when the insincerity passes away, subsequent sins are indeed remitted, but by Penance, not by Baptism. Wherefore they are not remitted, like the sins which preceded Baptism, as to the whole debt of punishment.