

**Systematic Theology for the Local Church**  
**#52—Pneumatology—Part VI<sup>1</sup>**  
**The Work of the Holy Spirit in Salvation Part III: Spirit Baptism**  
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The next study will be on the Holy Spirit's work in sealing the believer. Helpful for that study are Reymond, 762-64; House, Section 37, Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, 80-82. Helpful for the present study are Reymond, pp. 764-65; House, Section 37, Ryrie, 74-78 and Merrill F. Unger, *The Baptizing Work of the Holy Spirit*.

The baptizing work of the Holy Spirit is one of the most misunderstood and misapplied of all biblical doctrines. Its true meaning is often neglected and false meanings are used to justify unbiblical practices. The most frequent misuses are those that connect passages that speak of Spirit baptism with a special blessing after salvation, with speaking in tongues and with water baptism. As evidence of the confusion and distortion, here is an example describing several of these errors. The writer's own particular thrust is that Spirit baptism brings and is known by love [font effects are the author's].<sup>2</sup>

There are a lot of differing opinions concerning the meaning of the "Baptism of the Holy Ghost", and everyone has an opinion or a philosophy as to what it is. Some teach that when you receive Jesus Christ into your heart, you receive [*sic*] the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Some believe that when you are water baptized, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is an automatic. Some teach that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a separate occurrence from salvation and water baptism. Some believe that unless a person is baptized with the Holy Spirit, they are not saved. Some people couple the words "baptism of the Holy Ghost" with the words "with the evidence of speaking in tongues", and teach that unless you speak with tongues, you haven't received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Others don't believe that is true. Some people believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was a unique thing that occurred only during the days of the apostles. Some teach that the only way a person can receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit is through the laying on of hands.

As I said, there are a lot of opinions and philosophical musings concerning the baptism in the Holy Spirit. But the people that were filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost *experienced* something that was beyond their understanding and all who witnessed the occurrence could not deny that SOMETHING had taken place that could not be explained by mere words. The same thing is true today. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is an EXPERIENCE as real as, yet entirely different than the believer's baptism in water. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit **PRODUCES CHANGE**.

Are you baptized in the Holy Spirit? While speaking in tongues **MAY** be an evidence of the fact that you are, it isn't proof. Just because you speak in tongues doesn't mean that you are baptized in the Holy Spirit. I realize there are many who read this who may be offended at this statement, but other religions have devout followers who exhibit ecstatic manifestations of speaking in other tongues. The FRUIT which is produced by the baptism in the Holy Spirit is proof positive as to whether you are or not. Are you bearing fruit?

The Fruit and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit are not the same thing. The Word of God says that pure unadulterated Agape LOVE is the product or the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22).

Needless to say, something is sorely amiss here. As always, careful attention to the relevant texts will remove the fog and error.

## 1. The meaning of Spirit Baptism

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<sup>2</sup> <http://iwashungry.wordpress.com/2008/08/25/baptism-of-the-holy-spirit-part-i/>

I will start with a definition and demonstrate its validity through examination of several key passages:

Spirit baptism is the nonphysical act of the Spirit of God that places a believer in the Body of Christ and makes him a partaker, along with all other believers, of the work and merits of Christ; should be distinguished from filling, sealing, and indwelling; cannot be felt or noticed, and hence must be appropriated by faith; there is no warrant in Scripture for assuming a second act of God for power, a “baptism,” after salvation.

**a. Rom. 6:1-10**

This passage provides a result of Spirit baptism and also explains the meaning of the word baptism itself.

**6** What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? <sup>2</sup> By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? <sup>3</sup> Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

<sup>5</sup> If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. <sup>6</sup> For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with,<sup>a</sup> that we should no longer be slaves to sin— <sup>7</sup> because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

<sup>8</sup> Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. <sup>9</sup> For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. <sup>10</sup> The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

<sup>11</sup> In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. <sup>12</sup> Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. <sup>13</sup> Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. <sup>14</sup> For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

<sup>15</sup> What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! <sup>16</sup> Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? <sup>17</sup> But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. <sup>18</sup> You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

<sup>19</sup> I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. <sup>20</sup> When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. <sup>21</sup> What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! <sup>22</sup> But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in<sup>a</sup> Christ Jesus our Lord.

The act of salvation is presented in Scripture as such a radical thing as to be described as a new birth. 2 Cor. 5:17 tells us that every new birth by the Spirit results in a new creation. The great question, however, is How different are things after salvation? The lives of many Christians are too much like what they were when they

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<sup>a</sup> Or *be rendered powerless*

<sup>a</sup> Or *through*

were saved. Some seem never to have changed at all. In fact, 1 Cor. 3:1-3 addresses this very issue. Because they've remained babies (v. 1), some of Paul's readers left themselves open to carnality—being dominated by the old nature:

**3** Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly—mere infants in Christ. <sup>2</sup> I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. <sup>3</sup> You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?

Paul asks a very pointed question about this in Rom. 6:1. If 5: 21 is true (grace has reigned as a king through the work of Christ), then some would say that more sin will lead to more grace and God will be glorified. Paul provides two answers. The first is an outright and powerful rejection of such a thought: absolutely not (me génoito), or, as the Phillips translation puts it, “What a ghastly thought.” The second answer is a lengthy presentation of God's demand for a radical change in conduct. In vv. 1-10 Paul presents two things that we need to know in order to make the necessary radical break with the past: 1) the concept of baptism, and 2) the meaning of the crucifying of the old man. These form the positional basis for the radically new life.

Baptism is brought in here to explain the truth of our *identification* with Christ's death to sin. The significant confusion about baptism in the New Testament can be swept away if we look carefully at various uses of relevant Greek words in the New Testament and the meaning of baptism here in this passage.

First of all, the words used in Rom. 6 concerning baptism are related to the word βάπτω (baptō), which in ancient Greek often meant ‘to dip’ or ‘to dye.’ If a piece of cloth is dipped in a colored liquid, it would take on the color of the liquid. It becomes, in this sense, identified or associated with some feature of the water.

All the uses of the ‘baptism’ words in the NT (βαπτίζω [baptizō], βαπτισμός [baptismos], etc.) have to do with *identification* or *association*. There are many different baptisms in the NT. Here is a list of the types of baptism, not including the one in the present passage:

1. The baptism of John—those baptized by him became identified with his message
2. The baptism of the cup—Jesus came in contact with the judgment of God on the Cross (Mt. 20:22-23)
3. The baptism of Jesus by John—this symbolized his identification with His ministry to come
4. The baptism of believers (in water)—this pictures Spirit baptism and is a public demonstration of what has happened spiritually
5. Baptism for repentance Mt. 3:11—“I baptize you with water for repentance.”
6. Baptism into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Spirit (Mt. 28:19)
7. Baptism into Moses (1 Cor. 10:2)
8. Baptism into Christ (Gal. 3:27)
9. Baptism into his death and burial (Rom. 6:3, 4)
10. Baptism into his body (1 Cor. 12:13)

Because of the consistent use of ‘baptism’ to refer to identification, we are justified in asserting that the New Testament never views baptism of any kind as a ‘touch’ from God, as the contemporary Pentecostal movement espouses.

Second, what does baptism mean in this passage? The big question is, does it refer to believers' water baptism, Spirit baptism, or neither one? Upon seeing the word ‘baptism,’ we are inclined to think first of water. Verse 3 is unclear in the AV, and this has led to some misunderstanding. The AV has “as many of us as were baptized,” which seems to suggest that Paul is aware that some Christians have not been baptized. This leads to the conclusion that Paul is thinking about water baptism, under the assumption that some of his

readers were saved but had missed the rite.

This translation is faulty, however. A more accurate translation would be “we who were baptized.” This tells us that Paul envisions his whole audience of believers as people who were baptized. This argues for the view that Paul has Spirit baptism in mind here, since it is possible that some might not have undergone water baptism.

One of the biggest clues for understanding ‘baptism’ in this passage is found in v. 5, where Paul says we are baptized into the likeness of Christ’s death. This helps us see that baptism refers to identification: we gain for our life with God something that corresponds to His death. He suffered death, burial and resurrection, and we did, too, in some sense. Now this is what forces us to conclude that Paul is thinking here about the spiritual changes that have occurred in believers. The outward rite of going into water and coming out could not identify us with Christ’s experience. Outward rites cannot accomplish inner reality. In fact, Peter tells us this with regard to water baptism in 1 Pet. 3:21.

So this passage is presenting the spiritual, non-physical, act whereby the Spirit of God *identifies* a person with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ at the moment of saving faith. The startling fact here is that Christ’s history with regard to death has become ours.

But is there any water in this passage? Water baptism is a public demonstration that something spiritual has happened, that a person has already been identified with some spiritual aspect of the Cross. Furthermore, the mode of baptism that best pictures the spiritual reality is the one that should be used. Obviously Spirit baptism involves identification, not the coming of the Spirit on someone (which sprinkling or pouring would picture). Thus, from the standpoint of this passage, baptism by immersion is the appropriate means for the ordinance.

It is also important to note that what actually happens in Spirit baptism is that every believer is associated with the death burial and resurrection of Christ—in exactly the same way and to exactly the same extent as every other believer. So the Body of Christ, the Church, consists of people who have exactly the same spiritual history: they’ve all become partakers of what Jesus did on the Cross. Their unity (Eph. 4) is based on this identical history that they possess.

What is the result of Spirit baptism here? What does it have to do with a radically new life? There’s a fascinating and detailed sequence here that lies behind the power of this work of the Spirit.

First of all, we know that sin leads to death. If a person dies, it is because of sin. Death is the ‘dirty work’ of sin. However, sin can only cause a person to die once (vv. 7-10; Lazarus is the only exception to this. He died twice, but we can view his experience as having an interrupted but resumed [he must have died later] death experience; Elijah and Enoch and raptured saints are the exceptions to the universal experience of physical death).

The next part of the sequence is that Jesus died once; sin did its worst to Him. And yet He was raised from the dead (v. 9) and so can no longer be subject to sin’s doing its worst (v. 9b). Its control over Him has been broken. If His history has become ours by Spirit baptism, then this breaking of sin’s control has become our portion, too. In Jesus’ case, this breaking of control (v. 7—freed from sin; v. 9—no longer has dominion) means He won’t die again physically. In the case of the believer, this breaking means that sin’s dominion over our *actions* has been broken (v. 6). In v. 12, Paul says that sin has reigned as a king (*basileuo*); it no longer has that position, since Jesus broke its control. Consequently, whereas we formerly continuously presented ourselves to that king to do what it wanted, we are no longer under that master (vv. 13-23). Thus Spirit baptism has intense consequences for the daily life of the Christian.

## b. 1 Cor. 12:13

This is the most significant scripture for the understanding Spirit baptism (underlining is mine; I have preserved the NIV note on v. 13):

<sup>12</sup> The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> For we were all baptized by<sup>a</sup> one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

Recall that baptism refers to association or identification. If so, what is it that believers are being identified with here? This verse clearly states that the sphere or destination of this identifying work is the Body of Christ. What is the role of the Spirit here, then? Since the sphere the believer is placed into—identified with—is the Body of Christ, the role of the Holy Spirit here must be that of an agent who carries out the identification.

Those who want to see Spirit baptism as a special work after salvation, whether connected with tongues or not, want to translate the NIV’s “by one Spirit” as “in one Spirit,” as if the sphere were the Holy Spirit. Some in this camp will accept the translation “by one Spirit.” But either approach ignores the fact that the clear statement of the destination of the identification here—“into one Body”—makes it impossible that the believer is put into the Spirit.

There are several other important details in this passage:

1. The result of this work of the Spirit is the formation of the Body of Christ by building it up one believer at a time, as each is saved. Initially the 120 or so believers who experienced the outpouring of the Spirit in Acts 2 were the totality of the Body.
2. Notice that all believers undergo this same identifying work of the Spirit. Every person who is saved during this age becomes part of the Body of Christ.
3. These believers are the ‘many parts’ of v. 12. This teaches that all Christians have the same relationship to Christ and the same benefits. In fact, in context, vv. 12 and 13 are designed to help eliminate factions.

## c. Eph. 1:22-23

This passage does not speak of baptism, but is crucial in helping us understand what Spirit baptism does.

<sup>22</sup> And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, <sup>23</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Here Paul explicitly equates the Body of Christ and the Church—not the local church, but the universal Church that consists of all believers during this age. A crucial question in theology concerns the starting point of the Church? If we have information as to when the Body of Christ started, then we say when the Church began. The next two passages enable us to do this.

## d. Acts 1:5 and 11:16-17

**1** In my former book, *Theophilus*, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach <sup>2</sup> until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. <sup>3</sup> After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. <sup>4</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> Or *with*; or *in*

On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. <sup>5</sup> For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

In Acts 11:16-17 Peter is recounting what happened in the house of Cornelius:

**11** The apostles and the brothers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. <sup>2</sup> So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him <sup>3</sup> and said, “You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them.”

<sup>4</sup> Peter began and explained everything to them precisely as it had happened: <sup>5</sup> “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was. <sup>6</sup> I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles, and birds of the air. <sup>7</sup> Then I heard a voice telling me, ‘Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.’

<sup>8</sup> “I replied, ‘Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’

<sup>9</sup> “The voice spoke from heaven a second time, ‘Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.’ <sup>10</sup> This happened three times, and then it was all pulled up to heaven again.

<sup>11</sup> “Right then three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea stopped at the house where I was staying. <sup>12</sup> The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man’s house. <sup>13</sup> He told us how he had seen an angel appear in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. <sup>14</sup> He will bring you a message through which you and all your household will be saved.’

<sup>15</sup> “As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. <sup>16</sup> Then I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>17</sup> So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?”

These two passages bracket the time of the beginning of the baptizing work of the Spirit: it is sometime between Acts 1 and Acts 11 and only a few days after Jesus’ prediction in Acts 1. The only place between ch. 1 and ch. 11 when such a work of the Spirit could have occurred was at Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2. So, because Pentecost marks the start of Spirit baptism, which forms the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13), it also marks the beginning of the Church (Eph. 1:22-23). To put this another way, in 1 Cor. 12:13 Paul indicates that Spirit baptism places a person in the Body of Christ. Ephesians 1:22-23 tell us that the Body of Christ equals the Church. Therefore the Church is formed by Spirit baptism. This work of the Spirit is never found in the Bible until Pentecost. We conclude then that Spirit baptism is new, that it forms the Church and that the Church started at Pentecost. Spirit baptism is a work of God that is entirely new at Pentecost and is connected with crucial NT doctrines. Pentecost marks the coming of the Spirit to start his ministries in and among believers, to initiate indwelling, sealing, filling and other works toward members of the Body of Christ.

As with 1 Cor. 12:13, those who want to justify an experience of the Spirit after salvation want to see Acts 1:5 as saying “by the Spirit” or they take “with the Spirit” to mean that the Spirit comes upon them. But we cannot ignore 1 Cor. 12:13, which clearly states that the Body of Christ is the sphere of identification.

#### e. Col. 2:9-12

<sup>9</sup> For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, <sup>10</sup> and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. <sup>11</sup> In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, <sup>12</sup> having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

This cannot be water baptism here in v. 12, but Spirit baptism, since it accomplishes the spiritual work of making the believer complete in Christ (v. 10). Baptism with Christ gives the believer the merits and standing of Christ in God's sight (Rom. 6:4-6).

The circumcision of v. 11 is the spiritual reality (Paul specifically says it's not physical) of putting off the sinful nature, which is not destroyed or rendered inoperative, but given positional defeat at the Cross. As in Rom. 6, its control has been broken and we can live according to the new nature.

#### **f. Eph. 4:5**

**4** As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. <sup>2</sup> Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. <sup>3</sup> Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. <sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

The fact that Paul says there is one baptism shows that it is unique as a spiritual work of the Spirit: there is no additional baptism that comes on believers for power after salvation. Furthermore, everyone undergoes the same spiritual act at the point of salvation, so everyone's share of the work of Christ (Rom. 6) is the same.

#### **g. Gal. 3:27**

<sup>26</sup> You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, <sup>27</sup> for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

As a person would put on a garment, the believer through Spirit baptism has moved from bondage to the law to freedom in Christ to obey and live for God. Galatians was written to Jews who were tempted to put themselves under the law. A Gentile today cannot have this same experience. The phrase 'into Christ' must refer to the sphere of Rom. 6—the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

## **2. Some problem passages**

### **a. Acts 8:9-17**

<sup>9</sup> Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, <sup>10</sup> and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, "This man is the divine power known as the Great Power." <sup>11</sup> They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his magic. <sup>12</sup> But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. <sup>13</sup> Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw.

<sup>14</sup> When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. <sup>15</sup> When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, <sup>16</sup> because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>17</sup> Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

While this passage does not mention Spirit baptism, it seems to be speaking about it when it says, "they

received the Holy Spirit.” But the larger question is How could these people be believers without having the Spirit, something that started at Pentecost?

The answer is that this is the first of three passages that Luke has written to answer the question of what would happen to different kinds of people after Pentecost. The three groups are 1) believing Samaritans, 2) Gentiles and 3) disciples of John the Baptist. In Acts 8:14-17 the Spirit is given to the Samaritans, who exercised faith not long before, to initiate for this schismatic group the works that had been started in Jerusalem at Pentecost. ‘Baptism’ is not used, but must be included in the receiving of v. 17. The lesson to be gained here is that mixed Jews such as the Samaritans would receive the same spiritual advantages and standing as all believers since Pentecost. This passage does not teach a second blessing after salvation, since they were not saved before this.

#### **b. Acts 10:34-48**

<sup>34</sup> Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism <sup>35</sup> but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. <sup>36</sup> You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup> You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached— <sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

<sup>39</sup> “We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, <sup>40</sup> but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. <sup>41</sup> He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup> He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup> All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

<sup>44</sup> While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. <sup>45</sup> The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. <sup>46</sup> For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.

Then Peter said, <sup>47</sup> “Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.” <sup>48</sup> So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

This is the second passage that shows how God would deal with different groups beyond Jews who started responding to the gospel at Pentecost. It shows that Gentiles would be included in the Body of Christ along with Jews. Before this only the salvation Jews and Samaritans is recorded. This is an example of Eph. 3:6: “This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.”

#### **c. Acts 19:1-7**

**19** While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples <sup>2</sup> and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

They answered, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.”

<sup>3</sup> So Paul asked, “Then what baptism did you receive?”

“John’s baptism,” they replied.



<sup>4</sup> Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” <sup>5</sup> On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup> When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. <sup>7</sup> There were about twelve men in all.

These disciples of John the Baptist may have been saved, although it is not clear what they had believed (v. 2). Luke provides this account to show that like the Samaritans and Gentiles, another outlying group would come under the same ministries of the Spirit as Jews received at Pentecost. Notice that the issue is receiving the Holy Spirit (v. 2), so that it is wrong to take v. 6 as describing some kind of special gift of the Spirit after salvation. This occurred some twenty years after Pentecost, and these disciples were living spiritually in a pre-Pentecostal mode.

All three of these passages in Acts (8, 1, 19) are used to support a second work of God after salvation—either the baptism of the Spirit for power or the gift of tongues. An understanding of the flow of the book of Acts enables us to see the error of such interpretations.

### **Conclusion:**

The baptizing work of the Holy Spirit is the key to all the works of the Spirit of God during this age and provides us with all the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ: we have literally been identified with him and what he did for sinners on the Cross. May our theological understanding of this great doctrine be true to the words of Scripture and may we live in the biblical fullness of this provision for us.

## **Study questions**

1. What do the meanings of the words for baptism teach us about it?
2. Is there water in Rom. 6? Why or why not?
3. What is the practical consequence of the baptism of the Spirit in Rom. 6?
4. The covenant amillennialist asserts the Church existed in the Old Testament. How might this be disproven?
5. Can Acts 8, 10 and 19 be used to justify a supposed receipt of the Spirit today?

## Running compilation of key definitions

1. Systematic theology: The organized presentation of all that the Bible teaches about God and His works.
2. Exegesis: The actual practice of studying or interpreting a document or other message to determine its meaning.
3. Context: Context in a document or utterance is the surroundings of a portion of a word, a word, or a group of words.
4. Bibliology: The doctrinal study of the nature of the Bible.
5. Biblical authority: The quality inherent in Scripture by virtue of which human beings are completely answerable to its content.
6. Revelation: The information about Himself given by God to human beings.
7. General revelation: God's disclosure of Himself, available directly to everyone, given through means other than dreams, visions, direct words and Christ Himself.
8. Special revelation: The disclosure of information from God that is not available directly to all human beings.
9. Inspiration: A term applied to the Bible denoting that it is the product of God's creative activity, figuratively breathed out from Him (2 Tim. 3:16); applies to the process of recording Scripture, not specifically to the people involved; actually, *expiration* would be a better term to reflect the concept of 2 Tim. 3:16; the result is *inerrancy*.
10. Textual criticism: The science and art of attempting to discover the original text of a literary work for which the original document does not exist. It is especially important for biblical studies, and the foundational endeavor to all subsequent investigation of the Scriptures.
11. Canon: Transliterated from a Greek Word meaning "standard"; as used of the Bible, it refers to books authenticated as possessing divine origin and therefore authoritative; the Jewish canon consists of thirty-nine books, the Protestant of sixty-six and the Catholic of eighty (including apocryphal books).
12. Inerrancy is a term applied to the Bible, although not specifically found in it; it denotes that the Bible, as originally written, possessed no humanly induced deviations from the message God intended to be recorded and that it is true in every respect; 2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Cor. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:19.
13. Infallibility: Although some assert that this term has a different meaning from inerrancy, the two terms are, for purposes of biblical study, synonymous; the Bible is infallible because inerrant, and inerrant because infallible.
14. Illumination is the teaching ministry of the Spirit of God that imparts understanding of the message of Scripture to the believer; not to be confused with inspiration, which in the Bible is used of the work of God in giving Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16); 1 Jn. 2:20; Jn. 16:13.
15. Spirituality: God is not physical, but immaterial, incorporeal, invisible and alive.
16. Self-existence/Aseity: God exists independently of anything else. He is self-existent.
17. Immensity: God is infinite in relation to space.
18. Eternality: God is infinite with regard to time.
19. Simplicity: God is not a plurality and cannot be looked at as divisible into parts.
20. Pure actuality: There is nothing about God that is potential. He is not unfinished in any way.
21. Necessity: God is uncaused and exists because he must exist.
22. Immutability: God is unchanging and unchangeable.
23. Impassibility: God is incapable of being changed or disturbed by what he experiences and is incapable of suffering.
24. Transcendence: God and the world are distinct; he is not part of the world, and the world is not part of him.
25. Immanence: God is present in the world.
26. Infinity: There are no limits to God's person and his perfections.
27. Omnipotence: God can do whatever he wills.
28. Omniscience: God knows everything there is to know.
29. Omnipresence: God is present everywhere in his creation

30. Holiness: God is morally pure and separated from all moral evil and sin.
31. Goodness: A quality that describes or includes his love, benevolence, mercy and grace
32. Truth: God's person, actions, knowledge and revelations correspond to reality
33. Love: God's continual communication of himself to his creatures.
34. Benevolence: God's goodness toward his creatures.
35. Mercy: God's goodness toward those who are helpless.
36. Grace: God's goodness toward sinners.
37. Glory: The greatness of God's perfections.
38. Trinity: There is only one true God, existing as a single Being comprised of three Persons who are equal in every way, yet distinct in their tasks and relations to humanity.
39. God's decree: The decree of God is his plan for the universe that includes all things and is certain to come to pass.
40. Providence: God's care for and upholding of his creation.
41. Sovereignty: God's control over his universe.
42. Christology: The study of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.
43. Incarnation: The joining of deity and humanity in one person forever. The word is based on the Latin word for flesh: the Lord Jesus Christ is God joined with human flesh.
44. Pre-existence: Used of the Son, it means that he existed before Bethlehem.
45. Theophany: An appearance of God.
46. Christophany: An appearance of Christ.
47. Priesthood: The system that God established to remedy the problem of alienation between a holy God and sinful human beings.
48. Son of God: A name for Jesus that describes his deity and his approval by the Father at the resurrection.
49. Son of Man: A messianic name for Jesus that emphasizes his humanity backed by deity and his role of taking humans to God through suffering and humiliation.
50. Messiah: A transliteration of a Hebrew word meaning 'anointed one'; used of the expected national deliverer of Israel; the linguistic equivalent of Greek *christos*, 'Christ'.
51. Efficacious grace: Efficacious grace is the working of God in an individual that cannot be thwarted and that leads that person to faith in Christ. It is also described as effective calling and irresistible grace.
52. Regeneration: Regeneration is the unseen and unfelt work of the Holy Spirit that overcomes depravity and brings spiritual life and the capacity to please God and exercise faith.
53. Spirit baptism is the nonphysical act of the Spirit of God that places a believer in the Body of Christ and makes him a partaker, along with all other believers, of the work and merits of Christ; should be distinguished from filling, sealing, and indwelling; cannot be felt or noticed, and hence must be appropriated by faith; there is no warrant in Scripture for assuming a second act of God for power, a "baptism," after salvation.