
HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM

By

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What is Holy Spirit baptism? In connection with this question let us ask several other questions. Can any Christian today have the same Holy Spirit experience that the twelve apostles had? Has everyone who has been born of the Holy Spirit been baptized by the Holy Spirit? Is there any difference in this day of grace between receiving the Holy Spirit and being baptized by the Holy Spirit? Why did not the twelve apostles experience Holy Spirit baptism before the day of Pentecost? Why were not the disciples of Jesus Christ baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ before His death and resurrection?

Because of the confusion among Christians as to Holy Spirit baptism I think we can appreciate the importance of these questions. Let us then begin our study by quoting two verses of scripture:

"FOR JOHN TRULY BAPTIZED WITH WATER; BUT YE SHALL BE BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST NOT MANY DAYS HENCE." Acts 1:5.

"FOR BY ONE SPIRIT ARE WE ALL BAPTIZED INTO ONE BODY, WHETHER WE BE JEWS OR GENTILES, WHETHER WE BE BOUND OR FREE; AND HAVE BEEN ALL MADE TO DRINK INTO ONE SPIRIT." I Corinthians 12:13.

The words recorded in the fifth verse of the first chapter of Acts were the words of Christ not many days after His death and resurrection, and not many days before Pentecost. It was about the year 33 A.D. when the resurrected Christ promised to His disciples this new Holy Spirit experience.

It was about twenty-five years later that the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians that both Jews and Greeks were baptized by one Spirit into one Body.

While Jesus of Nazareth was a minister of the circumcision, in the land of the Jews, before His death, He was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Acts 2:22, Romans 15:8, Matthew 15:24.

There have been several reasons why Greeks could not have been baptized by one Spirit into one Body while the Saviour was here in the flesh. There was no Body during that time. Again, the Greeks who came to the disciples of Jesus and wanted to see the Saviour were denied that privilege; for He said to another Greek, "The children must first be filled."—John 12:23 to 27 and Mark 7:27. The children were the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Again, according to John 7:39, while Jesus was here among men the Holy Spirit was not yet given.

I am sure from this, that while we appreciate the fact that all Scripture should be studied in the light of later revelation, no intelligent student of the Word of God in reading the four Gospels will anticipate truth that is to be revealed by Christ years after He has ascended to heaven and the Holy Spirit has ushered in a new dispensation.

According to the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus, Jehovah's feast of Pentecost was to follow fifty days after the feast of the Passover and the Firstfruits. Christ was our Pass-over. He arose the third day after His death and became the Firstfruits of them that slept. It was fifty days after that event that the day of Pentecost was fully come. During the intervening days the disciples of Jesus Christ were told to tarry at Jerusalem for the descent and baptism of the Holy Spirit. But today tarrying-meetings for the descent of the Holy Spirit are unscriptural. These disciples were saved before the New Testament dispensation was ushered in, while Jesus of Nazareth was under the law. They were disciples of Christ before the Holy Spirit was sent down from heaven and before the birthday of that Church, which is designated "the Body of Christ."

Therefore we see how utterly impossible it would be for any believing sinner to have an experience today corresponding with the experiences of those who were disciples of the Saviour before the day of Pentecost. Truly when the Holy Spirit fell on them they had an experience separate from and subsequent to their salvation.

About twenty-five years after the day of Pentecost the Apostle to the Gentiles wrote to the Galatians that Christ died on the cross that Gentiles by faith might receive the Holy Spirit. Galatians 3:14. Several years later in writing to other Gentiles in the city of Ephesus, concerning their position and privilege in the Body of Christ, Paul said to them, **"Believing, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit."** In the authorized version the translation does not express the true meaning of the Greek word. The word is a Greek participle **"pisteusantes."** It is translated **"after that ye believed."** Literally, the word means "having believed," or perhaps better **"on believing."** The believing of the gospel and the sealing by the Holy Spirit happened at the same moment.

This experience is quite different from the experience related in Acts 19:1 to 6 in the lives of certain other disciples at Ephesus. There in the second verse we have the same Greek word **"pisteusantes"** translated **"since ye believed."** The question according to the original is not "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed," but literally **"On believing, received ye the Holy Spirit?"** The answer was "No." The reason is obvious; for the disciples had not received the gospel of salvation; that is, the grace of Christ.

There is not one single scriptural proof that any member of the Body of Christ in this dispensation of grace must or can experience a second work of grace, or second blessing whether it is called his or her Pentecost or Holy Spirit baptism.

In II Corinthians 1:21 and 22 the Scripture is clear that the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer is his earnest. The word there translated "anointed" is the same Greek word, in a different form, translated "Christian." Therefore anyone who is a Christian has the Holy Spirit within.

All Christians are members of the Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit performs a very definite work in the salvation of a believing sinner. It is called "sanctification of the Spirit", in II Thessalonians 2:13. It is called "born of the Spirit" in John 3:5.

The work of the Holy Spirit by which a believing sinner is placed in the Body of Christ is called "baptized in or by the Holy Spirit." There is no salvation outside of the Body of Christ. The scriptural way of becoming a member of that Body is by Holy Spirit baptism.

Therefore, every Christian has received Holy Spirit baptism, which experience occurs at the time of salvation. No Christian can ever experience Holy Spirit baptism after salvation. With a saved person it is always a past experience. And as no believer can ever enter the Body of Christ but once, he can never receive a second Holy Spirit baptism. No believer receives the Holy Spirit on the installment plan. Therefore, no believer can ever receive more of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians these words, "If we live in the Spirit let us walk in the Spirit." He wrote to the Ephesians "Be filled with the Holy Spirit." He wrote to the Romans that by walking in the Spirit believers fulfill the righteousness of the Law. Galatians 5:25, Ephesians 5:18, Romans 8:4.

Let us beware of Satan's counterfeits and delusions.

Concerning the Holy Spirit's relation to Christ He has a very definite mission, and that is, to testify of Christ and glorify Him. Believers who are filled with the Holy Spirit will not emphasize their Holy Spirit experience but they will walk in the Spirit and manifest the fruit of the Spirit while the Spirit within will cause them to exalt and praise the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our motto should not be "back to Pentecost," but on to our blessed experience in the upper heavenlies in Christ, as set forth in Ephesians and Colossians.