

The Witness of John the Baptist pt. 4

What is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit?

John 1:19-37

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is He of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.’ ³¹ I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water.”

³² And John bore witness, saying, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. ³³ I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, **this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.**’ ³⁴ And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.”

Introduction

Our text we have today in the Gospel of John introduces us to a topic that needs to be explained from a purely biblical perspective

We are living in truly wonderful days with the ability to learn the Word of God from not only our weekly time in the word at church but thru means of internet and media, we have access to a huge library of great resources to glean from and grow in Christ. It used be that the primary source of christian literature, Commentaries and lexicons etc..... were

the pastors library or the seminary library if you could get there. But now the world of information is available thru your smart phone. With that great blessing has come a great curse. Because as good as it is to have the means and avenue to teach the word of God and have access to such great and accurate teaching has also come an open door, a wide birth and a rushing river of inaccurate and false teaching unlike anything we have ever seen.

It should be obvious that charismatic and pentecostal and neo-pentecostal movement is not none for its hermeneutic or its great theologians. In fact, if anything, it is none for its lack and in some cases complete abandonment of the Hermeneutics.

This along with lazy pastors have been the source of tremendous confusion in the body of Christ that should not be. The topic of the The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is not that complicated and shouldn't be so clearly misrepresented. Speaking of how media has propagated error, the magazine "Charisma" is a good example.

Charisma Magazine

Find out the simple steps you can take to be filled with the Holy Spirit. When we meet Christ and put our trust in Him, we are "born again" (John 3:3) and we receive the Holy Spirit in our hearts. This is the most important decision we will ever make. This happened to the disciples of Jesus in John 20:22, which says: "[Jesus] breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'"

But before Jesus ascended to heaven He told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem until the "promise of the Father" had come (Luke 24:49). He told them that if they would wait there they would be "clothed with power from on high." In Acts 1:8 Jesus told His followers that they would receive "power" to be His witnesses.

So the disciples waited in Jerusalem for many days, praying near the temple. On the day of Pentecost, which was 50 days after Jesus had died on the cross, something amazing happened. The Holy Spirit was poured out on the early church. This is described in Acts 2:1-4. The Bible says that when the Spirit came, the disciples were filled (another word is "baptized") with the Spirit.

This shows us that there are two separate experiences we can have with God. One is salvation, in which we receive God's amazing forgiveness a new nature. The Holy Spirit comes to live inside us, and He becomes our Teacher, our Comforter and our Helper.

The second experience is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, in which the Holy Spirit who is already in us overflows. "Baptized in the Spirit" means "completely immersed in the Spirit." Jesus never wanted us to rely on our own ability to do the work of ministry. He wants to do it through us. So He fills us with the Holy Spirit in order to empower us with His ability.

When we have this experience, the Holy Spirit's power fills us so full that He spills out. Also when we are baptized in the Spirit, unusual "gifts of the Holy Spirit"-which are listed in I Corinthians 12:8-10)-begin to be manifested in our lives. We begin to experience His supernatural power. These gifts include prophecy, discernment, miracles, healing and speaking in unknown tongues.

When people were baptized in the Holy Spirit in the New Testament church, the Bible says they all spoke in tongues (see Acts 2:1-4, Acts 4:31, Acts 10:44-48 and Acts 19:1-7). A lot of people get hung up on speaking in tongues because it seems like a weird thing. It's actually not strange at all. It is a very special form of prayer that any Christian can experience.

When we pray in our heavenly prayer language, we are praising God and also strengthening ourselves spiritually. Speaking in tongues helps us become mighty in the Spirit. The apostle Paul, truly a giant in

the New Testament church, told the Corinthian believers: "I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all."

Being baptized in the Holy Spirit is not something you have to qualify for. Any Christian can ask, and Jesus is ready to do it. You can pray by yourself or you can ask someone else to pray for you.

Here are the simple steps you can take to be filled with the Holy Spirit:

1. Prepare your heart. The Holy Spirit is holy. He is compared to a fire (see Matt. 3:11), which means He purifies sin and burns up that which is not Christlike in our lives. Make sure you have confessed all known sin and made your heart ready for His infilling.

2. Ask Jesus to baptize you in the Spirit. You do not need to jump through hoops to get God's attention. He is eager to answer your request. Jesus is the one who baptizes us in the Spirit, so ask Him—and expect Him to answer.

3. Receive the infilling. Begin to thank Him for this miracle. The Holy Spirit's power is filling your life. If you feel your mind is clouded with doubts, just praise the Lord. Focus your mind on Him and not on yourself.

4. Release your prayer language. The moment you are filled with the Spirit, you will receive the ability to speak in your heavenly prayer language. You may feel the words bubbling up inside of you. You may begin to hear the words in your mind. Open your mouth and began to speak, trusting the Lord to give you this new, supernatural language. Some people ask me, "Do I have to speak in tongues?" Certainly God will not force you to do it, and it has nothing to do with salvation. But I believe He offers this gift to anyone who wants it. It could be considered the least of the gifts—but it serves as a doorway to the supernatural realm and helps usher you into the deeper things of God.

5. Step out in boldness. After you have been baptized in the Holy Spirit, one of the first things you will notice is a new boldness. The Holy Spirit does not like to hide. He wants you to speak about Jesus to those around you—and He will give you surprising courage.

What's at Stake?

The debate over Spirit-baptism may be summarized by answering this question: “Is the Christian life characterized by one or two stages?” Or again, “Is Spirit-baptism an *initiatory* experience for *all* Christians or a *second-stage* experience that only *some* receive?” Are all Christians automatically baptized in the Spirit at the moment they first trust in Christ for salvation? Or are some, if not most, baptized in the Spirit at some point in life subsequent to their initial conversion?

Review

I. What it Isn't

1. It is not the same as filling of the Holy Spirit.

While the Scripture never commands Christians to be baptized by, with, or of the Holy Spirit, it does charge them to be filled with the Spirit: "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18). But as for the initial gift of the Holy Spirit, that happens at one, and only one, time—at the time of salvation: "There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:4–5).

Unlike the baptism with the Spirit, being filled with the Spirit is an experience and should be continuous. Although filled initially on the Day of Pentecost, Peter was filled again in **Acts 4:8**. Many of the same people filled with the Spirit in Acts 2 were filled again in **Acts 4:31**. **Acts 6:5** describes Stephen as a man “full of faith and the Holy Spirit,” yet **Acts 7:55** records his being filled again. Paul was filled with the Spirit in **Acts 9:17** and again in **Acts 13:9**.

While there is no command in Scripture to be baptized with the Spirit, believers are commanded to be filled with the Spirit (**Eph. 5:18**). The grammatical construction of that passage indicates believers are to be continuously being filled with the Spirit. Those who would be filled with the Spirit must first empty themselves. That involves confession of sin and dying to selfishness and self-will. To be filled with the Spirit is to consciously practice the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ and to have a mind saturated with the Word of God.

Colossians 3:16–25 delineates the results of “letting the word of Christ richly dwell” in us. They are the same ones that result from the filling of the Spirit (**Eph. 5:19–33**). As believers yield the moment by moment decisions of life to His control, they “walk by the Spirit” (**Gal. 5:16**).

2. It is not a Second Work of Grace

it should be noted that some have tried to teach what is called the "doctrine of subsequence" or "second work of grace," which states that Christians receive some of the Holy Spirit at the time of salvation and then what is called the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" at some time afterwards. A careful examination of Scripture shows this position to be incorrect.

First, the phrase "baptism of the Holy Spirit" appears nowhere in Scripture. Moreover, there is no place in Scripture where the Holy Spirit does the baptizing. Instead, the Bible clearly portrays Christ as the baptizer: "I [John the Baptist] baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" ([Matthew 3:11](#)).

II. What it Was

while those supporting the teaching of subsequence point to specific episodes in Acts as proof that a secondary baptism occurs among all believers, closer inspection of both the texts and the historical background of the book undoes their position.

First The Promise of the Spirit

John 16:7-15

⁷ Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. ⁸ And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹ of sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁰ of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; ¹¹ of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

¹² "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear *them* now. ¹³ However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you. ¹⁵ All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare *it* to you.

In Acts 2, a subsequent baptism with the Holy Spirit is certainly seen; however, this is in keeping with Jesus' previous promise to the disciples in Acts 1:5: "you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." This occurred on Pentecost and was a predominantly Jewish event

In Acts 8, the Samaritans, a race deeply despised by the Jews, were added to the Church. While a subsequent baptism with the Holy Spirit is present in the text, the reasons for it are quite evident. It was important for the Jews to see and experience the fact that the Samaritans were included in the Church, and it was important for the Samaritans to know that the Jewish apostles were the channels of divine truth and that they were to be under apostolic authority.

In Acts 10, the Gentiles—Cornelius and those who were with him—were added to the Church. However, it should be noted that a subsequent baptism does not occur; rather, belief and the baptism with the Spirit occur at the same time.

Such is also the case in Acts 19 with a group of those who had only been exposed to John the Baptist's repentance teaching but nothing more. Belief in Christ and the baptism with the Spirit again occur simultaneously.

It is important to remember that the genre of Acts is that of historical narrative where Luke is recording an important time of historical spiritual transition. Therefore, a distinction must be made between what is descriptive in Acts vs. what is prescriptive. As one theologian has said, "We must not make the tragic mistake of teaching the experience of the apostles, but rather we must experience the teaching of the apostles."

III. What it is

**The distinction needs to be made
between**

Baptism by the Holy Spirit (place into
Christ)

vs.

Baptism with the Holy Spirit. (Holy Spirit
placed in You)

1. It is synonyms with conversion,
salvation

Romans 8:9

⁹ But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

2. It is the placing of the Believer in the
Body of Christ, (Church)

To be baptized with the Holy Spirit means that Christ places the new believer into the unity of His body and connects him/her with everyone else

who also believes in Christ. Baptism with the Spirit makes all believers one. Of this, Paul says,

"For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit" ([1 Corinthians 12:13](#)).

We must not miss the significance of the past tense expression "were all baptized." There is no state of limbo where a person is saved but not a part of the body of Christ.

While the Scripture never commands Christians to be baptized by, with, or of the Holy Spirit, it does charge them to be filled with the Spirit: "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit" ([Ephesians 5:18](#)). But as for the initial gift of the Holy Spirit, that happens at one, and only one, time—at the time of salvation: "There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism" ([Ephesians 4:4–5](#)).

The apostle Paul carefully defines the baptism with the Spirit as that act of Christ by which He places believers into His body ([Rom. 6:4–6](#); [1 Cor. 12:13](#); [Gal. 3:27](#)). In contrast to much errant teaching today, the New Testament nowhere commands believers to seek the baptism with the Spirit. It is a sovereign, single, unrepeatable act on God's part, and is no more an experience than are its companions justification and adoption. Although some wrongly view the baptism with the Spirit as the initiation into the ranks of the spiritual elite, nothing could be further from the truth. The purpose of the baptism with the Spirit is not to divide the body of Christ, but to unify it. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, through the baptism with the Spirit "we were all baptized into one body" ([1 Cor. 12:13](#); cf. [Gal. 3:26–27](#); [Eph. 4:4–6](#)).

3. It includes the indwelling of and sealing by the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 1:13

¹³ In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

The term, "baptize with the Holy Spirit," occurs several times in Scripture:

- [Matt. 3:11](#), "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."
- [Mark 1:8](#), "I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."
- [Luke 3:16](#), "John answered and said to them all, 'As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.'"
- [John 1:33](#), "And I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.'"
- [Acts 1:5](#), "for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."
- [Acts 11:16](#), "And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'"

Question: "What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit?"

Answer: The baptism of the Holy Spirit may be defined as that work whereby the Spirit of God places the believer into union with Christ and into union with other believers in the body of Christ at the moment of salvation. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was predicted by John the Baptist (Mark 1:8) and by Jesus before He ascended to heaven: “For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 1:5). This promise was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1–4); for the first time, people were permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and the church had begun.