

The Acts of the Apostles

Sermon Number 02

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Section: Acts 1:1-8

Title: “The Promise of the Father”

Acts 1:1-5

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, ²until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, ³to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

⁴And being assembled together with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” *He said*, “you have heard from Me; ⁵for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

This is the second message in the series on the Acts of the Apostles.

Last week we introduced “All that Jesus began both to do and teach.”

We connected Luke’s Gospel and Acts and we looked at the disappointment of many who saw Jesus hanging on the cross. But then Jesus came out of the grave!

The title today is “The Promise of the Father.”

We will work our way from the phrase “**All that Jesus began both to do and teach**” to “**The Promise of the Father.**” We will try to cover the main points of the phrases in between. As I said last Sunday, there is so much theology [the study of God] in these first few sentences that each thought could be developed into a sermon.

Although we can’t be dogmatic about this I was intrigued with the suggestion from Charles Alexander that “Theophilus” was not a specific person but that Luke coined a name from two Greek words, Theos and Philus, which means “God Lover” or “Lover of God.”

In these opening verses of The Acts of the Apostles, Luke writes an introduction to God's purpose in redemption, God's sovereignty, the infallibility of the Bible through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and the nature of the kingdom of God.

God the Father, in Christ Jesus, the Son of God, the *logos*, works through God the Holy Spirit.

² until the day in which He was taken up,

This phrase should remind us of someone from the OT who was "taken up."

There were two men in the OT who went to heaven without first dying.

There was Enoch:

And Enoch walked with God; and he *was* not, for God took him. Gen 5:24

And there was Elijah the only other man who went into heaven without dying.

Elijah in the presence of his successor, Elisha, was "taken up."

2 Kings 2:9-11

⁹ And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?"

Elisha said, "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me."

¹⁰ So he said, "You have asked a hard thing. *Nevertheless*, if you see me *when I am* taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be *so*."

¹¹ Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire *appeared* with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Likewise, Jesus, in the presence of His disciples was "taken up." Acts 1:2

"... until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen..."

the apostles whom He had chosen...

The Scriptures are consistent in their teaching that it is God who takes the initiative when a servant of God is chosen; as much as it is God's sovereign choice as to who will believe the Gospel and repent and be saved.

Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, gave commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen. The commandments here are the Gospels and the Epistles.

It was the apostles who wrote letters {epistles} to give to the church instructions on how the church should function and how believers should relate to one another in the local body of Christ.

The time period of Acts is a transition from synagogue and temple worship to the local NT church. Therefore it is not a correct method of interpretation of the Scriptures to select some of the unique events recorded in the Book of Acts and try to make them normative for the church in all ages. That is why the apostles wrote letters to the churches and to pastors. During the time of the events in Acts the local churches are being established. Letters from Peter, Paul, and John will soon follow to churches and to pastors to guide the churches in proper practice and discipline.

Letters were written to correct misunderstandings and abuses of privilege.

Peter warns elders not to lord it over the flock of God.

Paul warns the church about the abuse of speaking in tongues.

We will come to tongues in Acts Chapter 2.

If the modern charismatic would read and obey the Scriptures the error of so-called “speaking in tongues” would be corrected. Paul wrote to the Corinthian church to correct the abuse of tongues speaking.

Another example would be snake handling.

Paul was not tempting God when a serpent bit him.

Infallible Proofs

As we pointed the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the theme and the substance of every sermon recorded in Acts.

A brief review of your epistemology; how do you know what you know?

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is attested to by many infallible proofs.

A person may choose not to believe what Luke and the other writers of the Bible wrote, but they are basing their disbelief on nothing!

I believe the Bible is the written, infallible, inerrant, and plenary Word of God, and that is a matter of faith.

If you do not believe the Bible is God's Word that too is an act of faith. You have no more proof that the Bible is not the Word of God than I have that it is the Word of God. You simply choose not to believe it.

Think about this: Do you believe that there was a man in the history of the United States named George Washington and that he was the first president of the US?

Why do you believe that? I.e. what is your epistemology? You have never seen George Washington or known anyone else who has seen him. Why would you choose to believe that a George Washington even existed?

Because you have the historical records and you trust that they are true.

After His resurrection Jesus appeared in His body at least thirteen times to His disciples and He convinced them that He was alive and not dead and decaying in the grave. And the eyewitnesses wrote it down for us!

And so we have the infallible record of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit assures us that the record is true.

Paul writes:

1 Cor 15:3-8

³For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. ⁶After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. ⁷After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. ⁸Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

The Kingdom of God

Jesus is going to instruct the apostles and us on the nature of the kingdom of God.

In previous messages I have stated that in my 40 plus years of Bible study I have summarized my eschatology into two essential facts;

- 1) The nature of the Kingdom of God;
- 2) That God saves individuals and not races or ethnic groups.

Matthew writes that Jesus said the kingdom of God is now, as He spoke, not yet to be in some distant age to come.

Matt 4:17

From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Don't let anyone convince you that the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven are two different realms in order to support a view of eschatology that pushes the kingdom "out yonder."

Jesus uses both terms; the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God, in the same reference of time.

Matt 19:23-24

²³ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴ And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

You have to "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel" to twist these two kingdom phrases into two different realms and times.

The Number Forty in Scripture

... being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

During a period of forty days after His resurrection Jesus appeared no less than thirteen times.

In my search of a concordance, there are 104 references to the number "forty" in the Bible. This is not the place to do an extensive study of "forty" but perhaps on another occasion. Or, maybe Brother Gables has done a study on the use of the number "forty" that he can bring to us sometime.

However, so as not to leave you in desperate suspense, consider this from:

Wilson's Dictionary of Bible Types

"The number [forty] represents testing in human life."

Noah's faith was tested and found to be all that it should be.

Gen 7:4-5

⁴ For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made." ⁵ And Noah did according to all that the LORD commanded him.

God's faithfulness was tested and found to be sufficient for all the needs.

Ex 16:35

And the children of Israel ate manna forty years, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.

Israel's faith and trust were tested and failed at the end.

Ex 24:18

So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

Eli was tested. He judged Israel and failed at the end.

1 Sam 4:18

Then it happened, when he made mention of the ark of God, that Eli fell off the seat backward by the side of the gate; and his neck was broken and he died, for the man was old and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years.

Israel was challenged and was proved to be utterly unworthy and cowardly. Saul reigned forty years and was deposed as a failure.

1 Sam 17:16

And the Philistine drew near and presented himself forty days, morning and evening.

David reigned forty years and ended his rule gloriously.

2 Sam 5:4

David *was* thirty years old when he began to reign, *and* he reigned forty years.

Solomon reigned forty years and ended his period of testing in idolatry.

1 Kings 11:42

And the period that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel *was* forty years.

Jesus was tested forty days and forty nights. He came back more than a conqueror. Jesus revealed Himself to His own disciples for forty days after His resurrection so that they could endure the tests through the years.

Matt 4:1-2

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ²And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.

Acts 1:3

...to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

Wilson's Dictionary of Bible Types, Walter Lewis Wilson, Eerdmans, 1957, page 203

Acts 1:4-5

⁴And being assembled together with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," *He said*, "you have heard from Me; ⁵for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

Jesus told His disciples to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the Holy Spirit. It is not that the Holy Spirit has not been present in the world; He was at the beginning when the Spirit "brooded" over the waters. Genesis 1:1-2

Gen 1:1-2

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

But beginning in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit will be manifest in doing the work of Jesus and in the indwelling of believers. The Holy Spirit brings in the church of the New Testament in its corporate body, i.e. the visible church.

The corporate church will begin at Jerusalem but it will soon be scattered and spread throughout the uttermost parts of the earth.

Acts 1:4 "... but to wait for the Promise of the Father..."

Luke 24:49 "... Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you "which," *He said*, "you have heard from Me;"

What is the "promise of the Father?"

There are many things that Jesus could be referring to but they surely would include these promises of the Holy Spirit:

John 14:15-18

¹⁵ "If you love Me, keep My commandments. ¹⁶ And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever — ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

John 14:25-26

²⁵ "These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. ²⁶ But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

John 15:26-27

²⁶ "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. ²⁷ And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

Acts 1:5 ... for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

And indeed, in just 10 more days, on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came in fulfillment of Joel 2:28!

Acts 1:5

For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence. The number of "days hence" (from the Ascension to the descent of the Spirit) we know to have been exactly ten; because as 50 days had to intervene between Passover and Pentecost (Lev 23:15-16), and 40 of these had already been spent by our risen Lord upon earth, there remained but ten more until Pentecost, when the Spirit was to descend. But Jesus, instead of telling all this to the disciples, uses the indefinite expression, "not many days hence" - doubtless to keep their expectations awake.

(from Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by BibleSoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)

Acts 1:5 ... for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

⁴ And being assembled together with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," *He said*, "you have heard from Me; ⁵ for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

Here Jesus directly connects the "Promise of the Father" with the baptism of the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

Now what is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit?

In order to develop the baptism of the Holy Spirit I believe it is necessary to deal with the subject of baptism in its full context in the Bible.

Some of you were present for our Bible Study on Romans 6:3 on March 7, 2010, and this will be like an echo, so bear with me.

Romans 6: 3

Or do you not know that as many of us as were **baptized into Christ Jesus** were baptized into His death?

"Or do you not know....?"

If you are a believer in Jesus Christ there are some things that you are expected to know. This is one of them. If you are living the life of an antinomian {explain}, you do not know this truth and you are probably deceived as to whether or not you are saved. Salvation is not obtained by something that you decided to allow God to do for you. Salvation is entirely the work of our sovereign God and you will know when God has brought you from darkness to light - from death to life - having been born again.

Union with Adam; or **union with Christ.**

Just as union with Adam results in **condemnation;**
even so union with Christ results in **justification.**

When a person is in union with Jesus Christ he is therefore justified {declared not guilty}, and there are certain things that may be known and certain things that must be true.

That is why Paul anticipated, asked, and answered the question in Romans 6:1.

If grace superabounds sin [Romans 5:20]; and if the reign of grace so overcomes the reign of sin, why not continue in sin? And the answer is final!
“Certainly not!”

Since you have been justified then sanctification necessarily follows justification.

Have you been justified? Then you have died to sin.
If you have not died to sin, then you have not been justified.

What does it mean to have “died to sin?”
It does not mean that we no longer sin.

Paul deals with that in Romans Chapter 7.

It does mean, however, that sin is no longer your master.
Sin does not reign over you.

You now have the ability, the power, to resist temptation and it grieves you when you yield to sin. You have died to sin.

“Or do you not know...?” Know what? That you died to sin.

And when did this transaction of grace occur?

Romans 6:3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were **baptized** into Christ Jesus were **baptized** into His death?

Not many things in Scripture have been “twisted” to lead to destruction more than water baptism.

Now I would not embarrass you by asking you to raise your hand if you think Paul refers to water baptism in Romans 6:3. But be honest with yourself. What comes to your mind when you read or hear the word “baptized?”

Do you always think of baptism in water!

Do you ever think of any other kind of baptism?

In order to understand what Romans 6 is teaching we need to briefly discuss baptism. So, let’s talk about baptism and how the word is used in the Bible.

There are five kinds of “baptism” named in the New Testament, and yet most of today’s church people will think only of water baptism.

What else, then, besides water baptism is called a baptism?

In addition to water baptism there are:

Repentance; Moses; Suffering; Fire and the Holy Spirit.

What I want you to see about all five of these baptisms is that they all have one thing in common. They all involve being **overwhelmed**. {repeat}

If you can remember this concept it will help you to understand all of the types of baptism.

1) **Water baptism:**

In Scriptural water baptism, the subject is **overwhelmed** with water. He is put under the water, as if to be buried, symbolizing a death, dead to sin, he is buried, and he is raised to life.

Water baptism symbolizes union with Jesus Christ who died, was buried, and rose again from the grave.

This will not be an exhaustive lecture on the **subject** and **mode** of water baptism.

By **subject** I mean whom do you baptize?; believers only, or unbelieving infants? Only those who profess faith in Jesus Christ, or tiny little sinners wearing diapers?

By **mode** I mean how much water is required to scripturally baptize someone? Enough water to drown in, or just enough to clean your fingers, like a finger bowl?

If you want a definitive study of the subjects of water baptism you will do no better than to read The Baptism of Disciples Alone, Fred A. Malone, Founders Press, Second Edition 2007, ISBN 978-0-9785711-3-9.

A close second would be Adonniram Judson on Christian Baptism, Audubon Press 2000, ISBN 0-9651883-6-6.

Both Fred Malone and Adonniram Judson write from a personal journey from paedobaptism to credo baptism.

There are many texts in the Bible that establish believers' baptism by immersion. Just to take one example:

Acts 8:34-39 So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?" 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. 36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" 37 Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." 38 So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. 39 Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.

"See, here is water... The eunuch was travelling in the desert and he had enough water in skins on that chariot to use if sprinkling would do for baptism.

"If you believe with all your heart, you may."

The eunuch was now a believer and there need to be enough water for a baptism.

In another place:

John 3:23 Now John [the immerser] also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was **much water there**. And they came and were baptized.

Once I heard a well-known local Presbyterian minister, whom I greatly respect, teaching from this passage, say, "We who sprinkle need to be honest, it does not take "much water" to do that."

The Greek word "baptize."

βαπτίζω **baptizo** (bap-tid'-zo); from a derivative of to immerse, submerge; to make overwhelmed (i.e. fully wet); used only (in the N. T.) of ceremonial ablution, especially (technically) of the ordinance of Christian baptism:

KJV - Baptist, baptize, wash.

(Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright © 1994, 2003, 2006 Biblesoft, Inc. and International Bible Translators, Inc.)

Much confusion for several centuries might have been averted if the translators of the English Bible had translated **baptizo** correctly into immerse. Instead they invented a new English word by transliterating **baptizo** into baptize.

John the Baptist should be John the Immerser. And we might not have had much of the confusion over the centuries as to what baptism means.

In the two passages quoted we have the **subject** of baptism is a believer and the **mode** of water baptism as immersion.

But the main issue with water baptism is what does it do?

There are those who teach that water baptism literally and physically has an effect on the one being baptized. Others, of whom I am one, teach that baptism is only symbolic; that it is symbolic of something that has already happened to the one being baptized in water.

So here is a point of fundamental doctrine.

Does water baptism have a physical and spiritual effect on the subject or is it purely symbolic?

Another way of expressing this would be to ask, “When the person comes up out of the water are they any different than before they went under?” Your answer will tell you what you think baptism does.

As Yogi Berra is reported to have said, “When you come to a fork in the road, take it.” What you believe about water baptism will affect your understanding of many other doctrinal issues.

In order to illustrate how some different sects view water baptism it is necessary to understand what they teach. This is not meant to be mean-spirited, you can verify what I say by simply asking them or reading their published material. Therefore, I am not building a “straw man” that I can then destroy.

The **Roman Catholic Church** teaches that water baptism removes the guilt of original sin. That is called “baptismal regeneration.” They teach that the water of baptism actually removes the guilt of Adam’s sin. Their view of baptism by sprinkling actually does something to the subject.

Then, by their teaching, you must continue in the sacraments of the Roman Catholic church in order to pass through “purgatory” and to eventually arrive in heaven.

The **Church of Christ** {the denomination} teaches that you must be baptized “in order to be saved.” We will deal with their favorite text, Acts 2:38, at a later time. They argue that water baptism is part of your faith and is therefore not a work.

They also deny that the Holy Spirit is active in regeneration. They teach that the Holy Spirit gave us the Bible and we each have the ability to believe it apart from the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. They do not believe in man’s total depravity, or that a man is dead in his spirit.

However, they are not consistent in what they teach because a person who has been “baptized” can lose their salvation; but if they are then re-saved they do not have to be re-baptized.

Then there are the “**Landmark**” Baptist churches that do not recognize the baptism of even another Baptist church. A person desiring to join a Landmark Baptist church must be “baptized” into that local body.

Does the water literally remove the guilt of sin?

Does water baptism save us?

Does water baptism do **anything** in the spiritual realm?

Peter answered all those questions for us. 1 Peter 3:20-21

... in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. 21 There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,....

We must not ignore our **Presbyterian** friends. They teach that when believing parents take their infant, unbelieving child, and he is sprinkled, that child is then in a “covenant” relationship with God. As the child grows up he is received into the church and allowed to take the Lord’s Supper. It is my fear that many adult souls of that faith are presuming on God and have no conviction that they have been born again by the Spirit of God.

Our Presbyterian friends go astray when they try to make baptism the New Testament the antitype of Old Testament Circumcision. I will not go into all the arguments in this discussion, but regeneration, not baptism, is the New Testament antitype of circumcision. Cf. Romans 3:28-29

28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.

Didn't Paul know that baptism replaced circumcision? But here the type is physical circumcision and the antitype is Holy Spirit regeneration.

Colossians 2:11-12

11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

Regeneration is the circumcision of the heart and this is the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

As Baptists, we believe that water baptism is one of the two essential ordinances of the church.

Why are we called Baptists? Our Lord gave His church two and only two symbolic ordinances to profess faith in Him and to remember Him:
Viz. Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

As important as water baptism is, the great apostle made a distinction between baptism and the Gospel, as to what is of the utmost importance.

1 Cor 1:10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 11 For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. 12 Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ."

13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? 14 I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15 lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name. 16 Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other. 17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.

Paul makes a clear distinction between baptism and the Gospel and so they can't be essentially linked together, i.e. that you can't believe the Gospel and be saved unless you are baptized. As important as water baptism is, it is only a symbol of what has happened in your spirit.

However, I must add that if a person says they believe in Jesus Christ and they have been taught Scriptural water baptism properly and they willfully refuse to be baptized I doubt if they are really saved!

Four other types of baptism:

2) The Baptism into Moses: What is the baptism into Moses?

1 Cor 10:1 Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, 2 all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. 6 Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.

The people were committed to follow Moses and they were **overwhelmed** by the cloud and by the sea. And so it is called a "baptism."

3) The baptism of suffering:

Matt 20:22 But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able."

Our Lord Jesus was **overwhelmed** by the prospect of being made sin. He did not shrink from suffering because He was afraid of the physical pain. He recoiled at the idea of being made to be sin for us. He was overwhelmed at the thought of being put in the rank and order of sinners.

That is what **overwhelmed** our Lord.

4) **John the Baptist's baptism is called the baptism of repentance:**

In Luke Chapter 3 we have the record of the ministry of John the Baptist.

The people who came to John to be baptized were **overwhelmed** by the need for repentance. "Show me fruit, evidence of repentance," said John.

And, of course, John was misunderstood by some.

Acts 19:1-6

19:1 And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples 2 he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." 3 And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism." 4 Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

And that my brothers and sisters brings me to the baptism in Romans 6:3.

John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, the voice in the wilderness:

Matthew 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto 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.**

Jesus said: Acts 1:5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the **Holy Spirit** not many days from now." Then in Acts 2:1-4, Luke reports:

2:1 Now when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them **divided tongues, as of fire**, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5) **Baptism of the Holy Spirit.**

It is the baptism of the Holy Spirit that puts one into Jesus Christ.

The reason why believers will not ask the question:

“Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?” is because when they were baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ they died to sin.

Or do you not know that?

Believers are in union with Christ Jesus. They have been born again.

They have been baptized with the Holy Spirit.

We should not need to be reminded of this, but the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not what the charismatics calls the “second blessing.” They teach that a person can be saved and then at a later time they enter the “full gospel” manifested by speaking in tongues. We will deal more with “tongues” in Chapter 2. Just know that a person is not saved and then at some future time is baptized in the Spirit.

You can not divide the Godhead. If you do not have the Spirit of Christ then you do not belong to Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:9 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.

What Paul is teaching in Romans 6:3 is that when you are baptized with the Holy Spirit into Christ Jesus you enter into that union with Christ that assures you of having all that the Father promised to the Son; you are His inheritance in the church.

Ephesians 4:1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, **one baptism**; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

1 Corinthians 12:13

For **by one Spirit we were all baptized** into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

Can you now hear or read “baptism” and not think only of water baptism.

And so I will end this excursus with a summary statement of union with Christ

If you are now a believer in Jesus Christ, you were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world {Ephesians 1:4}. When Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners {1 Timothy 1:15}, His perfect life of obedience to the holy law of God was **reckoned** to be your life, that is what chapters 1-5 teaches. When Christ died, His death was **reckoned** by God to be your death, so that you no longer have the fear of death as a penalty for sin. In the same way, when Christ rose from the dead, His resurrection was **reckoned** by God to be your resurrection {Eph 2:5}. The whole of your salvation depends on the fact of your union with Christ. That is why you are dead to sin and water baptism symbolizes this fact.

If you can receive what I have taught you about Romans 6:3 you will be in a minority. Nearly all of the commentaries that I consulted say that this is water baptism in Romans 6:3. Even some reformed baptist theologians say that Romans 6:3 is water baptism. But they are not consistent. If this is water baptism, then it is that physical act that puts a man into Christ.

If that is true, we can follow the lead of Constantine and capture thousands and forcefully baptize them and make Christians out of them whether they believe in Jesus Christ or not.

There is not a drop of water in Romans Chapter 6.

What we have is the statement:

Romans 6:3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

This is the baptism of the Spirit into Christ Jesus.

Or do you not know that?

After that excursus on baptism we will return to Acts 1:6-7.

Acts 1:6-7

⁶ Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.

I realize that I am repeating myself, but in my studied opinion two of the most misunderstood things in the Bible are:

- 1) The nature of the kingdom of God, and;
- 2) That God saves individuals and not races or ethnic groups.

Following the teaching of the Jewish rabbis the disciples were looking for an earthly kingdom and a restoration of the nation of Israel in the power and glory of the days of David and Solomon.

It was this misunderstanding of the prophets that led the Jewish leaders to reject Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah. Jesus has a kingdom but He would not allow them to crown Him an earthly king.

John 6:14-15

¹⁴ Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."

¹⁵ Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone.

A well-known Bible expositor insists that we must understand the OT prophets exactly as the Jews understood them. It was that misunderstanding of the prophets that led to the crucifixion of Jesus.

It was this same misunderstanding of the prophets that lead well-meaning teachers to look for a kingdom on earth in some millennial future. They are blindly following the Jewish rabbis in the face of all that Jesus and the apostles said about the nature of the kingdom.

Jesus spoke often in parables about the kingdom and still the people thought of the kingdom almost entirely in political terms.

Jesus' answer to the question, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority."

Jesus did not give a simple "No," He stressed the sovereignty of God; it was not for them to know the workings of God in terms of "times and seasons."

Would that the eschatological prognosticators and end-times chart makers would learn from Jesus that the important thing is to be about the business of being witnesses for Him.

Acts 1:8

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Witnesses become martyrs

Jesus told His disciples that they would be witnesses.
The Greek word translated "witness" is *martus*.

[NT:3144](#) μάρτυς **martus** (mar'-toos); of uncertain affinity; a witness (literally [judicially] or figuratively [genitive case]); by analogy, a "martyr":

KJV - martyr, record, witness.

(Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright © 1994, 2003, 2006 Biblesoft, Inc. and International Bible Translators, Inc.)

In the process of witnessing about Jesus and His resurrection the disciples came under persecution. The word "martyr" translated "witness" thus a martyr became one who suffers for their belief.

WITNESS

New Testament Use of Word. In the NT the original notion of a witness is exhibited in the special form of one who attests his belief in the gospel by personal suffering. Hence it is that the use of the ecclesiastical term "martyr" has arisen.

(from The New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright (c) 1988.)

In the strongest terms; “But...” Jesus told His disciples not to dwell on political speculation regarding national Israel but rather to be about the business of spreading the good news of what God has done for sinners in Christ.

As already mentioned Jesus gives an outline of Luke’s record of the Acts of the Apostles.

The events of Acts Chapters 1-7 take place in Jerusalem, Judea.

The events of Acts Chapters 8-11:18 move out into Palestine, Samaria.

The events of Acts Chapters 11:19-28:31 go to the end of the earth; i.e. the world of the Gentiles.