

Holy Spirit in the New Testament

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▪ I. Introduction

- A. The writers of the Old Testament looked for a time when the Holy Spirit would do a greater work than was done in their day.
- B. They stressed the importance of words that would be spoken and written because of the work of the Holy Spirit. Consider the importance of the words of revelation.
 - 1. "The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me; because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the year of Jehovah's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah, that he may be glorified" (Isa. 61:1-3).
 - 2. The context of this passage shows these words were spoken to Judah before the Babylonian captivity and refer to the restoration and rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple but have a second and ultimate fulfillment in Jesus (See Luke 4:16-21). The

message was from "the Spirit of the Lord Jehovah."

- C. The power and importance of the revealed word is emphasized. The word heard, revealed, preached, believed and obeyed is dominant.
 - 1. Matthew 4:12-17 and Isaiah 9:1-2— Jesus began to preach.
 - 2. Matthew 11:2-6; Isaiah 35:5-10—gospel is preached.
 - 3. Matthew 12:15-21 and Isaiah 42:1-4—Jehovah's servant shall declare judgment.
 - 4. Matthew 13:14-17 and Isaiah 6:9-10— see, hear, believe.
 - 5. Matthew 13:35 and Psalms 78:1-3— teach and reveal.
 - 6. Luke 4:16-21 and Isaiah 61:1-3—preach good tidings.
 - 7. John 12:37-41 and Isaiah 53:1; Isaiah 6:9-10—a message is to be believed.
- D. The Bible deals with the message more than the messenger. The real messenger was the Holy Spirit, and, being God, he is deep, inscrutable, and incomprehensible, but we can grasp the words the Holy Spirit revealed.
- II. The Holy Spirit and the Word in the New Testament
 - A. John the Baptist was a forerunner.
 - 1. He was filled with the Holy Spirit from birth (Luke 1:15).
 - 2. He was to prepare the way for Messiah (Isaiah 40:3).
 - 3. He would turn the hearts of the people to God (Malachi 4:5-6).
 - 4. He did his work by exhortation and preaching (Luke 3:18)
 - B. The work of Jesus was planned by God.
 - 1. "He that hath received his witness hath set his seal to this, that God is true. For

he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for he giveth not the Spirit by measure. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:34-36).

- a) Note: Jesus is the one God sent. Jesus spoke the words of God: for (the reason is) he (God) giveth not the Spirit by measure. Obviously, the one who spoke the words of God, is the one who received the Spirit without measure—Jesus received the spirit without measure.
- b) Others must have received the Spirit by measure; otherwise it does not make sense to say Jesus had an immeasurable measure of the Spirit.
- 2. Emphasis was put on the teaching (the words) of Jesus: "Never man so spake" (John 7:46).
 - a) "The multitudes were astonished at his teaching" (Matt. 7:28).
 - b) "Hear ye him" (Matt. 17:5).
 - c) "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46).
 - d) "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that y, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works?

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock" (Matt. 7:21-24).

- e) "It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63).
- f) "No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he that is from God, he hath seen the Father" (John 6:44-46).
- g) "Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I came forth and am come from God; for neither have I come of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and standeth not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father thereof. But because I say the truth, ye believe me

not. Which of you convicteth me of sin? If I say truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth the words of God: for this cause ye hear them not, because ye are not of God" (John 8:42-47)

- h) "If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also: from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I say unto you I speak not from myself: but the Father abiding in me doeth his works" (John 14:7-10; Amos 1:1). Daniel said, 'heard I the voice of his words" (Dan. 10:9). Balaam said, ' 'The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak" (Num. 22:38).

Comments on the Outline

God instructs the people of earth through the medium of words. The Holy Spirit used words in instructing chosen leaders who repeated the words to the public. The words would sometimes come to the receiver through the eye, at other times through the ear, and occasionally the words were put in the mouth, but the message always came in the signs and symbols of ideas and was communicated to the people in words.

"The words of Amos, who was among the herdsmen of Tekoa, which

he saw concerning Israel...." (Amos 1:1). Daniel said, "heard I the voice of his words" (Dan.10:9). Balaam said, "The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak" (Num. 22:38).

The Bible stresses the importance of inspired writings. The New Testament says the Holy Spirit influences human minds through a medium, except in some miracles—*miracles confined to the first century.*

God made the world by the creative power of his spoken word. God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters." God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together unto one place." God said, "Let the earth put forth grass, herbs yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit after their kind, wherein is the seed thereof, upon the earth: and it was so." God spoke, and it was done. "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God" (Heb. 11:3).

"... It is God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6). Paul's argument is that the same God who called light out of darkness in the beginning, demonstrated how weighty and mighty his word is, by giving the revelation of his gospel of salvation. We dare not ignore nor belittle it.

The force of God's word is well documented in the Bible. The gospel is God's power to save (Rom. 1:16). Still, some misguided souls call it "the mere word" and "the dead letter." Those who faithfully follow the teaching of the Bible are called strict constructionists and legalists. These terms are used in derision and are not unlike the Jews' calling Jesus a Samaritan to disgrace him. Jesus set the proper response pattern for us when he discounted their slap by saying they dishonored him and pointed out that he was doing his Father's will, but they were not so disposed. The apostle argues we do

not handle the word of God deceitfully. ..The gods of this world blind the minds of the unbelieving to prevent them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ...We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God" (2 Cor. 4:1-7). He calls the scriptures "the word of God...the gospel of the glory of Christ...a treasure...an exceeding great power."

We do not war according to the flesh, but "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ; and being in readiness to avenge all disobedience, when your obedience shall be made full" (2 Cor. 10:5-6).

Our obedience is to be full, complete, perfect. It is the Comforter—the Holy Spirit—who gives to us divine revelation. "Wherefore, even as the Holy Spirit saith, Today if ye shall hear his voice" (Heb. 3:7). "Brethren, it was needful that the scripture should be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spake before by the mouth of David concerning Judas" (Acts 1:16). "The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, And his word was upon my tongue" (2 Sam. 23:2). "But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons" (1 Tim. 4:1).

The word of truth revealed by the Holy Spirit is sufficient and adequate to make sinners acceptable to God. We are not to follow the ambiguous leadings of doubtful feelings but are to submit to the absolute standard of scripture inspired of God.

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4).

"Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth" (Matt. 6:10).

"The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the soul: The testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise the simple" (Psalms

19:7).

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope” (Rom. 15:4).

“And that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness. That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work” (2 Tim. 3:15-17)

“It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, are life” (John 6:63).

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death” (Rom. 8:2).

“But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing” (James 1:25).

“For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12).

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves” (James 1:22).

“Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures” (James 1:18).

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another

from the heart fervently: having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, For, all flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower falleth: But the word of the Lord abideth for ever. And this is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you" (1 Peter 1:22-25).

"For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21).

"Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21).

John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth finished their God-given assignments through the power of words. The overriding importance of the message is prominent in the God-given scriptures (writings). As we look at the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the apostles of Jesus, certain disciples in the first century, and all the saved, we will understand more fully the Spirit's work of revealing, confirming, and protecting the plan of salvation as given in the new covenant.

"Now I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give {you} the inheritance among all them that are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

Do We Know God?

By Carl G. Hecker

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A basic understanding of the true nature of our God can come only from the Bible. Our ideas of him develop over years of spiritual growth. If our fundamental understanding is wrong, we will never come to an adequate appreciation of what he requires of us. The following simple thoughts seem helpful in searching for deeper insight from the scriptures. See if you agree.

The Godhead

A clear, simple concept of the God of the Bible is essential to the proper faith and practice of the religion of Christ. The Hebrew word translated God (*Elohim*) in Genesis 1:1 is plural in number. It shows plurality in the persons of God. The New Testament also presents the same idea (John 1:1-14).

We ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold or silver or stone, graven by art and man's device (Acts 17:29). Material representations of the Divine Being are idolatry (Exodus 20:4-6). God is spirit and we must not allow ourselves to think otherwise (John 4:24).

God (*Elohim*) has revealed himself as three persons. Each one in the Godhead is a distinct person but always one in action, thought, and purpose with the other two in the Godhead. These three persons always moved in perfect unity, with each having a specific identity and work apart from the others.

The Father is the designer. The Son, (also designated the Word) is the executor. The Holy Ghost is the organizer. When we read of God in the Bible, it always helps to have these basic thoughts in mind: God, the Father, as Designer; God, the

Son, as Executor; God, the Holy Ghost, as Organizer.

We see these three in the redemption of mankind. A proper understanding of their individual roles in this divine plan is essential to overcoming the often confusing and always conflicting denominational doctrines so prevalent today.

Our God in Redemption

We would expect to see the same unity of purpose and the definite assigned work in the revelation and enforcing of the scheme of redemption. The Father is the designer, the planner (Eph. 3:11; II Tim. 1:9). It was his eternal purpose. It was his grace and it was to be expressed in his gospel (Titus 2:11).

The Son is the one who executes by taking the form of a man (John 1:14) and dying on the cross to save all mankind (I Tim. 1:15). The Holy Ghost then did his divine part by revealing the reasonable and orderly plan in the New Testament. He did this by inspiring the apostles of Jesus.

Jesus gave the promise of the Father (infallible guidance) to his chosen apostles just before returning to the Father (John 14:25-26; Acts 1:4-9). The Comforter was to guide them into all truth. This he did. He then confirmed the word with gifts of signs and wonders and with divers miracles (Hebrews 2:1-4). The person of the Holy Ghost is always in the masculine gender (he or him). He is always singular in number. He revealed the word of God but he is not that word. The Holy Ghost has great influence but he is not merely an influence. The Holy Spirit is not some sort of "glorified it."

The Holy Spirit possesses all the divine attributes equally with God, the Father and God, the Son. He is co-eternal, omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient. He is a person of the Godhead.

The term *Holy Ghost* equates with the expression *Holy Spirit*. They mean the same. The two English words translate one Greek word. He is a person and always functions as a person. He can be grieved (Eph. 4:30). The Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit is one person the same as God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, the Son are individual persons (Eph. 4:1-4).

Just as one individual cannot dwell literally within another person, so neither God the Father, Christ the Son, nor the Holy Spirit dwells in us personally. Such divine indwelling is a beautiful expression pointing to the closeness of our relationship to them. When one misapplies these scriptures by making them literal, he not only comes up with conflicting and confusing denominational doctrines but deprives himself of the real beauty of the revelation! The indwelling of the Godhead can only be effected by the words of the Eternal One. When this word is in the heart of the sincere individual it is God dwelling in us and we in him!

God dwells in us. Christ dwells in us. The Holy Spirit dwells in us. We dwell in them, that close! Such a close relationship is described by this beautiful and satisfying figure of speech. Other figures express the close relationship, such as we walk with him; he leads us; we are his sons and daughters. These physical, worldly images are descriptive of the spiritual. Our God is spirit (John 4:24). If any one of them is taken literally, that conveys an unreasonable idea leading to confusion and often unwholesome superstition. Do not allow this to happen to you.

The Blood Of Christ

Neal Pollard

The topic above should cause one's mind to focus on some precise areas. Naturally, the blood of Christ implies thoughts of the "incarnation" of Christ (that Christ took on the form of man, while all God, and, thus, had blood coursing through His veins; Philippians 2:8). The blood of Christ further educes from one's thoughts the atonement Christ made for all mankind through the shedding of His blood at the cross (cf. Hebrews 9:12-14). The blood of Christ also elicits reflection upon the suffering and death of the sinless man from Nazareth (1 Peter 2:24). And on one might reflect.

The phrase, the blood of Christ, appears verbatim in the New Testament in four verses. With each reference one finds important lessons about the function and significance of His blood. Christ's blood is central in the Father's plan of salvation and life within His favor. What does the blood of Christ bring to needy man?

The Blood Of Christ Brings Redemption (1 Peter 1:19)

In 1 Peter 1, one sees the inspired apostle speaking to persecuted (1), predestined (2), purified (2), and pliant (2) people of God. What would cause a Christian to suffer wrong for doing right? What would cause a Christian to search out from the scriptures the terms of election, accept the terms of pardon, and follow the terms of Christian living? Simply, an understanding of redemption.

Perhaps the verse most loved and quoted is John 3:16. Yet, so bekown and familiar, this verse is sorely misunderstood and underapplied. Jesus, the speaker of the words recorded in this verse, foretells the act of redemption. With His divine

foreknowledge, Christ understood that the gift of the Father's only begotten Son (Himself) meant the shedding of His blood at Calvary. The purpose of that shed blood, He knew, was to redeem the lost race of man from the power and hopelessness of sin. Paul says, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Galatians 4:4,5). By inspiration, Paul reinforces this with Titus (Titus 2:14).

The Blood OF Christ Brings Removal (Hebrews 9:14)

The King James Version uses, in this verse, the word "purge" in translating the effect of the blood of Christ upon the conscience of one to whom that blood is applied. Purge means "to purify, especially of sin, guilt, or defilement" (The American Heritage Concise Dictionary, 1994). Thayer shows the original word translated "purge" in this verse means "free from the guilt of sin" (The New Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, 312). Clearly, the Spirit-guided writer of Hebrews speaks of the effect of the applied blood of the Savior. The audience of Hebrews, of which modern man is a part, needs some agent to remove the guilt of sin (dead works) from their lives. The blood of Christ is that agent. For the agent to be effective (to do the job it was intended to do), one must come in contact with it. Where does one come in contact with the blood?

Jesus shed His blood when He died (John 19:34). Paul writes "that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death" (Romans 6:3). One cannot literally go over to Jerusalem to a hill called Mt. Calvary and find the man Jesus bleeding to death on a cross. Furthermore, because one cannot do this, one cannot in some literal way reach up to Him and take some of His shed blood and apply it to himself.

Thus, there is no literal, physical way for today's man or woman to contact the actual, shed blood of our Lord.

Yet, Revelation 1:5 reveals that Christ, on His cross, washed us from our sins in His shed blood. God would not allow His Son to shed His life-blood and then provide no means for mankind to contact that blood in some way. And, there is a way and only one way. In identical terminology, Acts 22:16 says that baptism washes away sins. In summation, Christ shed His blood in His death. We are buried with Christ in baptism. Christ washed our sins with His blood. We wash away our sins in the act of baptism. The blood of Christ and baptism, inseparably joined, remove the sins of those who recognize and submit to the authority of Christ in being baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21).

The Blood Of Christ Brings Return (Ephesians 2:13)

At the creation of man, there was no need for means whereby man could return to a right relationship with Jehovah. The idea in Ephesians 2 that, specifically here, the Gentiles were "far off" implies the need to return. How could they come back to God? Paul stresses the fact that Christ's blood was the only means whereby reconciliation could be made. Thus, Paul penned the glorious fact that Christ "made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself" (Colossians 1:20). As if an inseparable gulf was crossed by Adam and Eve through their sinning at Eden, that gap of sin separated man from God (cf. Isaiah 59:1,2; Note: This is not to suggest that all inherit Adam's sin— the false idea of Hereditary Depravity – but rather that through Adam sin entered the world, Romans 5:17, and, consequently, all have sinned, Romans 3:23). Not with acts of goodness or meritorious works could man ever earn his salvation (Titus 3:5). Yet, there are conditions that God expects man to meet

in order to have past sins forgiven and the restoration of a right relationship with the Father (Titus 2:12; Hebrews 5:9; Ephesians 2:8). By shedding His blood, Christ paved a road of return (i.e., the “narrow road” of Matthew 7:13,14) to take us back to God. There was no access before and without Him and after sin was in the world (cf. 1 Timothy 2:5; John 14:6). How did Christ effect this return with His blood?

He took the first, old covenant God made with Moses and Israel out of the way by dying on the cross (Ephesians 2:12,14-15). He placed all believers in the faith into one body [the church](Ephesians 2:14,15,16; 4:4). He provided the message of reconciliation in commissioning the preached word to all men (Ephesians 2:17; Acts 1:8). He opened the avenue of prayer by His death on the cross, encouraging petitioning the Father to enhance our relationship with Him (Ephesians 2:18). He sets aside a place in the Kingdom [the church] for all the faithful obedient into which all spiritual blessings flow (Ephesians 2:19-22; 1:3; Matthew 16:18-19). To all who obey the commandments of God relative to entrance into His church, reconciliation and return to God are provided.

The Blood Of Christ Brings Remembrance (1 Corinthians 10:16)

As Eden shows the importance God stressed in mankind before the cross to anticipate that great event, this verse shows the importance God stresses in mankind after the cross remembering it. Those washed in the blood of Christ, contacted in baptism, are added to the church (Acts 2:41-47). Therein, those added [Christians] are governed by the Word of God in worship and conduct. A vital part of New Testament worship is the weekly participation in the Lord’s Supper (Acts 20:7). Why has God authorized that Christians do so, and with such frequency?

The answer is “communion.” In connection with the Lord’s Supper, this word is translated “communion” only once in the

New Testament. Yet, the original word from which it is translated is *koininia*, among the most recognized of all Greek words even among those who have little knowledge of that language. Most often, *koininia* is translated "fellowship." "Fellowship" is also employed by the inspired New Testament writers to make reference to the "Memorial Feast." The apostles and early Christians continued steadfastly in the fellowship of the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:42). The fellowship of the Lord's Supper was not to be defiled by the presence of idolatry at Corinth (1 Corinthians 10:20), but rather the communion was to be exclusively with the Lord.

In 1 Corinthians 10:16, Paul stresses that there is communion. That fellowship is with the blood of Christ, which suggests a multitude of things. First, the blood of Christ places one into the one body (the church— Colossians 1:18)(Acts 20:28). Therefore, the fellowship of the Lord's Supper involves corporate (collective) activity. Together, children of God are drawn closer to one another remembering the Savior whose blood purchased them from sin. This communion, then, is a means of expressing encouragement and thanksgiving together as the redeemed. The Lord's Supper cannot, then, have significance to those not members of the body as there is no celebration and fellowship with Christians. Also, the Lord's Supper provides a communion between the individual Christian and his Lord. Thus, Paul instructs each to "examine himself" (1 Corinthians 11:28). None other can obey the command of self-examination and remembrance for another in the Lord's Supper or in any spiritual matter. Yet, the Lord's Supper is special because of both the sharing with others and the individual responsibility. As an institution, the Lord's Supper is, in both regards, a crucial means whereby Christians remember the sacrifice, suffering, and death of Christ in shedding His blood on the tree.

The blood of Christ purchased man's pardon (1 Peter 1:19). The blood of Christ purges man's conscience (Hebrews 9:14). The

blood of Christ propels man closer to God (Ephesians 2:13). The blood of Christ provides recollection of atonement (1 Corinthians 10:16). His blood was important in prophecy (Isaiah 53:3-5). His blood was important in physicality (John 19:34). His blood is important in perusal (Matthew 26:28; 1 Corinthians 11:28).

Holy Spirit

By Frazier Conley

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*...we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Spirit was given
(Acts 19:2 ASV)*

What is the object or goal of the following discussion, what is the subject? The subject is, "Holy Spirit baptism." Why does it come up for discussion? It is a New Testament phrase about which conflicting ideas are expressed – and because it is a good starting point for understanding the whole doctrine of the Spirit.

The following is a complete list of the passages where the phrase is used:

- Matthew 3:11: "I indeed 'baptize you in water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire:"
- Mark 1:8: "I baptized you in water; but he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit."
- Luke 3:16: "John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed

baptize you with water, but there cometh he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and (in) fire.”

- John 1:33: “And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize in water, he said unto me. Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending and abiding upon him, the same is he that baptizeth in the Holy Spirit.”

- Acts 1:5: “For John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence.”

- Acts 11:16: “And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, John indeed baptized with water: but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit.”

Some would add 1 Corinthians 12:13, “For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit.” Later, however, I will show that this passage does not belong in the list, at least not as it is usually interpreted.

What are some of the diverse ideas Bible students have when they speak of being “baptized in the Holy Spirit?” The following list summarizes several of these:

- Some will say that it is the Holy Spirit entering into a person and bringing him “regeneration.” It is salvation, as they suppose, that is accomplished.

- Similarly, others hold it is the saving presence or action of the Holy Spirit at baptism – water being the external part of the baptism and the Spirit the internal part. Some of these will teach that the Holy Spirit in baptism is “non-miraculous.” Others will say that it sometimes, or always, involves miracle power.

- People who hold the “Pentecostal” viewpoint will affirm that at conversion one receives an indwelling of the Spirit. Then, subsequent to conversion, Christians should seek to receive power from the Holy Spirit. The empowerment must involve speaking in “unknown tongues.” This, they say, is Holy Spirit baptism.

- Still others explain that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a special measure of power (the “baptismal” measure), bestowed exclusively on the apostles and the house of Cornelius.

Are any of these correct? The thesis here is that none of them is exactly right. The following statement is Holy Spirit baptism in a nutshell. The remainder of the discussion in this book will set forth a defense of the following definition in the context of the larger New Testament theology of the Spirit:

Holy Spirit baptism is that event of the first century in which God gave divine notice to the world of the commencement of the age of salvation in Christ. He did so by imparting to a large number of people a variety of extraordinary Holy Spirit empowerments, including especially prophetic proclamation. This event was initiated on the day of Pentecost, as depicted in Acts 2. It ceased with the fading of the apostolic period. The manifestations were not only attention getting, but also served to advance and confirm the gospel. Receiving the Holy Spirit in this office though associated with an attitude receptive to the gospel was not the means or the instrument of one’s personal salvation; nor was it the Pauline doctrine of the indwelling Spirit; rather, it was simple empowerment.

Here it is suggested that one should not say, “Holy Spirit baptism” but, *the* Holy Spirit baptism.” It was a specific event, which had a beginning and an ending.

The Spirit received for empowering proclamation

To confirm the distinction made in Acts between reception of the Holy Spirit and salvation itself, one first needs to look carefully at Luke 4:18-19. There Jesus quotes Isaiah 61:1-2:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to

preach good tidings to the poor: He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovering of sight to the blind. To set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

The Messiah receives the Spirit in order to preach or proclaim the good news of salvation, the arrival of the acceptable year of the Lord. He did not receive the Spirit for his own personal sanctification or for imparting the Spirit to others for indwelling sanctification. Throughout the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts the Spirit was received by persons, and then it is specified that the recipients as a result proclaimed and preached the gospel.' The gospel of salvation is *proclaimed* through the empowerment of the Spirit. *Salvation* comes when the hearer of the proclamation responds obediently to what is proclaimed.

In this connection one should especially note Luke 24:46-49; Acts 2:38-39; and 5:31-32. In Luke 24 forgiveness of sins upon repentance is first mentioned (Luke 24:46-47). Then separately the conferral upon the apostles empowering them for preaching is noted (Luke 24:48-49). The preaching of salvation by the Spirit is not the salvation. The same order and distinction is in Acts 2:38-39. Peter first proclaims repentance and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of sins. Then he mentions the reception of the Spirit – a reception that in Luke's gospel and the book of Acts, time and again, is an empowerment for proclamation. In Acts 5:30-32 first there is the proclamation of the gospel, the promise of repentance, and the forgiveness based thereon. Second, there is the mention of the Spirit who empowers testimony. The role of the Spirit is to empower the proclamation, not to indwell directly and sanctify by his presence, as described in Paul's letters. The forgiveness or salvation comes when the gospel is preached and the correct response follows – repentance and baptism. In summary, one (a) learns about the salvation from preaching inspired by the Spirit: (b) and one responds to the preaching

and obtains forgiveness by a penitent baptism in the name of Jesus Christ. The two matters are not identical.

As noted, among the powers bestowed during the period of the Holy Spirit baptism was the gift of inspiration, prophetic utterance. Inspiration was a special empowerment, although it was not technically “miraculous.” Nevertheless miracles, manifestations, predictions, and tongues usually accompanied inspiration, which authenticated the inspiration.

How conferred?

If the baptism in the Holy Spirit consisted of a widespread bestowal of special Holy Spirit powers conferred upon the inaugural generation of the church, how was the power imparted? Certain principles, set forth especially in Acts, arise from the New Testament description.

It will be shown that:

(1) the extraordinary empowerment was conferred *directly* (without apostolic hands) only upon the twelve at Pentecost, and the house of Cornelius;

(2) through apostolic hands alone was such power conferred to others (Cornelius received the “same” gift as the apostles so far as the manner of reception – direct from heaven – but not the measure of power given to the apostolic office, which included the ability to confer gifts of the Holy Spirit to others by laying on of hands);

(3) the power necessarily ceased with the apostolic age; and (very important);

(4) the reception of such power was only indirectly related to individual personal salvation.

Basic facts.

Here are some basic facts about Holy Spirit baptism. As noted, the expression “baptize in the Holy Spirit” or its verbal equivalent occurs only six times in scripture (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16). Acts has the most to say about it – the expression itself however occurs in Acts only in quotations from Jesus. The author of Acts, in his own usage, wanted to reserve the word *baptize* for (water) immersion. Instead, Luke speaks of the Holy Spirit baptism typically by such phrases as “filled with the Spirit.”

The first reference in Acts states:

...he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which said he, ye heard from me: For John in. deed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence... you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:4-5, 8).

Note the following facts from these verses:

(1)The baptism in the Holy Spirit was “the promise of the Father.”

(2) It would occur, for the apostles, within a few days.

(3)This event would bring to its recipients an empowerment for witness.

The preamble to Acts 1 is Luke 24:36-53, “And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city until ye be clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). Note again that “the promise of the Father” (the Holy Spirit baptism) would include “power from on high.”

With reference to the apostles (others would receive empowerment in due time), the “promise of the Father” was plainly kept on the day of Pentecost, when they were filled with the Holy Spirit from heaven (Acts 2:1-13). They were empowered to speak in tongues. The whole event was accompanied by a sound from heaven like wind (which filled the entire chamber); and flames in appearance like fire, resting on each of them. Peter explains in Acts 2:33 that the Father had imparted the promised Holy Spirit to Jesus, and that Jesus then “poured out” upon the apostles that which had been seen and heard. This was the event which empowered the apostolic witness (see Acts 1:8).

When Peter began his sermon in Acts 2, he said:

... but this is that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel: And it shall be in the last days, saith God, I will pour forth of my spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: yea and on my servants and on my handmaidens in those days will I pour forth of my spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heaven above, and signs on the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the day of the Lord comes, that great and notable day. And it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved (Acts 2:16-21).

There is no ambiguity in Peter’s introduction: “This is that.” The event which had just been witnessed: the sound, the fire-like phenomenon, and the languages were the fulfillment (or the inauguration of the fulfillment) of the prophecy found in Joel.

We pointed out that the prophecy of Joel is the “promise of God” – the promised “pouring out” of his Spirit. Therefore,

when John the baptist spoke of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and when Jesus is quoted in Acts 1:5; 11:16. The reference is to the prophecy of Joel in chapter 2:28-32. Clearly, if anyone is to understand the baptism in the Holy Spirit, he must understand Joel's prophecy.

Summary

In Acts the following are related or correlated: (1) the baptism in the Holy Spirit. (2) the promise of the Father, (3) the coming of the Holy Spirit, (4) the reception of power from on high, and (5) the events of Acts 2:1-4. This included (6) being filled with the Spirit, (7) the sound that filled the house. (8) the fire- like flames. (9) the empowerment to speak in tongues, (10) the fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32, and thus, (11) the pouring out of God's Spirit.

John the baptist declared that he baptized with water, but the Lord would baptize with the Holy Spirit. Did John affirm that water baptism replaces Spirit baptism? Many Bible students take it this way. However, it is quite indisputable that Jesus ordained water baptism for his church (Acts 8:36-39; 10:47-48; 22:16; Eph. 5:26; et al.).

Please note carefully (it is frequently overlooked) that the word *baptizo*, when used literally and without any specification of a medium, has inherent in it the element of water (Oepke, *TDNT* 1:539; and see most Greek lexicons). *Baptizo* should therefore, in many passages, be rendered "immerse in water" and resurrected to a new life. By definition in such passages it cannot be understood to refer to a baptism "in Spirit." It is clear that John was not teaching that Jesus was going replace water baptism with Spirit baptism.

Since the elements of the two baptisms are not the point of contrast, what is? The comparison is rather John's ministry, his preparation for the kingdom, versus its later inauguration

with the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. John's ministry could not claim the fulfillment of Joel 2. His ministry was a baptism of water only, looking forward to the coming of Christ. Christ, in the new age, not only authorizes a water baptism, but at the inaugural he confers an overwhelming of the Holy Spirit on the infant church.

John's ministry (thus his baptism) was preparatory; Jesus' ministry (including the baptizing in the Holy Spirit), in contrast, was the consummation. From another perspective (looking toward the future), Jesus' ministry, with its culmination on the day of Pentecost, was initiatory.

¹One should notice John the Baptist (Luke 1:14-17); Elizabeth (Luke 1:41-45); Zechariah (Luke 1:67-79); Simeon (Luke 2:25-35); Jesus (Luke 4:14-15, cf. 16-21; 10:21-22); disciples (Luke 12:12); the Twelve (Acts 1:8; 24ff, cf 2:17ff: 4:8ff, 31: 10:19ff, 34ff; 11:12, 14); Stephen (Acts 6:5, 8-10ff; 7:1ff, cf. 7:51); Philip (8:29ff; Paul (Acts 9:17, 20); the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:44-46); Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:2, 4ff); and the Ephesian 12 (Acts 19:6). Other Luke-Acts material could be cited which suggest something similar.

What About the Rapture?

by Joe E. Galloway

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The rapture is a widely accepted denominational doctrine. Popular TV and radio evangelists teach this idea. Several best-selling religious books deal with this subject. Hal Lindsey's book, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, became a Hollywood movie. This book, first printed in 1970, was so

popular that by 1976 it had gone through forty-two printings!

The result of this blitz of teaching is alarming. The news media mentioned the War in the Persian Gulf as maybe connected with Armageddon. Many people are using the term "the rapture" as if it was a commonly known and established future event, but the word "rapture" is not in any credible translation of the Bible.

The denominational idea of a coming rapture confuses folk and makes it difficult for them to understand and accept the truth. It is necessary to combat this false teaching before we can begin successfully to teach basic Bible truth. Some members of the church have accepted the teaching as Biblical. Brethren, we must teach the truth on "end times" and answer this false doctrine.

This incorrect view of "the rapture" says that Christ will soon appear and take the saved away from the earth for a seven-year rapture, leaving the unsaved on the earth to suffer. Most of us have read articles or heard hair-raising stories on what these people say will occur when Christ raptures the saved.

The anecdotes tell of men waking up and finding their wives and children mysteriously gone. Others, at work, abruptly disappear from their machines and desks. Drivers and pilots suddenly vanish, causing crippling crashes.

Those not raptured panic, not knowing what has happened. The phone lines are jammed as people call the police, the newspaper office, the radio station. Disorder is rampant. Finally, some slowly realize the "rapture" has taken place, and they, not ready, were left behind. Meanwhile, the saved have inexpressible bliss.

TOO NEW TO BE BIBLICAL

Few people seem to know this unbiblical teaching is somewhat new. Although the false doctrine of premillennialism has been around for a while, dispensational premillennialism (from which comes the rapture idea) is dated from about 1830, beginning with John N. Darby and the start of the Plymouth Brethren movement.

One writer claims the two-stage idea of Christ's coming commenced with Miss Margaret MacDonald in Port Glasgow, Scotland a few years earlier. No one can trace it back before the 1800's. This shows the doctrine to be unscriptural. It started 1700 years too late to be from God!

THE DISPENSATIONAL PREMILLENNIAL THEORY EXPLAINED

Dispensationalists, generally, teach that all human history falls into seven divisions. They disagree on the designations and the exact periods covered in the first five dispensations, but all agree we are now living in the sixth period, called, by them, the Dispensation of Grace. They expect the seventh dispensation to last one thousand years and call it, The Millennium.

Most say the Dispensation of Grace will soon end with the reputed rapture. The living righteous will be caught up to meet Christ in the air to be judged and rewarded. The rapture lasts seven years (the "final week" of Daniel's prophesy – Daniel 9:27)

On earth, during this seven-year period, is The Great

Tribulation. During the first part of this period, the Jews in Palestine make a covenant with Antichrist. They rebuild the temple, renew its sacrifices, and convert many to Judaism.

In the middle of this seven-year period the Antichrist breaks covenant with the Jews and demands to be worshiped. Multitudes are slaughtered in a great persecution.

After seven years, Christ comes back to earth with the raptured saints. Dispensational premillennialists call this The Revelation. The battle of Armageddon is fought and the Antichrist is destroyed in the war.

The righteous dead are, at last, remembered and resurrected. All the nations are judged. The millennium begins. Christ rules the world from earthly Jerusalem, sitting on David's literal throne. After the thousand years, Satan is loosed for a little while. After Satan's last fling, the wicked dead are resurrected and judged in "The Great White Throne Judgment."

A PROOF TEXT

Teachers of dispensational premillennialism claim First Thessalonians teaches their speculation about a rapture and tribulation and millennial reign of Jesus on earth. "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17).

The verse does mention the living saved, along with the resurrected saved, caught up to meet the Lord in the air, however the passage speaks of what occurs after all the dead are raised and judged and says nothing of a secret rapture. The passage also indicates the redeemed in Hades are resurrected and the saved on earth are transformed simultaneously.

The book of First Thessalonians does not teach a clandestine

return and rapture but says, "he (Jesus) shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God" (1 Thess. 4:16). This is one of the noisiest verses in the Bible! The verse says, "the dead in Christ shall rise first."

Verse 17 says the saved of earth shall, with the sainted dead, be caught up "in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." The word "so," most people know, is an adverb of manner, and means "in this manner," that is, "in the air," shall we ever be with the Lord.

The rapture notion teaches, instead, that only the living righteous will be caught up in the air to be with Christ for seven years. Then they are to return to earth with him in The Revelation.

The advocates of a covert coming of Christ and the rapture say the Bible pictures the final coming Jesus as like a thief. So, they think, he will sneak in and snatch the saved from the earth secretly, like a thief doing his work.

The Bible does not teach the act of Christ's coming to be as a thief, but says "the day" comes like a thief in the night (1 Thess. 5:2). This does not teach that Christ will be sneaking in and out but shows we cannot know when Christ is coming.

CONTRARY TO BIBLICAL TEACHING

Many things in this fanciful doctrine contradict Bible truth! The word "rapture" is not Biblical. Hal Lindsey says it is not in the Bible and tells us not to look for It (The Late Great Planet Earth, page 126). Consider some discrepancies of this doctrine with God's revealed truth.

First Discrepancy

The idea that the saved are to be taken from the world, while the lost remain, violates Bible teaching. The parable of the tares (Matt. 13:24-30; Matt. 13:38-43) disproves this notion. The wheat and the tares grow together “until the harvest” (13:30). Jesus tells us “the good seed are the children of the kingdom” and “the tares are the children of the wicked one” (13:38). “The harvest is the end of the world” (13:39). The sacred scriptures say the good and the bad will “grow together” until the “end of the world.” In the final harvest the householder will command, “Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in the bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn” (verse 30). Jesus’ interpretation of the parable says, “The Son of man shall send forth his angles, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun” (verses 41-43). The impress of the passage is a simultaneous judgment of the saved and the lost. The parable says the lost are to be cast into the fires of hell at the same time the saved go to their heavenly mansions.

Second Discrepancy

Dispensational millenarians teach separate resurrections of the good and evil. According to them, the transformed righteous of earth are swept away to a seven-year ecstasy. After the seven years, the sainted dead are resurrected to take part in a victorious 1,000 year earthly kingdom. After this, the wicked are resurrected. This makes different resurrections separated by at least 1,000 years.

Jesus said, “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the

resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29).

Some try to dodge the force of this by saying that "all" simply refers to the saved. Jesus takes care of this quibble—"they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." The ransomed and the damned are raised the same hour.

Third Discrepancy

The rapture theory demands a secret coming of Christ. In discussing the destruction of Jerusalem, Jesus told his disciples not to believe it if some said, "Lo, here is Christ, or there" (Matt. 24:23-26). Jesus explained, "For as the lightening cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. 24:27).

Just as all see the flash of lightening, so Christ's ultimate coming will be open and public. It will not be an event so secret that most of mankind will not even realize Christ has returned until many hours afterward. Acts 1:11 tells us, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." When he comes again, "every eye shall see him" (Rev. 1:7).

Fourth Discrepancy

The rapture speculation of millennial dispensationalists demands two future, literal returns of Christ. They call one return "the rapture" and the other return "the revelation." Jesus promised, "I will come again" (John 14:3). He did not say, "I will come again and again." Hebrews 9:28 tells us that "unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." A third literal coming of Jesus is not promised in the holy scripture.

Dispensationalists downplay what the Bible says about a second literal coming by calling it the first and second “phase” of his second coming. This does not remove the fact they teach he is coming two more times, with seven years between his second and third coming. The Bible teaches one, still future, literal coming of Christ!

Fifth Discrepancy

A seven-year period of great tribulation on earth triggered by the second, literal coming of Jesus is not in the Bible. Matthew 24:21 mentions “great tribulation” at the destruction of Jerusalem – not after this age and the destruction of the earth.

The great tribulation of Matthew 24 cannot refer to Jesus’ last coming. The passage tells his followers not to return to their houses for possessions and speaks of the difficulty of being pregnant or nursing a baby and of the inconvenience of fleeing during the winter or on the Sabbath, all of which is meaningless, unless he is speaking of Jerusalem’s destruction, and not of his second, final coming. If Jesus is coming again to steal, like a thief, the good folk from the earth, it is pointless to tell them not to pack their clothes nor urge them to pray nor to have babies, nor that it is winter, nor the Sabbath day when he comes to zing them into rhapsody.

Revelation 7:14 speaks of victorious saints who suffered “great tribulation” on earth, who are rewarded by the Lord in heaven. There is no passage in all the Bible that speaks of a great tribulation after the Christian age. The Bible speaks instead of great comfort for the redeemed at the end of this period.

Sixth Discrepancy

The antichrist concept of millennialism is foreign to the

scriptures. Antichrist simply means a person who is against Christ. The term is never used in the Bible to designate a leader of the forces of evil at the end of time.

1 John 2:18 helps answer this false emphasis. John said, “even now are many antichrists.” The antichrists of John’s day disprove the claim that one antichrist will appear after this age.

A list of those identified as the antichrist is amusing – Napoleon, Wilhelm, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Henry Kissinger, and Ronald Reagan. Soon someone will add Saddam Hussein to the roll. The prophets for dispensationalism are obviously wide of the mark, but that does not seem to bother their followers. They commonly ignore Deuteronomy 18:22! The prophets of the rapture, who teach lies, are the tail (Isa. 9:15)

Seventh Discrepancy

The battle of Armageddon, according to dispensational millennialists, is a war between the forces of the antichrist and those of Jesus at his literal, second coming. Revelation 16:14 mentions a “battle” and Revelation 16:16 mentions a place called “Armageddon.” Neither the antichrist nor Christ’s last coming is mentioned in this passage.

Pre-millennialists say prophetic statements should be accepted in an unqualified sense. The battle of Armageddon is therefore a verbatim, carnal warfare. Some claim the carnage will be so great blood will really flow to the depth of the horse’s bits – horses will be swimming in human blood.

Will they accept as literal “three unclean spirits like frogs” coming “out of the mouth of the dragon” to gather the kings to battle? The war of Revelation 16 is no more literal than is the instigator a literal frog who comes out of the mouth of a literal dragon.

Eighth Discrepancy

Advocates of the rapture say the earthly phase of the kingdom of heaven is to begin when Christ comes a second time unto salvation. The bible says the earthly phase of the kingdom of God now exists and will end when Jesus appears a final time.

The kingdom of heaven, which John the Baptist said was at hand, began on the Pentecost of Acts 2, during the Roman empire as foretold in Daniel 2:44. First century saints were in it (Col. 1:13-14; Heb. 12:28). At Jesus' last coming he will deliver an already established kingdom to God the Father (1 Cor. 15:23-25).

Ninth Discrepancy

Dispensationalists list as many as seven separate days of judgment. All such false teachers list at least three days of judgment – one at the claimed rapture of the saints, another for the nations after the assumed seven-year tribulation, and a third at the end of the so-called millennium.

The Bible teaches one day of judgment. Near the end of the gospel of Matthew we read of the day of judgment at least four times (Matt. 10:15; Matt. 11:22-24; Matt. 12:36), and “judgment” (singular) at least two more times (Matt. 12:41-42). “He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world” (Acts 17:31). The idea of various days of judgment for various groups of people is alien to the Bible.

“As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation” (Heb. 9:27-28).

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