

Holy Spirit Baptism

Introduction:

We come now to one of the great areas of confusion and controversy within Christendom today — the subject of “Holy Ghost Baptism.”

There are many who believe it is an experience to be sought after, linking it to certain visible manifestations such as “speaking in tongues.” This is the basic position of the Pentecostal and other holiness denominations as well as that of the so-called “Charismatic Movement” — one of the fastest growing religious movements in the world today.

Then there is the more conservative traditional belief that “each believer is baptized by the Holy Spirit into the ‘body of Christ’ at the instant of conversion.” This position goes hand-in-hand with the “invisible, universal, mystical, body of Christ ‘Church’” theory.

It behooves each Christian to very carefully study what the Bible does teach in this subject. To be absolutely convinced on this matter is vital if one is to stand for truth in a day when the majority “will not endure sound doctrine.”

TO KNOW THINGS AS THEY ARE
IS BETTER THAN
TO BELIEVE THINGS AS THEY SEEM

I. Bible References on the Subject of Holy Spirit Baptism

It comes as a surprise to many to learn there are only six passages of Scripture which actually mention “Baptism with the Holy Ghost.”

A. Matthew 3:11

“I indeed baptize you with 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 with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.”

B. Mark 1:8

“I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.”

C. Luke 3:16

“John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water: but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”

D. John 1:33

“And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.”

E. Acts 1:5

“For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”

F. Acts 11:16

Holy Spirit Baptism

“Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.”

II. Fact 1 — The Holy Spirit Does not Baptize Anyone

A careful reading of the above Scriptures makes it clear that the Holy Spirit does not baptize anyone, never has, and never will!

Each verse says, Christ baptizes with the Holy Ghost. This then makes the Lord Jesus Christ the baptizer — the Holy Spirit the medium (as with John the Baptist: Has was the baptizer — water was the medium.)

Implication #1

To say, as does Scofield, that “the Spirit forms the Church by baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ” is faulty.

Scofield, C.I. (Editor) **The Scofield Reference Bible** New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1945: pg. 1150.

III. Fact 2 — Each Verse is Referring to One Specific Event

It will be noted that the first 5 of the above verses are contemplative — “Ye shall be baptized,” “He shall baptize you:” and the last verse (Acts 11:16) is reflective — looking back.

It is quite obvious that this specific event occurred between the time of John the Baptist’s prophecy (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) and the events of Acts 11.

Acts 1:5 zeros in on the actual time with the phrase, “not many days hence.”

That single event of the Lord Jesus Christ baptizing with the Holy Spirit occurred on the DAY OF PENTECOST.

Implication #2

To seek baptism with, in, or by the Holy Spirit as an ongoing event is of no use. The Scriptural event was “once only.”

IV. Fact 3 — The Prophecy of John is Synonymous with the Promise of the Father

Acts 1:4 and Acts 1:5 should be read together. When this is done it is readily seen that the Lord Jesus Christ meant the same thing when speaking of the promise of the Father and the words of John the Baptist.

The Promise of the Father

John 14:26

This is the sending of the Comforter — the Holy Spirit — to the world. When the second Person of the Trinity returned to Heaven, the third Person came down to earth. When He came on the Day of Pentecost, every believer in that first church was submerged into His glorious Person.

Thus the “Baptism with the Holy Ghost” was the out pouring of the Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit Baptism

The Holy Spirit did not baptize — Christ did: and this baptism was not of individuals as such, but collectively.

The Holy Spirit came and gathered into the folds of His glorious Person the assembled, blood-brought believers. And this He did once for all.

Implication #3

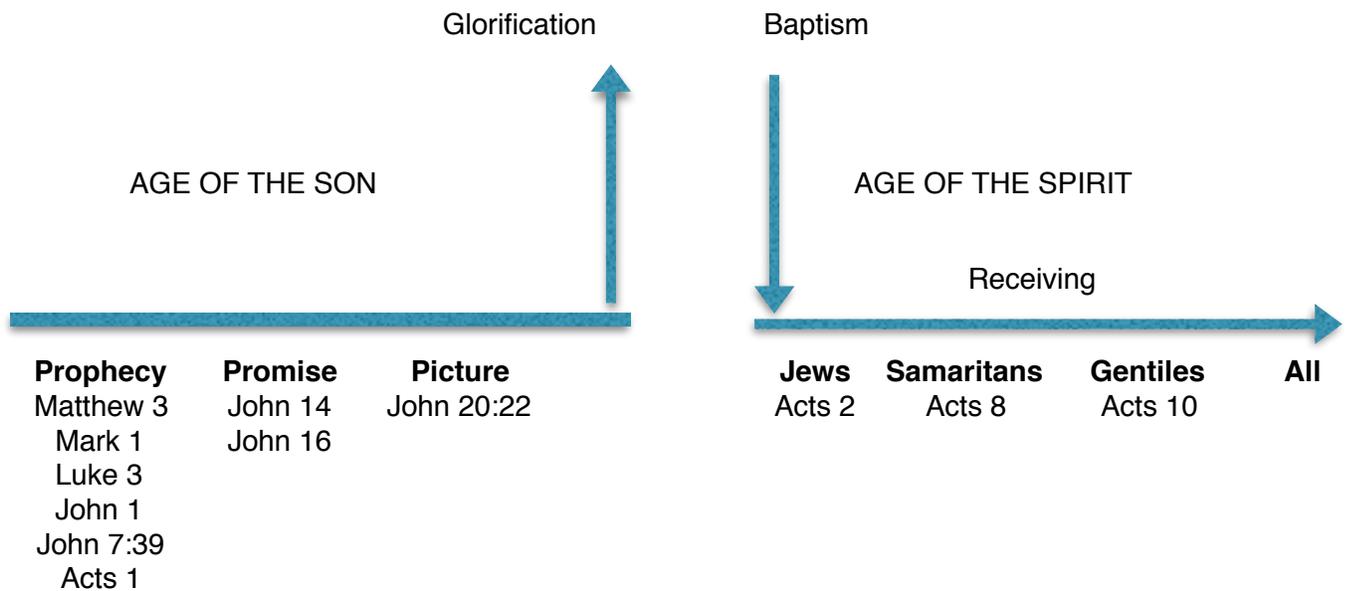
To make Holy Spirit baptism and the sending of the Comforter two different events is to fly in the face of Scripture.

V. Fact 4 — Holy Spirit Baptism Ushered in the Present-Day Gift of Receiving the Holy Spirit at Salvation

The context of Acts 11:16 (an event which occurred some time after the Day of Pentecost) explains this significant aspect of Holy Spirit baptism:

- A. It is a gift. — Acts 11:17, Also: Acts 2:38-39; 8:20
- B. It is for those who believe. — Acts 11:17
- C. It is indicative of real Salvation. — Acts 11:17; 19:2
- D. It was prerequisite evidence of Salvation. — Acts 10:47
- E. It is also called “Receiving the Holy Ghost.” — Acts 10:47

VI. A Bible Timetable



Note: Christ's baptizing with the Holy Ghost occurred as a "once-only" event at Pentecost. It is incorrect to say this baptism occurs today when a soul trusts Christ.

As the diagram above shows — one baptism, many receivings.

Holy Spirit Baptism

VII. What Actually occurred on the Day of Pentecost?

The Day of Pentecost was a Jewish feast day on which some remarkable events transpired.

It is vital the student recognized that some of these events were “once only,” some “transitory,” and some “repeatable.”

A. The “Once Only” Events of Pentecost.

1. Christ Sent The Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit became the righteous Representative of the Godhead on the earth, in place of the Son.

This could not happen until the Son was glorified — John 7:39; 16:7.

2. The Father Authenticated the Church Christ Established.

There are four physical temples mentioned in the Word of God (in addition to the physical body of the Lord Jesus and the physical body of the believer — to which this illustration equally applies!) and in each case, God authenticated them by filling them with His Glory.

- a) The Tabernacle — Exodus 40:34
- b) Solomon’s Temple — II Chronicles 7:1
- c) The New Testament Church — Acts 2
- d) The Millennial Temple — Ezekiel 43:4

3. The Holy Spirit Assumed Administration of the Lord’s Churches.

This is one reason it was expedient for the Lord Jesus Christ to return to Heaven, for while He was on the earth He could only oversee one church. Now, through the Holy Spirit, He is Head over all New Testament churches everywhere.

B. The “Transitory” Event of Pentecost.

This was the miraculous enabling of the apostles in the church at Jerusalem to speak in many foreign languages.

This gift was temporary, to be done away with once the Word of God was completed (I Corinthians 13:8-10.)

C. The “Repeatable” Events of Pentecost.

1. Believers were filled with the Spirit. — Acts 2:4
2. The Church was empowered to witness boldly. — Acts 1:8
3. Souls were saved, baptized, and added to the Church. — Acts 2:41.

VIII. What about I Corinthians 12:13?

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”

This verse of Scripture is the number one proof text used by all who teach the “baptism of the Spirit into the universal, invisible Church” theory.

Holy Spirit Baptism

In interpreting this verse correctly we need to consider a number of things:

- A. Does the Holy Spirit Baptize Anyone?
We have seen He does not.

- B. Is “Baptism with the Holy Ghost” a Continuing Event?
The have seen it is not.

(Paul is witting to the Corinthians about 29 years after Pentecost.)

- C. Is The “Body of Christ” a Universal, Invisible Thing?
As we shall see in future lessons, it is not.

(Actually I Corinthians 12:27 makes this clear, for Paul was addressing himself to the Church AT Corinth — a local, visible entity.)

- D. Is There ONE Baptism — Or Several Baptism?
According to Ephesians 4:5, there is ONE baptism.

Now if this “one baptism” is Spirit baptism, as so many think, what becomes of believer baptism in water?

The context of Ephesians 4:5 is church related. The sending of the Comforter was a baptism in the sense that the sufferings of Christ was as baptism — Matthew 20:22-23 — both of which are salvation related and once-only events. Paul wrote Ephesians 4:5 some 33 years after the sending of the Comforter and spoke of the baptism of believers in water upon their profession of faith and on the authority of the church. This baptism is part of the Great Commission — which is to be effected until the end of the world!

- E. So, How Do We Interpret I Corinthians 12:13?
1. “For by one Spirit” = salvation. See: verse 3
 2. “Are we all baptized” = believer baptism.
 3. “into one body” = church membership.
 4. “Whether we be Jews or Gentiles” = no racial distinction.
 5. “Whether we be bond or free” = no class distinction.
 6. “And have been all made to drink into one Spirit” = no favoritism in the blessings of Christ.