

Study 0019

Scripture Text: Hebrews 6:2a; Acts 2:1-4

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is one of the most misrepresented issues in Christianity. This may stem from errors arising from our not understanding what the Bible says on the subject.

To begin with, the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Holy Spirit baptism), takes place when a person who is born again is 'dipped into' or 'immersed in' or 'over-shadowed by' the Holy Spirit (**John 1:33**). In Holy Spirit baptism, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Baptizer; the Holy Spirit is the Medium; and the baptized is a person who has been born again of the Holy Spirit (**John 1:12-13; 3:3-8**).

To get a correct view of Holy Spirit baptism, we shall look at the Medium (the Holy Spirit); the individual to be baptized (i.e., who can be baptized in the Holy Spirit); the evidence that this baptism has taken place; and, the fruit (the effect) of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit

Until recently, the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost as He is sometimes referred to, was thought to be just a spirit or a concept. But the bible tells us that the Holy Spirit is a Person; He is in fact the Third Person of the Trinity, and is equal in power, authority, etc., with God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The bible refers to the Holy Spirit as 'He', not 'it' or 'she' as some would want to call Him.

Before His departure from the earth, the Lord Jesus Christ introduced the Holy Spirit to His disciples as a 'Paraclete' which means that He is an Advocate, a Helper, a Consoler, a Comforter, a Counsellor, an Encourager, indeed, an indispensable Ally of the believer in Christ (**John 14:16, 26**). This tells us that the believer in Christ is naked, exposed, and endangered in the absence of the Holy Spirit! He is also called the 'Spirit of truth' (**John 14:17; 15:26**), in which case we know that whatever He says is true and the truth. He is also referred to as the Anointing (**1 John 2:20, 27**) Who covers the believer in Christ with His presence and all that goes with that.

The Lord Jesus also told His disciples about the work that the Holy Spirit will be doing when He comes to be with them, and by extension, with us. This work include: teaching us all things (**John 14:26; 1 John 2:27**); reminding us of things that we have learned before (**John 14:26**); testifying (speaking or telling us) about Jesus Christ (**John 15:26**); glorifying Jesus (**John 16:14**); leading and guiding the believer into all truth (**John 16:13**); convincing and convicting people about sin, righteousness, and judgment (**John 16:8-11**); revealing scriptures and their meanings/implications to us at the appropriate time (**John 16:12-13**); enabling the believer in Christ to do the works of God (**Acts 1:8**); appointing believers to do certain assignments (**Acts 13:2**); and, leading and directing the believer in the way he should go (**Acts 16:6-10**); to mention a few.

The Holy Spirit is holy, and no evil can proceed from Him. He is gentle and meek, and so cannot manifest rowdiness and arrogance. He brings order where there is chaos, light where there is darkness, and fullness where there is emptiness (**Genesis 1:2**). He gives life (**Genesis 2:7; Job 33:4**), and makes things that were dead to come alive (**Romans 8:11; 1 Peter 3:18**). Indeed, there are so many things to be said about the Holy Spirit, but time and space will not permit. Suffice to say that when a person is ‘dipped into’ or ‘overshadowed by’ the Holy Spirit, he begins to operate under His influence/leadership/direction, and that individual can then perform miracles, signs, and wonders; as well as do other things which can only be done when God is present in an individual (**John 14:12**). It is unthinkable for a person to engage in an unholy conduct and claim to be doing so under the influence of the Holy Spirit. This brings us to a very significant aspect of the Holy Spirit’s influence.

There is the influence of the Holy Spirit upon a person, and the influence of the Holy Spirit within a person. The former is what we know as Holy Spirit baptism, while the latter is what makes us to become like Jesus in character and conduct. In **John 14:17**, the Lord spoke about the Holy Spirit **dwelling with us**, and also **being in us**. This is a significant statement indeed because it is one thing for something to surround you; but is another thing for that thing to be in you. An example will be of a person who swims in water and drinks water. In swimming, the water is around him; but in drinking, the water is inside him. Furthermore, the water he drinks plays a role which is different from the water he is swimming in.

There is a difference between the Holy Spirit dwelling with us (baptism) and the Holy Spirit being in us. These two scenarios are described as the ‘coming upon’ and the ‘coming into’, of the Holy Spirit, respectively. While the Holy Spirit upon a man (which is Holy Spirit baptism) empowers or energizes him to do things for God; the Holy Spirit within him (which takes place at salvation) empowers or enables him to become like Christ. Hence, while the ‘coming upon’ empowers us ‘to serve’, the ‘coming into’ empowers us ‘to become’. The Holy Spirit ‘upon’ a man empowers (enables) him to display miracles, signs, and wonders; whereas, the Holy Spirit ‘in’ a man transforms him to become like Jesus Christ in character. In **John 20:22**, the disciples received the Holy Spirit within them, which signified their salvation; and in **Acts 2:1-4**, they received the Holy Spirit upon them, which is Holy Spirit baptism.

The Baptized

This brings us to the discussion of the individual who is to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This person must of necessity be: (1) born again, that is, he has the Holy Spirit within him; (2) desirous of and ask to receive the Holy Spirit (**Luke 11:9-13**); and (3) be totally surrendered to the Lord (**John 7:37-39**). This was the preparation the Lord asked His disciples to make before the Holy Spirit came upon them on the day of Pentecost (**Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8, 13-14; 2:1-4**).

EXERCISE

Please answer true or false.

- 1) Holy Spirit baptism and Holy Ghost baptism are two clearly distinct baptisms.
- 2) Holy Spirit baptism is done by the Holy Ghost, in conjunction with Jesus Christ.
- 3) The Holy Spirit is to Holy Spirit baptism, what water is to Christian baptism.
- 4) The Holy Spirit is a Person, and a Concept.
- 5) The Holy Spirit has the same power and authority as the Father and Jesus Christ.
- 6) The Holy Spirit is the Mother of the Son of God.
- 7) The Holy Spirit is in fact a 'He' and not an 'It' nor a 'She'.
- 8) No believer in Jesus Christ should be without the Holy Spirit.
- 9) You can have the Holy Spirit upon you even if you don't have the Holy Spirit within you.
- 10) The Holy Spirit empowers the believer in Christ to do things for God.
- 11) Some of the major works of the Holy Spirit in the believer in Christ include teaching, leading, and directing.
- 12) No evil thing can ever proceed from the Holy Spirit.
- 13) When the Holy Spirit is dwelling within a person the person is energized to serve God.
- 14) The indwelling of the Holy Spirit takes place during Holy Spirit baptism.
- 15) It is possible for a person to be a believer in Christ and not be under the influence of the Holy Spirit (**Romans 8:9**).
- 16) Using the analogy of water, drinking water is like having the Holy Spirit in you at salvation; and swimming in water is like being baptized in the Holy Spirit.
- 17) Miracles, signs and wonders take place because of the Holy Spirit in us.
- 18) One major ingredient for anyone who would be baptized in the Holy Ghost is that he desires the Holy Spirit.
- 19) Waiting on God is another ingredient that may be necessary in order to receive the Holy Ghost.
- 20) Once you have the Holy Spirit in and upon your life, there can be no temptation in your life.