

GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 38, **No.38A, September 18, 2012** / Southside Baptist Church & Christian School / P.O. Box 1594 / 1028 South Water Avenue, Gallatin, TN 37066 (615) 452-5951 / **"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen."** (2 Peter 3:18)

THE BLESSED HOLY SPIRIT!

As to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, many folk use their experiences, the experiences of someone else, and/or the teachings of someone else as the determining factors as to what they believe about the Holy Spirit. **It has been said that a man with an experience is never at the mercy of someone with the actual truth of God's Word!** But regardless of all this, let us seek to discover and yield to the Word of God on this and any other doctrine! **Please open your own Bible** and prayerfully read, study, receive and heed what God reveals!

1. NEW BIRTH BY THE HOLY SPIRIT! (John 3:3-8) To be born again is to be birthed, regenerated by the Holy Spirit! This is why Romans 8 teaches us that if one does not have the Holy Spirit, they are not saved! (Rom 8:9) **Moreover**, everyone who is saved experiences the miracles of Galatians 2:20; 5:22-25 as the fruit of new life in Christ!

2. BAPTISM with/by/in THE HOLY SPIRIT! This is recorded SEVEN times in the New Testament: Matt 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:4-5; Acts 11:15-17; 1 Cor. 12:32. **Holy Spirit Baptism** is **His** work and not our own. It is the actual being **"born from above,"** which is the literal definition of "born-again" (see John 3:3, 5). Man is born once from beneath (in sin; see John 8:23); the New Birth, then, must of necessity come from above, by the Holy Spirit. So, the divine Wind of the Spirit invades and the sinner is regenerated, born again! (John 3:7-8)

At this saving moment the LOVE OF GOD FLOODS our hearts BY THE HOLY SPIRIT which is given to us! (Romans 5:5) At this same moment, "...**BY ONE SPIRIT** are we all **BAPTIZED INTO ONE BODY...**" (1 Corinthians 12:13) *"There is one body, and **ONE SPIRIT**, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, **ONE BAPTISM**, one God and Father of all..."* (Ephesians 4:4-5) **Note: There is not a single drop of water in any of these references! These verses only speak of the work of the Holy Spirit!**

We need to understand that the **Holy Spirit** is the One responsible for **baptizing a repentant sinner into the body of Christ**. Man cannot baptize himself into the body of Christ, yet multitudes claim to do this very thing! No such work of the flesh can save anyone; the work must be done **“from above.”** It is Holy Spirit baptism that saves, that regenerates — not water baptism.

Man’s obedience could never connect us to the blood of Christ or to the life giving Holy Spirit. If man’s obedience is what connects a sinner savingly to Christ— then, let us praise that sinner! Indeed, I saw this sign prominently displayed in a pastor’s office: ***“It it is meant to be, it is up to me!”*** That is heresy. The gospel truth is this: ***For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. (Eph. 2:8-10)***

THE AMAZING GRACE GIFT OF GOD TO SINNERS DEAD IN THEIR SIN IS THE BLOWING OF THE ‘FREE WILLED’ WIND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WHO GIVES LIFE, WHO REGENERATES THE SINNER!

3. SEALING of the Holy Spirit! (Eph. 1:13) When God says the genuine believer is ‘sealed’ with the Holy Spirit, He is declaring Ownership, Authority and Preservation. The indwelling Holy Spirit is given so as to claim and possess ownership of His holy temple, the believer!

4. INDWELLING of the Holy Spirit! (1 Cor. 6:19-20) Our body is HIS HOME! The divine life of God has baptized and is now IN the soul of every redeemed sinner!

5. THE COMMAND for continuous FILLING of the Holy Spirit! (Eph 5:18; Col. 3:16)

6. From the lips of Jesus we learn Primary MINISTRIES of the Indwelling COMFORTER! (John 14:15-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-14) When we read and receive these verses, we have powerful reasons NOT TO quench or grieve the Holy Spirit!

7. Gifts of the Holy Spirit to aid in the building up of the church. (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12-14; Eph. 4:11-16) **Note:** Without being continuously filled with the Holy Spirit and overflowing with the Holy Spirit’s FRUIT, the gifts are ineffective and become a source of pride and controversy! (The entire book of 1 Corinthians reveals this!)

8. FRUIT of the Holy Spirit— manifesting the reality of genuine Christianity, making visible the life of God through the body, soul and spirit of the redeemed! (Gal. 5:22-23) All who are baptized by/flooded with the Holy Spirit will have Holy Spirit fruit! (Romans 5:5) No fruit. No life! (Galatians 5:19-24)

THE REMAINDER OF THIS ARTICLE IS A More Detailed Look into the DOCTRINE OF BAPTISM with/by/in the Holy Spirit

Again, the Baptism with/by/in the Holy Spirit is stated SEVEN times in the New Testament— Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:4-5; Acts 11:15-17; 1 Cor. 12:32.

1. Five of the SEVEN references *POINT FORWARD* to the day of Pentecost: Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:4-5.

2. Two of the SEVEN references *POINT BACK* to the day of Pentecost: Acts 11:15-17; 1 Cor. 12:32

What the Word of God says and DOES NOT SAY in those 7 references:

1. In none of the Biblical references is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit an experience SOUGHT sometime after being saved.

2. It is never presented as a 'second' work of grace, following salvation. **Rather**, it is equated with the miracle of BEING SAVED. (Acts 11:1-18)

3. The Holy Spirit Baptism did not come in response to agonizing prayer. Holy Spirit baptism **did not come** for a select group of believers, while passing by other believers. Rather, all who come to faith in Christ are BAPTIZED into the Body of Christ. (1 Cor. 12:32)

4. The Holy Spirit Baptism is not presented as an experience for believers to seek; **but rather** as the reality of the miracle of becoming a Christian. All who get saved are baptized into Christ, (into His body), and the Holy Spirit FLOODS every redeemed heart. (Rom.5:5) **Obviously, this is the foundational key and/or entrance into Christ and to all power to live the Christian life.**

But the point is that Holy Spirit Baptism **is never presented as** something not received at salvation and which must be sought for later.

5. At the inauguration of the New Testament Church, (on the precise day of Pentecost **and** when the gospel went to the Gentiles in Acts 11), **there was** the manifestation of speaking in tongues.

However, these 'tongues' were not sought; and these 'tongues' were CLEARLY a supernatural gift of known, human languages. (Acts 2:6-11) This truth is beyond dispute!

Furthermore, it is important to note that the New Testament gives the account of several who come to saving faith in Christ who **did not** manifest any sort of speaking in tongues as they did on the day of Pentecost.

Fundamentally, **the evidence** of being saved, **the evidence of being baptized with/by/in the Holy Spirit and** into Christ and into His body **is the FRUIT of the Holy Spirit, as revealed in Gal. 5:22-25 and Romans 5:5— rather than an emotional experience accompanied by tongues.**

ADDITIONAL REALITY: Of the Holy Spirit's coming, John remarked that "**the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified**" (John 7:39). The Pentecostal coming of the Holy Spirit required that Jesus first be glorified; that is, after His crucifixion and resurrection, He must ascend back to His Father in heaven. Of Jesus, Peter also explained, "**Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He [i.e., Jesus] has poured forth this which you both see and hear**" (Acts 2:33; Compare Ephesians 4:8-13.).

At Jerusalem, Acts 2. On that first Pentecost, the baptism of the Holy Spirit was initial; and the book of Acts provides **the historical narrative of the extension of** the Holy Spirit's baptizing ministry from Jerusalem (Acts 2), to Samaria (Acts 8), to Caesarea (Acts 10), and finally, to Ephesus (Acts 19). **In each of these four extensions**, the coming of the Holy Spirit was initial, not sequential. It was a first and not a second work of the Spirit in and among Jesus' disciples and other believers.

At Samaria, Acts 8. The apostolic mission to Samaria was undertaken because Jerusalem had heard "**that Samaria had received the word of God**" (Acts 8:14). Upon arriving in Samaria, Peter and John prayed for the Samaritans "**that they might receive the Holy Spirit . . . For He had not yet fallen upon any of them**" (Acts 8:14-16). Thus, in Samaria as at Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit was an initial and first reception.

At Caesarea, Acts 10. While Peter preached at Cornelius' house in Caesarea, "**the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message**" (Acts 10:44). Those believers who witnessed this initial coming of the Spirit stood amazed "**because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Gentiles also**" (Acts 10:45). Again the experience was a first for Cornelius and his household.

At Ephesus, Acts 19. To disciples he encountered at Ephesus, the apostle Paul inquired, "**Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?**" to which they answered, "**No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit**" (Acts 19: 2). Then after Paul baptized them and laid hands upon them, "**the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying**" (Acts 19:6).

Notable in this instance is that to the twelve Ephesian disciples this encounter with the Holy Spirit was also a first.

In every instance in the Acts record (Acts 2, 8, 10 and 19), at Pentecost in Jerusalem, at Samaria, at Caesarea and at Ephesus— the baptism of the Spirit **was not a second work of grace for those believers. Rather it was a first or initial ministry** by which the Holy Spirit incorporated those various believers into the one body of Christ.

The sovereign Spirit came upon believers from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds for the purpose of uniting them into the one body of Christ, His church.

The question as to when the Holy Spirit baptizes believers will therefore have to be determined in a way other than by assuming that Acts 2, 8, 10 and 19 present a pattern for the normal Christian life.

When Paul arrived at Ephesus and met the Ephesian disciples of John the Baptist, he asked them, "**Did you receive the Holy Spirit *when you believed?***" (Acts 19:2, NASB. See NIV, NKJV, NLT, NRSV, ASV and NAB.). Against the majority of newer translations, the King James Version reads, "**Have ye received the Holy Ghost *since ye believed?***"

Mistakenly, this version gives the impression that the Holy Spirit was to be received subsequent to, and not at the same time as, believing upon Jesus Christ. On this point, the King James Version is misleading.

Paul's question assumes that believers will be initiated through Spirit baptism into the body of Christ at the same time they believe, not subsequent to placing their faith in Jesus Christ.

This interpretation agrees with Jesus who said, "**He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water'**" (John 7:39). To Jesus' statement, John added this clarification: "**But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive . . .**" (John 7:40).

The Gospel of John marks the bestowal of the Spirit to be simultaneous with the point in time when, through faith in Jesus Christ, a believer is regenerated. **Holy Spirit baptism not only brings the very life of God into the soul of the new believer, but also places new believers into spiritual union with Jesus Christ, and *positioning* them together, no matter what might be their ethnic or cultural backgrounds, in the church, the Body of Christ.**

5. The Holy Spirit Baptism is an immersion into the sphere of the Holy Spirit. Flooded with the Holy Spirit, (Romans 5:5), we manifest the fruit of the Holy Spirit, Galatians 5:20-23.

However, no one in the New Testament is commanded to be baptized with, by or in the Holy Spirit. **No one is instructed to seek the baptism and there is no Biblical instruction on how to seek or on how to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Why?** Because to be baptized with the Holy Spirit is the salvation miracle and gift of being placed by God into Christ and Christ in us!

The new convert becomes God's Holy Temple! (1 Cor. 12:13) **This salvation reality is common to all who are born again—the wind blows!** (John 3:3-8) This takes place when the Holy Spirit brings the actual **salvation**; it is **His** work and not our own. It is the actual being **“born from above,”** which is the literal definition of “born-again.” (see John 3:3, 5)

Man is born once from beneath (in sin; see John 8:23); the New Birth, then, must of necessity come from Above, by the Holy Spirit. This is the spiritual birth and baptism by/with/and into the Body of Christ! “For BY ONE SPIRIT are we all BAPTIZED INTO ONE BODY...” “There is one body, and ONE SPIRIT, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, ONE BAPTISM, one God and Father of all...”

(I Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:4-5)

Yes, there are different baptisms mentioned in the Bible; but there is only one baptism required for salvation— namely, the Baptism with/by/in the Holy Spirit or as Romans 6 states it, ‘baptized into Jesus Christ!’ (Romans 6:1-4; 1 Cor. 12:13; Col. 2:11-12; and Titus 3:4-6) **Baptism with/by/in the Holy Spirit is performed by the operation of God by the Spirit giving NEW BIRTH (John 3:6-8) and placement into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13).**

The **Holy Spirit** is the One responsible for **baptizing a repentant sinner into the body of Christ.**

NO MAN can by means of water baptize himself or another into a saving connection with the blood of Jesus and/or into the body of Christ, yet multitudes of Catholic priests and church of Christ preachers and others claim to do this very thing! No such work of the flesh can save anyone; the work must be done **‘from above’ exclusively by the Holy Spirit!** God initiates the sinner's salvation in his soul by His Holy Spirit, not a work of obedience by the sinner.

6. The Holy Spirit Baptism is not to be confused with the COMMAND to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Every new born Christian begins their Christian life being baptized by/with and into the Holy Spirit and also filled with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2: 4; Romans 5:5)

However, whereas there is ONE Baptism in the Holy Spirit, there are, can be, should be MANY FILLINGS with the Holy Spirit. Moreover, as to being filled with the Holy Spirit, we are both commanded and told how to be being filled. (Eph. 5:18-6:18; Col. 3:16-4:4)

7. Speaking in tongues is nowhere in Scripture said to be the evidence Holy Spirit filling or anointing or the key to a higher level of Christian living.

Speaking in tongues does not mean or prove that one is full of the Holy Spirit or even that a person is a Christian. Hindus and people of various religions speak in tongues!

8. In the New Testament, the most carnal church, Corinth, was big on speaking in tongues. However, they were very short on Holy Spirit FRUIT and FULNESS.

Jesus never spoke in tongues. Jesus lives, by His Holy Spirit, in every born again believer to live His life through that believer!

NOTE: I happen to be among those who believe that all the ‘gifts’ of the Holy Spirit are still with us today. God has provided both gifts and FRUIT and the command to seek the best gifts and the greater command to BE BEING FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT, so that the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-24) will flood our souls and flow out of our lives.

The greatest need is always Holy Spirit fullness! As we heed the commands not to grieve and not to quench or resist the Holy Spirit and instead to be being continuously filled— we will experience more and more of the fullness of the Spirit and will have Spirit anointed expressions of various gifts of the Holy Spirit. [A number of sources used in the original preparation of this article]

GRACE TO ALL! James Bell

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES!

1. Tuesdays, 10:30am— Ladies Bible Study!

2. WEDNESDAYS: PRAYER SERVICE at 7:00PM!

YOUTH: Wednesdays, 6-8pm @ Adam and Bethany’s home.

3. Thursdays @ 6:30pm: OUTREACH VISITATION

4. EVERY SATURDAY @ 8:00am: Men's Fellowship and Bible Study

Sunday Schedule for September 23, 30

- 1. 9:30am-** Sunday School
 - 2. 10:45am-** Morning Worship / Children's Church
 - 3. Noon Fellowship 'Covered Dish' Meal**
 - 4. 1:00pm- Early Afternoon Service**
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Southside Christian School: Students entering SCS for the first time are diagnostically tested and placed in class-work where they are actually performing — thus, existing 'learning gaps' are discovered and remedied. A student can enter SCS at any time, begin work and go forward without having been left behind.

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