

Acts 19

The vital importance of the gift of the Spirit.

(Diversity of Christian experience, raises some perplexing and difficult questions about what we should expect as we experience Christ's Spirit.)

Introduction:

- We strive for unity in our experience of Christian confession, love, and purpose. We also are committed to diversity in the manifestation of Spiritual gifts for ministry.
- But what about the broad variety of spiritual experiences that we observe and experience? What are we to make of all the interesting testimonies that are offered as people bear witness to Jesus?

1. Identity as Christians.

“¹ And it came about that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found some disciples, ² and he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they {said} to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." ³ And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism." ⁴ And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus." ⁵ And when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they {began} speaking with tongues and prophesying. ⁷ And there were in all about twelve men.

- There are a number of questions that emerge from this paragraph. We must remember that this is descriptive experience and not prescriptive instruction as to what we should experience.
 1. How does John's baptism differ from Christian baptism?
 2. How can a person be a believer in Jesus (vs.4) and yet need to be re-baptized and to receive the Holy Spirit?
 3. Is speaking in tongues to always be an expected sign of the Spirit's baptism? This is the most difficult or complex question.
- John's baptism was not "Christian baptism" for a number of reasons. 1) It was of and for Jews only, 2) It was for repentance of sins in preparation for the Messianic age, 3) It was based on faith in God, in the Old Testament sense. Christian baptism united believers with Christ as a result of their faith in him. It was associated with the gift of the Spirit and forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus.
- It is clear that the Ephesians had been obedient to John's message. They were believing God and waiting for the coming of Christ. They had not, however, been baptized in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins (Acts 2:38). They were much like the Apostles before Pentecost. As soon as they were informed as to the real issue (the coming of the Spirit), they were baptized in the name of Jesus (Acts 19:5) at which time the Spirit was imparted to them (19:6). There is no indication in

the text as to the order of the events of verses 5 and 6; we assume they were simultaneous.

- See apptoteach.org (theology file #603) for a complete study of the Baptism with the Spirit.
- **Six kinds of Baptism are mentioned in the Bible.**

JOHN'S BAPTISM (Jn.1:25-33) in water of the Jews as a sign of repentance in preparation for the Christ. This is NOT Christian baptism, as we practice it today.

JESUS' BAPTISM (Matt.3:13-17) came in the context of John's baptism but was unique "fulfilling all righteousness" and anointing Jesus for ministry.

BAPTISM INTO MOSES (I Cor.10:1-2) was the same as saying "identified with Moses" through the Exodus.

BAPTISM WITH FIRE (Matt.3:9-12, Lk.3:16-17) is a reference to experiencing God's judgment.

BAPTISM WITH THE SPIRIT (Matt.3:11) is by Jesus, of all regenerate believers into the "body of Christ". This is not a water baptism but is the spiritual basis of the church's baptism with water.

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM (Matt.28:18-20) is a water baptism, by the church, of those who are united with Christ through faith. It is the subject of this paper.

John's Baptism Jn. 1:25-33	Spirit Baptism Matt. 3:11	Believer's Baptism Matt. 28:18-20
by John	by Jesus	by disciples
with water	with Spirit	with water
of Jews	of all	of all
sign of repentance	regeneration	sign
temporary	continuous	continuous

- **Baptism and Salvation.**

1. In Matt.28 Christ commanded Water baptism.
2. How are we to understand the meaning of Christian baptism?

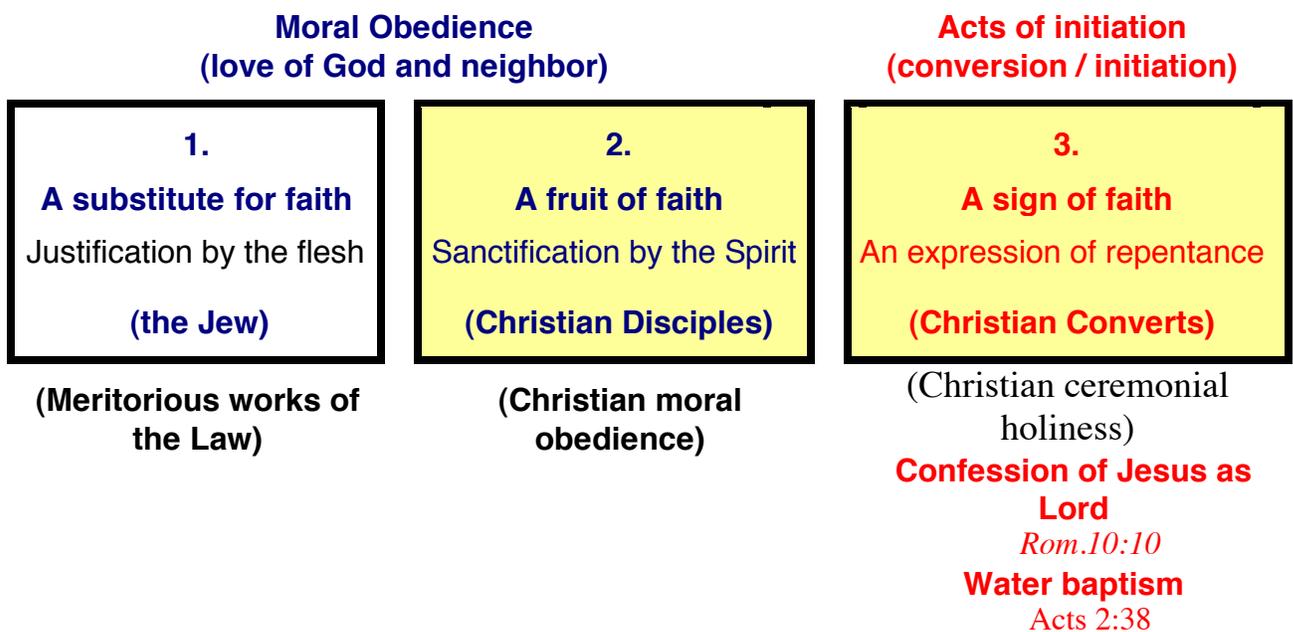
The Conversion / Initiation View of Baptism and Salvation

Three views of water baptism compared

Sacrament	Seal	Sign
Essential for salvation	Initiation rite of salvation	Optional to Salvation
It is the actual means of imparting grace.	It is the formal introduction to our new life in Christ.	It is a way of testifying to our new life in Christ.

- a. This is a view expressed by F.F. Bruce, James D.G. Dunn, and Richard Longnecker. It is also my own view.

- b. In essence, this position holds that a person becomes a Christian (i.e., receives the Holy Spirit) by a complicated process composed of three elements: faith, water baptism, and the reception of the Spirit. However, the reception of the Spirit may come before or after water baptism. While faith and the reception of the Spirit work an inner transformation called conversion, water baptism works at an objective and ritualistic level called initiation.
3. What was the mode of baptism in this text? Probably pouring.
 4. Is water baptism necessary for saving faith? Technically NO! but practically YES! There is no indication that anyone was accepted into the early church without water baptism.
 5. What is the relationship between faith, works, and water baptism? Three kinds of works are represented in the following chart.



• **Five views of water baptism**

	Meaning	Mode	Recipients
Catholic	A means of imparting the new birth – eternal life. SACRAMENT	Sprinkling	Anyone associated with the Roman Catholic Church
Lutheran	A means of imparting the new birth when mixed with faith SACRAMENT	Sprinkling	Infants of believing parents and adults upon confession of faith.
Presbyterian	A sign and seal of the covenant promises SACRAMENT	Sprinkling	Infants of believing parents and adults upon confession of faith.
Baptist	A sign of faith and repentance. ORDINANCE	Immersion	Adults and children upon confession of faith.

Church of Christ	A sign of faith and necessary act of repentance. ORDINANCE	Immersion	Adults and children upon confession of faith.
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- While speaking in tongues seems to have been a common sign of the filling of the Spirit (which often accompanied the baptism of the Spirit) in the book of Acts, there is not a consistent testimony supporting that experience in the history of the church or in the teaching of the Apostles.
- The Apostle's teaching is quite clear. It is faith in Jesus that unites us with Christ, insures our pardon from sin, and grants us the blessings of eternal life. Water baptism is the outward expression of initial faith. It is assumed (in the NT epistles) that all who are in Christ by faith possess the gift of the Spirit. There is no suggestion in Acts or the Epistles that there are two receptions of the Spirit (one at new birth, the other at empowerment for service).
- While speaking in tongues is not the only sign or primary sign of the reception of the Spirit, it must be recognized that with the coming of the Spirit there is going to be a display of power and passion for ministry in the person's life.
- **Acts is more descriptive than prescriptive in its story of the experience of the Spirit.**

1. The reception of the Holy Spirit in the Early Church.

The following texts speak of the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts.

- 1:4-8 The Promise of the Father (Lk.24:49) which was the Spirit (Gal.3:14) is coming to all who have faith in Christ.
- 2:2-4 The disciples receive the Spirit at Pentecost and are "*filled*" with the result that they speak in tongues.
- 2:33 Peter's sermon referring to Pentecost indicates that the Spirit could not have come until after Jesus ascended to the Father (Jn.16:7, 7:38-39).
- 2:38 Peter's promise that all who Repent and are Baptized will receive the Spirit.
- 8:14-24 The Samaritans receive the Spirit through the laying on of hands after they "*believed*". It is not clear that their faith was true faith until the Spirit came - ie. Simon vs.13,22-24.
- 10:44-11:18 Cornelius (a Gentile) receives the Spirit after the pattern of Pentecost (11:15) where the Spirit "*fell on them*" (10:44) as a result of repentance unto life (11:18).
- 19:1-7 The Ephesians receive the Spirit when they believed on Jesus (vs.5-6 may have taken place simultaneously).

2. The Biblical doctrine of the Baptism with the Holy Spirit:

- a. It is **unique** to the Church age (II Cor.3:7-8).
- b. It is a **ministry of Jesus Christ** (John 1:33).
 1. It is stated as such in Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16.
 2. The Greek present tense in He who baptizes (John 1:33) implies continuous repeated action, not just the day of Pentecost.
- c. It is linked with **removal of sins** (Titus 3:5).
 1. Christ's ministry-removal of sin (John 1:29) and bestowal of Spirit (John 1:33).
 2. Ezekiel 36:25,27; II Cor.3:8-9; Acts 2:38; Titus 3:4-7

- d. It is **universal** among regenerate Christians (I Cor.12:13; Eph.4:5; Joel 2:38 with Acts 2:33,38-39).
 - e. It takes places at **the moment of regeneration** (Gal.3:2,14,26-29; 4:6; Rom.8:9,14-16; 5:5; Jude 19).
 - f. It is **sufficient and complete** (Eph.1:3; I John 2:29; 3:9-10; 5:18).
 - g. It **unites** us to the Body of Christ (I Cor.12:13; Rom.6:1-4; Gal.3:26-29; Eph.4:5).
 - 1. We belong to Christ (Gal.4:29).
 - 2. We are clothed with Christ (Gal.3:27).
 - 3. We put on Christ (I Cor.12:13).
 - 4. We are identified with Christ's death and resurrection (Rom.6:1-4; Col.2:12).
 - h. It results in **fellowship, worship, and power** (Acts 1:8; I Cor.2:15-16; Gal.5:22-23; John 4:24).
 - i. It results in the bestowal of Spiritual **gifts** (I Cor.12).
 - j. It is the basis of the believer's **position and possessions** in Christ (Eph.1:13; Col.2:10; 3:1-4).
 - k. It is presented **prophetically** in the Gospels, **historically** in Acts (1:5 with 11:6), **doctrinally** in Epistles.
3. **Regeneration and the Holy Spirit**

Although men in every age are justified by faith (Gen.15:6), it seems clear that regeneration or new birth (at least in the New Testament sense of the word--John 3:3-7, Titus 3:5) is the unique experience of the Body of Christ which is, historically speaking, all believers between Pentecost and the coming of Christ for His Church.

- a. The Old Testament system offered pardon for sin but no power (new life).
 - 1. Cleansing was provided through the Levitical sacrifices and offerings, which pictures the coming cross of Christ.
 - 2. Change was promised through a NEW COVENANT (Jer.31:31-33; Ezek.36:26-27) which was viewed in the Old Testament and the Gospels as a future reality.
- b. John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, spoke of a Spirit baptism which was to take place through Jesus in fulfillment of the Old Testament promise (Joel 2:28; Luke 3:16; 24:49; Acts 1:4-8; Gal.3:14).
- c. Jesus came preaching that the Kingdom of God (eternal life, age to come, regeneration) was at hand.
 - 1. People were to repent in preparation for it (Mark 1:4-8).
 - 2. He pointed His followed to a day (Pentecost) when they would experience union with Him (John 14:20), and new power (Luke 24:49) through the Spirit, Who would come after His ascension (John 16:7; Luke 24:49).
- d. The Apostles make it quite clear that "new life" (regeneration) is dependent upon -
 - 1. The death and resurrection of Christ (Rom.6:3-11,22; 7:6; Eph.2:4-9; I Cor.5:15-17; Gal.2:20; I Peter 1:3-4).

2. The indwelling Holy Spirit (I John 3:24; 4:13; Rom.8:1-10).
- e. In the New Testament, the absence of the Holy Spirit is a sign that the person is unsaved, unregenerate, and outside the body of Christ (Rom.8:9).
4. Luke seems to make a distinction between the **SPIRIT BAPTISM** (indwelling) and **SPIRIT FILLING** (outworking).
 - a. Spirit baptism is a positional (non-experiential) event with experiential aspects.

FACT (non-experiential for every Christian at the point regeneration)	POTENTIAL (experiential for every Christian, but often subsequent to regeneration)
Indwelt by the Spirit	Filling (Pleroo)
Sealed with the Spirit	Security of Salvation
United to Christ by the Spirit	Power
United to the Body by the Spirit	Fellowship
Given gifts by the Spirit	Manifestation

- b. We are baptized with the Spirit at the moment of new birth, and this is not always an emotional event. Experiencing the results of the Baptism may be a very emotional event.
- c. Luke speaks of two types of **FILLING**.
 1. **PIMPLEMI** (πιμπλημι)--This is a special filling which may be the best word to describe the charismatic experience today.
 - a. It appears in

Acts 2:4 “And they were all **filled** with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.”;

Acts 4:8 “Then Peter, **filled** with the Holy Spirit, said to them . . .”;

Acts 4:31 “And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all **filled** with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak the word of God with boldness.”;

Acts 9:17 “the Lord Jesus . . . has sent me so that you may regain your sight, and be **filled** with the Holy Spirit.”;

Acts 13:9 “but Saul, who was also known as Paul, **filled** with the Holy Spirit, fixed his gaze upon him.” Note that this filling is consistently associated with energy to speak prophetically or in praise.
 - b. Before Pentecost, “the filling of the Holy Spirit” was expressed through a sovereign anointing for specific types of service-- Exodus 28:3 (35:30-35), Judges 3:10; 6:2,4; 11:29; 13:25;

14:6,19; 15:14. (See also Numbers 11:17,25; 27:18; I Samuel 10:9-10; 16:13; Daniel 4:8; 5:11-14; 6:3)

- c. Note the unique features of the Old Testament filling:
 - 1. It had not relationship to spiritual character.
 - 2. It was associated with a sovereign call to service for a specific task.
 - 3. It was temporary.
 - 4. John 14:17 suggests that the Spirit's work was from a position of "with" as opposed to "in" the individual.
- d. Classical examples of this special manifestation of power before Pentecost are seen in Luke 1:15,41,67.
- e. In short, this PIMPLEMI (filling) is not for every believer, temporary, instant power, related to special gifts of service, given by God's sovereign will.

- 2. **PLEROO** (πληροω) --This is a term (translated "full" or "filled") used to describe a state of maturity available to all believers.
 - a. It is not dramatic (like PIMPLEMI) but more a description of character and growing power.
 - b. It appears in

Acts 6:3 "but select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation **full** of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task."

Acts 7:55 "but being **full** of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God."

Acts 11:24 "for he was a good man, and **full** of the Holy Spirit and of faith."

Acts 13:52 "and the disciples were continually **filled** with joy and with the Holy Spirit." ("Were filled" is an imperfect passive meaning "they kept on being filled".)

- d. Some conclusions:
 - 1. Every true believer is Spirit baptized (indwelt) with the Holy Spirit - ie. Rom.8:9, I Cor.12:13.
 - 2. Every believer should grow to be "filled" (pleroo) with the Spirit.
 - 3. Some (but not all) will experience a "filling" (pimplemi) for power ministry, praise, and bold witness. This is what I would call "the charismatic experience".

- See apptoteach.org (theology file #812) for a complete study of the Baptism with the Spirit.

