

Christ the Baptizer

In this chapter we look at the term *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*. The term has been defined variably by different church groups. Our purpose is to look beyond our group definition to the biblical *analogy of scripture*. *Analogy of scripture* means taking a synthesised view of the whole Old and New Testament, based on the principle that *scripture interprets scripture*; i.e. we do not interpret scripture, but allow it to speak for itself.

In exegesis we both allow one passage to speak for itself, as we also accept that the whole Bible speaks in a unified way. Failure to accept this brings into question the concept of *inerrancy* and puts the prophets and apostles against each other.

Four main views on baptism in the Holy Spirit are:

1. The view sometimes held by Roman Catholics (and sometimes by other denominations) that the baptism in the Holy Spirit occurs at water baptism, whether for infants in “sprinkling”, or for adults being water baptized, or for teenagers at “confirmation” ceremonies. Here baptism in the Spirit is said to be automatic. This is the sacramental view.

This view arose over the centuries partly due to believers hoping that their children’s salvation would be secured from infancy. It is not always a heretical view, though the view of *baptismal regeneration* is not biblical when not associated with a transformed life.

2. The view held through much of church history is that the baptism in the Spirit is new birth. This is considered by many to be the best theological or biblical view, though it is brought into question when believers said to be born again do not exhibit the life and power of Christ.
3. The view held by modern Pentecostal and Charismatic groups, that the baptism in the Spirit is a second experience received after salvation, when one is empowered for ministry of witness in the gifts of the Spirit. This normally is evidenced first by the *speaking in other tongues*.
4. The view held by some Methodist, Wesleyan or Holiness groups that the Spirit Baptism is a post-conversion experience of sanctification.

For some, the second view is the one easiest to maintain biblically, but the third view is often held to arrest a laxity in spirit or a lack of a genuine experience of God. A problem with those accepting the second view may be passivity or complacency and a problem that may go with the third view is fanaticism.

If those who adopt the second view are often seen to lack power, then those who adopt the third view are often seen to lack transformation of life. Neither side stands on the scriptural *high ground*. If, for example, we speak in tongues and also freely lie, it cannot be said that we have the power of Christ. Power then includes that which changes our life and character and not *fleshly “spiritual” demonstrations*.

David Pawson, in *Jesus Baptizes in One Holy Spirit*, “maintains that the sacramental, evangelical and Pentecostal streams in Christianity have all failed to do justice to this biblical doctrine. In particular its dual purpose of purity and power, for salvation and service, needs to be recovered if we are to become a truly apostolic church in the twenty-first century”.

Topics in this chapter include:

- Old Testament prophetic background.
- Jewish expectations at the time of Christ.

- John the Baptist.
- John's Gospel – Jesus' teaching.
- The book of Acts.
- Paul's epistles.
- Recent church history.

This chapter does not look at the baptism of Jesus when He began His public ministry, as that has been dealt with in an earlier chapter in the section on *Christology*. In that section we also looked at the terms “coming upon” and the Spirit “within”.

Context

Baptism in the Holy Spirit cannot be studied in isolation. Like most things in theology, it runs together with other themes. We are in need of a *contextual education*, which means studying subjects in the context of the whole. Western education tends to break things up into categories to study each one in isolation and this can cause misunderstanding.

The New Testament scripture has the Old Testament for its context, where themes were first introduced. Scripture also has its own historical context of the day. The New Testament was written to the 1st Century Jews mainly and not to 21st Century Pentecostals or Evangelicals. Therefore, we have to know the mind of the day to read the scripture as they then received it.

When we come to the topic of baptism in the Spirit we have several aspects to consider. These include the Old Testament prophets, the Jewish Messianic expectations and traditions and the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus in relation to the kingdom of God. We can then move on to study Luke and Paul.

The Prophets

Everything that happened in the New Covenant was a fulfilment of the Old Testament prophets. It was these very prophecies that John the Baptist and Jesus said were about to be fulfilled. Jesus said, “Tarry in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father”. (Luke 24:49). He was clearly referring to the prophets.

Jeremiah sets the scene for *the promise of the Father*, the gift of the Spirit:

Behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband to them, says the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel;

After those days, says the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts; and will be their God and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more. (Jer 31:31-34).

In the promised New Covenant God would write His law upon our heart. Every one of His people would know Him, not just a special class of anointed priests. This would be because God would put His Spirit within us and we would become the temple of the Holy Spirit. He writes the law on our heart by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit.

In the Old Covenant the Holy Spirit came upon certain people for a certain purpose. The New Covenant is when God gives His Spirit to dwell *permanently* within *all* His people. This is *the promise of the Father*. The promise is scattered throughout all of the prophet's writings. This promise shows the New Covenant distinctive, which is the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Ezekiel

Ezekiel continues the theme:

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and you shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes and you shall keep My judgements and do them. (Ezek 36:25-27).

Here again, the Father makes the promise of the Spirit. He will put His Spirit within us, who will regenerate our heart and nature. This is symbolically called *the cleansing of water*. In the Hebrew mind this washing was signified by baptism. Baptism comes from a Greek word and is first seen in the New Testament, but in the Old Testament the concept of washing for purification was very common.

The gift of the Spirit is associated with the Messianic age. He would come and wash us from our sin (cleansing) and also cause us to walk in His statutes (power). The prophets speak of the coming Messiah and a new age. The most significant aspect to the Messianic age would be the gift of the Spirit to all God's people.

Isaiah

Thus says the Lord that made you and formed you from the womb, which will help you; Fear not, O Jacob, My Servant; and Jesurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon Your seed and My blessing upon Your offspring: And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. (Is 44:2-4).

Here is the Father's promise again. It is to Jacob's seed. This is really Jesus and those in Him. Jacob's seed is the seed of faith, according to Jesus and Paul. It is not a racial seed. It includes those in the nation of Israel and those in all nations that the Father calls. This promise was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost and continues throughout church history.

Every promise that God made has one fulfilment in Christ (2 Cor 1:20). They all point to Jesus Christ and His coming to redeem and restore Israel through His resurrection and outpouring at Pentecost. This is the analogy of scripture: Christ came *to fulfil* His promises to Israel, *not to delay* them.

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose...they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God...Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with recompense; He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Then shall the lame man leap as a hart and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool and the thirsty land springs of water...but the redeemed shall

walk there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. (Is 35:1-10).

In the prophet's mind this is Spirit baptism. Water was used to symbolise this. They called it *washing, filling (flooding), empowering with life*, before the Greek root for *baptism* became popular in the Gospels. There is no doubt that in understanding a biblical meaning for *Spirit baptism* we must start with the prophet's description of it, as it would be fulfilled when Messiah came.

Isaiah's prophecies were fulfilled when Jesus came and ministered and when the apostles continued in His ministry after the outpouring at Pentecost. It was fulfilled in the first coming of Jesus and continues today in the church. This was the declaration of Jesus when He came, "That it might be fulfilled...". Dispensationalism says these are going to be fulfilled in the Second Coming "when Jesus reigns in Jerusalem". This misses the point that the prophets intended.

Isaiah speaks of the Messianic era and the Servant of the Lord (Is 42-66). He shall establish His kingdom. He will overcome Israel's enemies, i.e. sin and a wayward heart. He will give of His Spirit and freely give redemption where there was sin and failure. He will pour out water on a thirsty and powerless soul. We know Jesus fulfilled this in His first coming. He said so in John 7 where He cried out, "If any man thirst let Him come to Me and drink, as the scripture has said, Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water...".

Ezekiel spoke of the rivers of living water in Ezekiel 47, which would issue out from the temple. According to Jesus in John 7 that temple is His body, the church. Ezekiel was speaking of the church, the Messianic age, the kingdom of God in church history. That is what Jesus said. Jesus depicted this also with the new wine at the wedding at Cana. It is the New Covenant baptism in life through Jesus Christ.

Joel

Joel also spoke of this New Covenant:

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit...whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Joel 2:28-29, 32).

This is the promise of the Father. It includes both cleansing and power: salvation and service. A common error here is to see the "wonders in the heavens and earth" (vs. 30) as being associated with the Second Coming of Christ. The scripture does not say that. It is referring to the time of Pentecost and Christ's first coming. Peter said this was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:16).

Joel also said this time would be associated with upheaval and great distress in Israel and the nations. He symbolized it by blood, smoke and the moon and sun turning red.

The Jewish Mind

In the mind of the Jews, they saw the coming Messianic era, the gift of the Spirit, associated with upheaval and distress among the nations as the Messiah's rule is consummated. The Jews saw the Messiah's coming as a period of salvation associated with judgement. There is no doubt that this is how they read Joel and this is how Peter interpreted it

Modern Christians often have a *gap mindset*. This means they see a large gap of some thousands of years between Jesus coming to confirm the promises of the New Covenant and His coming again to judge Israel. This is inconsistent with the parables of Jesus and with the warnings of John the Baptist. They both spoke directly of an impending judgement on Israel, for not knowing the day of God's visitation in Christ.

In the time of Jesus the Essenes were one of the three major religious groups of the Jews, the other two being the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Essenes lived in communities in the desert areas, near where the *Dead Sea Scrolls* were discovered preserved in the 20th Century. The Essenes had a significant influence on Jewish thought in that time.

During the Intertestamental period before Jesus came, the Essenes developed strict ascetic practices. Among these practices were frequent water baptisms to purify them from sin. These evolved out of the Old Testament washings that were prescribed by Moses' Law for the priests. So, baptism in essence, meant washing or purifying.

The Essenes believed that the Messiah's age was at hand, about to come. They saw the prophecies in Isaiah and the other prophets as soon to be fulfilled. They thought that their asceticism would usher in a level of holiness that would bring the Messiah. The Essenes practiced frequent baptism for this very purpose.

The Essene and Jewish mindset of baptism represented three things:

1. Cleansing and washing.
2. Initiation into the soon coming Messianic age.
3. Receiving power with God, to usher in that age.

When John the Baptist came baptizing this is how the Jews understood what he was doing. They did not see water baptism as symbolic of a second experience after salvation, but as the initiation into salvation, or into the Messianic age which was then at hand. It was a cleansing from sin with the promise of power to be made a son in the kingdom.

They saw baptism as eschatological, to do with the new Messianic age about to dawn 2,000 years ago. We cannot study Spirit baptism without studying the New Covenant promise, Jewish history, eschatology, the meaning of Israel and election. All these topics are defined together.

John the Baptist

John the Baptist was not an Essene. He had some similar practices, but held to a quite different theology about Christ. John was the one Isaiah spoke of, "I send my messenger before Me to prepare the way of the Lord," (Is 40:3) and Malachi, "Behold I send Elijah before the great and terrible day." (Mal 4:5).

When John was baptizing, in the mind of the Jewish people, this meant washing and initiation into the kingdom of the Messiah. For John had said, "Repent (be ready for what is coming) for the kingdom of heaven is *at hand*." (Matt 3:2). (There is no difference between "the kingdom of God" and "the kingdom of heaven". God the Father is in heaven.)

Then John said, "I baptize you with water, but there is one mightier than I whose sandal I am not worthy to loose, He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." (Matt 3:11). To the Jews who

heard him, this meant that the baptism of Jesus was the real baptism. John's baptism was only symbolic, but Christ's baptism was the reality, the actual substance of the promise of God.

This means that when John the Baptist said, "He (Messiah) will baptize you with the Holy Spirit..." the Jews heard him say, "He will give you *the real* cleansing and empowerment of the Spirit and He will initiate you into His kingdom", fulfilling the prophets.

The point of John the Baptist is that there is only one baptism. His water baptism was merely an outward symbol of the real baptism, the inner work of the Spirit. John the Baptist would give the outward symbol, while the Messiah would give the inner work. Water baptism symbolises initiation into Christ. It is Christ Himself in the New Covenant that gives the real baptism into spiritual life.

In church history, Christian water baptism was seen as an outward symbol of the inner real baptism, which was seen as conversion, or regeneration, new birth into Christ. That is the baptism *of* (or *by*, or *in*) the Spirit. It is the gift of the Spirit that the Father promised, which is the distinctive of the New Covenant or Messianic era.

John the Baptist's message flows naturally from the prophets. He came to announce the arrival of what the prophets said would come. The Essenes, for the most part, at that time did not accept Jesus as the Messiah they were waiting for, because they thought the kingdom would come visibly (Luke 17:20).

Water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. It means washing. So water baptism is a symbol of Spirit baptism. If water baptism is for a convert's initiation into Christ, then Spirit baptism is the actual spiritual initiation into Christ. Spirit baptism is new birth. By associating baptism with initiation, the Bible teaches that Spirit baptism is the beginning of the Christ life.

...but according to His mercy He saved us, by the *washing* of regeneration and *renewing* of the Holy Spirit, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior (Titus 3:5-6).

Thus John the Baptist said he must decrease, because he represented the end of the old.

Fire Baptism

John said Jesus would baptize in the Holy Spirit and fire. This fire is a purging from sin and an empowering. It also refers to judgement. John the Baptist said, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand and He already has the winnowing sheaf in His hand and the axe is already poised, laid to the root of the tree". (Luke 3:17). Christ's baptism would cleanse us from sin and be a judgment upon those who reject Him.

Those from Israel who would not receive Him would be *cut off from His people* (Acts 3:23). They would go into the judgement spoken of by the prophets. The baptism of fire can refer to a purging, cleansing and empowering, or to a judgement on those who reject Messiah. The purging and empowering are not two different experiences for the believer. They are the one baptism.

From discussions so far it is clear that the prophets, the Jewish mindset and John the Baptist all interpreted Spirit baptism as entrance into the life of Christ, where one is cleansed and empowered to be a son of God. (John 1:12; to receive *exousia* - *privilege, power, authority, right, enablement*.) This eschatological fulfilment would also be accompanied by outward works of power, even to our present day.

The Gospel of John

The Gospel of John was prophetic until the Day of Pentecost. The promise keeper (Messiah) had come, but the Day of Pentecost had not yet fully come. Throughout John's Gospel Jesus was pointing to that day which was *at hand*, but would not come until He had finished His work and gone to the Father. Until then, Jesus still ministered grace under the Old Covenant.

Theme of John

In our earlier days in Pentecostalism we were told that the Gospel of John spoke of different experiences. The exact exegesis of this was a little vague, but the claim was that Jesus spoke of new birth in John 3 and John 4, but of a second experience following that called Spirit baptism in John 7. In other words, the apostle John was giving witness to a rather complex set of stages in Christian experience.

It is difficult to find this in the Gospel of John, as a stated purpose of the apostle. John never said this was his purpose in writing the Gospel. So the problem is can we claim that the book has a purpose that the author did not openly speak of?

John states his purpose for writing the Gospel. He said it was written so that we might believe on Jesus Christ and have eternal life. The whole Gospel has this one purpose of pointing to Jesus as the one who fulfills the promise of the Father. Claiming that John was witnessing to different experiences in Christian life is contrary to John's own claim. His claim is, "This is the Christ. In Him is fullness, *which we have all received.*" (John 1:16. John wrote this after Pentecost).

But these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God; and that believing you might have life (*fullness*) through His name. (John 20:31).

The Message of Jesus

In the whole Gospel of John, Jesus develops the theme started by John the Baptist, that He is the baptizer in the Holy Spirit. This theme is introduced in John 1:33 and is then developed in John 2, 3, 4, 7, 14-17 and in chapter 20. We will have a brief look at each of these chapters. Each of these chapters was still prophetic when Jesus was teaching. None of them was fulfilled when Jesus spoke them, but *it was at hand*. They were fulfilled when Jesus went to the Father.

John 2 speaks of the new wine, which was kept to last. This was better wine. It represents the New Covenant. The old wine is the law and the flesh, which cannot profit. The new wine is the grace of God that breaks the power of sin and brings life. The baptism in the Spirit is the new wine, which Jesus would give. This is clearly following on from John the Baptist's introduction to the life of Christ.

John 3

John 3 includes the discussion between Jesus and Nicodemus. Jesus spoke of the new birth, calling it being *born of water and of the Spirit* (KJV). With regard to both water and Spirit, the Greek language of John 3 uses the preposition *ek*, meaning "out of". The J. B. Phillips Bible puts it "born *from* water...born *from* the Spirit".

...except a man be born *out of* water and *out of* the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (John 3:5).

Jesus is following on from John the Baptist's message on Spirit baptism. The preposition here means born out of a submersion or baptism in the Spirit. The *water* here is also used as a symbol of the Spirit and of the word of God, the living spoken word of God (Eph 5:26).

According to Jesus it is plain the new birth is the baptism *in, of or by* the Spirit. We are born again by Christ submerging us into the Holy Spirit. This way we are filled and regenerated by the power of God. Without a baptism into the Spirit we cannot be empowered and regenerated into new birth. Without Spirit baptism we cannot be saved.

Being Spirit *filled* is a result of baptism. *Baptiso* in the Greek means to be submerged so that we are filled. We are an open vessel, which when submerged is also filled. So we are not baptized into Christ and later filled with the Spirit. It is the filling of the Spirit through baptism that gives us a new heart and puts us into Christ. Jesus as baptizer submerges us into the Holy Spirit, washing and renewing our inner nature, giving us a new heart.

"Born of water and of the Spirit" denotes Christian baptism, where Spirit ("wind") denotes Pentecost (Acts 2:2) and "water" refers to the washing of the living word of God. See Eph 5:26, 1 Pet 1:23, 1 John 5:7-8. The Spirit and the word are one, they work as one and both agree with the blood, Jesus' redeeming work. *Born of water* is not water baptism, for physical water cannot regenerate.

John 4

In John 4, Jesus spoke to the woman at the well. He spoke of the gift of the Father, which is the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that the Spirit is a well of water within the believer, springing up to everlasting life. This means that the well of life never runs dry. It means that a born again believer does not need to drink again, but will never thirst.

When Jesus said that the woman had to come to the well each day He was speaking of the insufficiency of religion. Religious life does not satisfy. It must be refreshed and sustained daily. The life of Christ is sustained by Jesus Christ Himself and not by what we do. This is the distinction between the old and new wines.

We know this was the meaning of Jesus because their discussion together was about religion, not physical water. The woman asked where they should worship, at the place of the Samaritans or in Jerusalem. Jesus answered, "Neither place, for the day is at hand when they will worship the Father in Spirit.". By this Jesus abrogated all holy lands. He is the Holy Land.

In John 4 we see the baptism of the Spirit that John the Baptist spoke of. It is the eternal self-sustaining life of Christ and it is a New Covenant that abrogates all religious institutions under the old system, including the Holy Land. It fulfils all those everlasting promises in the person of Jesus Christ.

We could include every chapter of John, such as chapter six where Spirit baptism is eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood through the faith that baptism imparts, but we do not have space. We speak of John 6 in another chapter.

John 7

In John 7 Jesus spoke at the *Feast of Tabernacles*, showing He is the fulfilment of the Old Testament feasts and holy days, such as the Sabbath. At the *Feast of Tabernacles* each year the Jews would pour out flasks of water to symbolize the coming Messianic era of the gift of the Spirit. Jesus stood to say the era was at hand and He was the Messiah.

If any man thirst let him come to Me and drink. He that believes on Me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (John 7:38).

This is the fulfilment of the prophets concerning the Messianic age and the water of life (the Spirit of God) that the Messiah would fill us with. It is also a reference to Ezekiel 47, where living water came from the threshold of the temple and became rivers of water that brought life to all creatures, meaning all peoples, not just to the Jews.

Jesus' reference to Ezekiel 47 shows how Jesus interpreted Ezekiel's prophetic utterances about the temple he was asked to measure. The temple is fulfilled in the church, not in the city of Jerusalem. The New Testament refers only to a temple of living stones, of which Ezekiel's temple was symbolic (Eph 2:19-22, 1 Pet 2:9). Ezekiel's temple with living water cannot be interpreted differently from any of the other prophet's utterances about the Messianic gift of the Spirit.

Jesus fulfils all the feasts, not just Tabernacles. He fulfils Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Jubilee, etc. These feasts do not represent different stages of Christian experience that we must go through from one to the other. They represent all that Christ is. The fullness of all dwells in Christ and we are complete in Him. When we have Christ we have life, the fulfilment of all feasts in one person.

John 14-17

In interpreting John 14 we usually slip into our lazy habit. We assume Jesus was speaking directly to us. He was not. He was speaking to His disciples about going away and coming to them again. This was before His sufferings and so He was explaining the purpose of His sufferings and the goal of Pentecost, when He, the Spirit and the Father would indwell them.

Jesus was not speaking here about heaven. He clearly stated that He was speaking of fellowship with the Father. Jesus also was not speaking about His Second Coming because His disciples did not experience that. They died before that occurred. Jesus said that He would come again to them, i.e. to the 11 disciples. When did He do that? At Pentecost, after He had gone away to the Father. This is the subject of John 14-17.

Jesus started John 14, "In my Father's house are many mansions, I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am you may be also." (John 14:2-3). This is not speaking of heaven (a geographical place) but a person, the Godhead, the trinity. A better rendering is "dwelling places" not "mansions". "In My Father's house (family), are many dwelling places, living stones, vessels (us)." This was the Father's plan from before creation.

Jesus was going to prepare a place for us in Father's household, or family, so we could be the Father's dwelling place, or temple. He would prepare this place by shedding His blood, rising from the dead and ascending to the Father's right hand and cleansing the heavenly tabernacle. He had to go to the Father to do this, to prepare the way. Then He could fill us and live within. Then all the prophets would be fulfilled.

Phillip and Judas (not Iscariot) did not know what Jesus was saying. Phillip said "show us the way", thinking in geographical terms. They did not understand that Jesus was speaking of a person. This place was a person. He was speaking of Father. All that concerned Jesus was Father, doing His will and His fellowship with Him. He came to bring us into that fellowship which He had.

People see salvation in terms of escaping hell and going to heaven. Yes, but that is a fruit. The problem is sin, not hell. The answer is Christ in you. Jesus' answer showed Phillip that He was speaking of life and fellowship, not a geographical place. He said, "*I am* the way.". He did not say, "Go

down there and turn the second on the right...". He said that the way is a person. So then they said, "Show us the Father."

Then Jesus said plainly, "I am in the Father and the Father is in Me...". So this is what He was speaking about! He was going to the cross to prepare the way that we could be where He is, *in the Father*, that we could enter into this fellowship through Spirit baptism. "And I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter that He may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth...for He dwells with you and shall be in you..."

"I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you...At that day you shall know that I am in the Father and you in Me and I in you...If any man love Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him and We will come to him and make Our abode with him." (John 14:10...23).

We are the dwelling place of the Lord. It is clear that Jesus is speaking of fellowship in the trinity. When would this happen? The disciples were clean in the Old Covenant sense, but not regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit dwelt *with* them, but later He would be *in* them, permanently (John 14:17). This is the New Covenant promise for the church, consummated on the Day of Pentecost.

The believer does go to heaven when he dies (2 Cor 5:8), but that is not what Jesus is speaking about in John 14-17. The point people seem often to miss is that life is a person, Jesus Christ and salvation is being brought into His fellowship with the Father through the Spirit. The second point missed is that life begins now in Christ, not in heaven. Life begins at new birth.

As far as our children were concerned, home was always where we were as a family. It was never a house or location. John's Gospel was not written so you could go to heaven, but so you might have life. Eternal life is *now* in Him. "...in believing you might have life in His name." (John 20:31).

It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I depart I will send Him to you...At that day you shall know that I am in the Father and you in Me and I in you. (John 16:7, 14:20).

In John 14-17 the terms *He will come to you* and *I will come to you* describe the same thing. The coming of the Spirit of God was the coming of Father and the coming of Christ to the church. Go through John 14-17 and read it in relation to Pentecost, the coming of salvation. This is why Jesus came to die.

This is why John said in his latter epistle, "That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:3). "This is the message; that God has given us eternal life and this life is in His Son. He that has the Son has life. He that has not the Son of God has not life." (1 John 5:11-12).

It is emphatic from this passage that the Spirit would not be given until Jesus went to the Father. This does not mean a brief visit after the resurrection and then back to the disciples before the ascension. The *going to the Father* is emphatic. It is the *sitting down* of Christ at the Father's right hand, the receiving of Christ into the heavens according to Psalms 2 and 110, Daniel 7 and Hebrews 1. This is when the Spirit was sent forth.

John 20

John 20 contains a verse that has been a source of controversy for some Catholics and Pentecostals. Some have claimed that the disciples were born again in John 20 before the ascension of Christ and then received a second baptism of power on the Day of Pentecost.

There are difficulties with this view. Firstly, not all the disciples were present in this encounter. What happened to those who did not receive then? Also, there is no evidence of any change in the disciples or of any influence of the Spirit in this encounter – nothing happened!

This view however has sometimes suited a Catholic doctrine of works, which is added to salvation. It has suited a teaching that faith in Christ is not enough, but we need to work for some deeper blessing, in keeping with early Platonic influences in Catholicism. It has also suited Pentecostal teaching, which claims that there is a second baptism after salvation.

Pentecostals have not always noticed the similarity of this position with the Catholics. The conditions we sometimes say must be fulfilled to obtain this second baptism include tarrying, emptying yourself, cleansing all sin, sufficient prayer or fasting, unity, repentance from various past sins, or from wearing earrings, etc. Such conditions contradict the gospel that the Spirit is given freely through the merits of Christ.

The Great Commission

The text in John 20 is as follows:

Then said Jesus to them again, Peace to you; As my Father has sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.

Whosoever sins you remit are remitted and whosoever sins you retain are retained. (John 20:21-23).

Just as Nicodemus was not born again in John 3, neither the woman at the well in John 4, or any at the feast in John 7, so also the disciples were not born again in John 20. This encounter was preparatory. It was prophetic of the Day of Pentecost, as were all the earlier chapters. John carries the same theme throughout his whole Gospel concerning Christ the baptizer in the Holy Spirit.

Some have said that this act of Jesus in John 20 highlights the divinity of Jesus Christ. He breathed into Adam at *creation* and would breathe His Spirit into man once again for a *new creation*. Certainly this is true, as Christ is identifying Himself as the giver of the Father's promise. This was not when the disciples received the Spirit, but a teaching for them on the resurrection power they were soon to enter.

The real essence of the text is that it is a *Great Commission* passage. At the end of each Gospel there is a Great Commission passage that highlights two aspects:

1. *The reception of the Holy Spirit*, power or authority. This power is Christ residing in us through new birth. Matthew, "All authority is given to Me..."; Mark, "These signs shall follow..."; Luke, "Tarry in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father...". All of these speak of the power in which the Great Commission is to be carried out.

The message of Jesus in John 20 is the same. "Receive the Holy Spirit" for the Great Commission! We know that they did not receive the Spirit then, for why then would Jesus have said in Luke at His ascension, "Tarry for the promise after I have gone" (Luke 24:49) and in Acts 1:4, "wait for the promise of the Father"?

So John's record of Jesus' "receive the Holy Spirit" was an instruction to tarry in Jerusalem. It is John's record of the Great Commission, a synopsis with the other Gospels. This makes the most simple and straight forward sense of the passage. John just words the same instruction differently.

2. *The remission of sin.* The second aspect of the Great Commission was that after receiving this power they should preach the gospel to every person. Mark, "Preach this gospel to every creature, those who believe and are baptized shall be saved..."; Matthew, "baptizing them" for the forgiveness of sins...; Luke, "Preach repentance and remission of sins."

So John records the same aspect in the Great Commission, "Whoever sins you remit, they are remitted." This is not a personal authority given to the disciples, but as ambassadors of Christ they would declare remission of sins by the gospel to those who believe. This is what all the Gospel accounts say in relation to the Commission.

John adds, "Whoever sins you retain are retained." Again, this is not our personal authority, but a declaration to those who reject the gospel that their sins are retained. We are simply declaring by faith what we see the Father doing through the ministry of His word. We say it on earth, because it is already said in heaven. This does not give us power over any people.

Some pastors have used this verse to say that members must do what they say or they will not forgive their sins and so neither will God forgive them. Our sins are not in the hands of man. There is one mediator between man and God, the man Jesus Christ (1 Tim 2:5).

The promise of the Father in the Old Testament was Holy Spirit baptism. It is the whole point of the Gospel of John. This is the distinction of the New Covenant which the Father said was coming. This is why Jesus came.

And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry in the city of Jerusalem, until you are endued with power from on high. (Luke 24:49).

But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:39).

Therefore being at the right hand of God exalted and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has sent forth this which you see and hear. (Acts 2:33).

The Day of Pentecost

The Day of Pentecost was a feast celebrating the giving of the law, the inauguration of the Old Covenant with national Israel. The book of Hebrews shows this and contrasts it with the inauguration or beginning of the New Covenant.

For when Moses had spoken every precept (read the covenant) to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop and sprinkled *both the book and all the people*, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God has enjoined for you...

It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these (animal blood); but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. (Heb 9:19-24).

Moses spoke on the first Day of Pentecost at Mount Sinai after Israel had come out of Egypt. This is the day the Old Covenant began. It did not begin in Egypt. The Passover in Egypt was their deliverance. Sinai was when they were brought to God in covenant. This does not signify two experiences, but two aspects of the one salvation/sanctification: set apart *from the world* and set apart *to God*. The atonement and the gift of the Spirit are both required for this and both work in us through the new birth.

The first Day of Pentecost occurred 50 days after the first Passover. Pentecost in Greek means *fiftieth day*. In this context it means 50 days after Passover. The Day of Pentecost in Acts 2 was on the same day, 50 days after the crucifixion of Christ. It was the day that the New Covenant was inaugurated. It is the true Day of Pentecost, the fulfilment, of which Moses' Pentecost was a type.

Sprinkled With Blood

Christ had taken His blood into heaven for us and the Father received it as sufficient for our sins. He sent the Holy Spirit as a surety, as a down payment of our full inheritance and redemption, until the resurrection of our body on the last day. It was the sending of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost that shows that the man Jesus Christ is accepted for us at the Father's right hand.

The sending of the Spirit at Pentecost was the sprinkling of blood on our hearts for regeneration, cleansing and empowering. It was the inauguration of the New Covenant. It was the writing of God's law upon our hearts and not upon stone. The Day of Pentecost was when the disciples were born again.

The Father promised in Jeremiah 31, "I will make a new covenant, wherein I will write My law upon the heart.". This is done by the Spirit of God in new birth. Because we receive the Holy Spirit, we receive the nature of God with His faith and love and by that we have the spirit of the law written on our heart. The law written on our heart is not the letter, but the nature of Christ within.

The new birth occurred in Acts 2, when God wrote the law upon their hearts. This giving of the Spirit made the disciples new creatures in Christ. Pentecost is the sprinkling of Christ's blood in heaven and in our heart by the Spirit. This makes us sons of God. Moses sprinkled blood on the people. Christ sprinkles His blood on our inner man, bringing the power of faith. The church exploded into life and will never be overcome.

Interpreting Acts

Pentecostals have for a long time argued that we can take theology from the book of Acts. "All scripture is profitable for doctrine." (1 Tim 3:16). Paul used historical narrative as an example for others (1 Cor 10:11). Others have argued that Acts is historical and theology must be taken only from

Paul in the epistles. Some passages in Paul's epistles have very clear theological intent. We take from scripture only what it clearly tells us to take.

Pentecostals have argued that Luke's intention in Acts is to show that the Spirit is received primarily for power. This means Acts is primarily *pneumatological* (about the Spirit). However, its primary focus is *soteriology* (about salvation). The tenor of Acts is salvation, cleansing *and* power (Acts 2:38, 4:12). "Call not unclean what I have cleansed." (Acts 10:14-15). When the Spirit came on Cornelius' household it was said that God had granted them repentance and life, not power for service (Acts 11:18).

People ascribe different motives to Luke's writing, such that he is recording the ongoing ministry of Christ (Acts 1:1); or the unfolding mission from Jew, Samaritan to Gentile; or the power of the Spirit in service (Acts 1:8). It is likely that Luke does not have any theological intention other than to simply describe events as a witness. Where intentions are not directly stated we must not assume them.

It is also said that we must interpret Luke by Luke alone and not use Paul's definition of Spirit baptism to interpret Acts. While this is true exegetical procedure, it is not true that we can find a meaning in Luke that is contrary to the rest of scripture. If this was the case then we would not hold to the *inerrancy of scripture*. After all is said, Paul and Luke ought to agree.

Doctrines From Acts

In the book of Acts, the *baptism in the Spirit* is sometimes called being *filled with the Spirit*. The term "filled with the Spirit" may refer to Spirit baptism, but can also refer to manifestations (*charisma*) after salvation. Several disciples in Acts were said to be *filled with the Holy Spirit* as this or that sign followed. This is normal Christian life (Acts 4:31), after the initial baptism.

Modern Pentecostals have often taken two doctrines from the book of Acts that are not found anywhere else in the Bible and are questionable within Acts itself. One of these is that the baptism *in, of, by or with* the Holy Spirit is a second baptism received sometime after new birth and commonly after some special period of consecration.

The other doctrine is known as "initial evidence", meaning that *speaking in other tongues* is the initial evidence that one has received the baptism of the Spirit. This means that one who speaks in tongues has received the baptism, no matter their lifestyle and one who does not speak in tongues has not received the baptism, no matter what powers of the Spirit are seen in them for the benefit of the kingdom of God.

We will not spend time on this second doctrine. William Seymour, head pastor at Azusa Street in 1906, did not believe it, neither did Dowie. It was the methodology of Charles Parham. Seymour said that the initial evidence is love, God's love and we agree with Seymour (Rom 5:5). Evidence of Spirit baptism is empowerment to sonship, faith, love and transformed life. Other manifestations, including tongues and all *charisma*, follow as the Spirit wills.

Whereas tongues is often mentioned in Acts as one of the signs, it is often not mentioned. If Luke meant to teach that tongues was the initial evidence he would have mentioned it in each case, including the 3,000 in Acts 2, the 2,000 in Acts 5, those *added daily*, the Samaritans, the Ethiopian eunuch, Paul, the Jewish priests, Lydia, the jailer, etc. Pentecostal theology rests on just a few cases.

Albert Simpson of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA) was a Christ-centred forerunner of the AOG and Four Square Gospels movements. Wikipedia states:

There eventually developed a severe division within the C&MA organization over "the initial evidence doctrine" within Pentecostalism. While Simpson and the C&MA wholeheartedly embraced the filling of the Holy Spirit and all the spiritual gifts, including tongues, they could not embrace the position that only tongues would be the initial evidence for that Baptism experience. This brought about the eventual emergence of the C&MA as a distinct denomination.

Second Baptism

Pentecostals traditionally hold to Acts 2, Acts 8, Acts 9, Acts 10 and Acts 19 as their proof texts for Spirit baptism as a second experience after salvation. We have seen already that Acts 2 was not a second baptism for the disciples, but it was their new birth. They received the new birth and were Spirit filled in one go. We will leave Acts 8 until last, because it is not so simple.

Acts 9 speaks of Paul's conversion. It is not stated that Paul spoke in tongues then, but we know from his letter to Corinth that he did speak in tongues. The Lord arrested Paul on the road to Damascus and sent him on to wait for Ananias. There is no record that Paul was saved in his first encounter. When Ananias laid hands on Paul he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

We know many people whose salvation resembles this. First they had a vision, later they heard the gospel and were saved. This has happened to many Muslims we know. Unfortunately Paul's fasting for three days (in a state of shock) is used as a precondition for Spirit baptism. This is an example of methodology being made from people's experiences.

Some say Paul was saved in his first encounter because he called Jesus *Lord*. Rom 10:9 (*confessing that Jesus is Lord for salvation*) is speaking of the faith that comes through Spirit baptism. Many call Jesus *Lord* for many years before they receive salvation.

Every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord, but will not be saved (Phil 2:10-11). "Why call Me Lord and do not the things that I say. Not everyone who says *Lord, Lord*, shall enter the kingdom, but those who do the will of the Father." (Luke 6:46, Matt 7:21). Here Jesus is preaching law, showing all that they were condemned by it, but we also see that calling Jesus *Lord* does not make us a Christian, unless we are Spirit filled.

In Acts 10, Cornelius and his household also received the new birth and infilling of the Spirit in one hit. No one was surprised that this happened. They were only surprised it happened to Gentiles. Some said Cornelius was saved when the angel visited him and received the second touch when Peter preached. Angels visited many people in the Old Testament and they were not born again. The new birth is receiving the indwelling Spirit. Angels do not preach the gospel: we do.

In Acts 19:2, Paul asked the disciples in Ephesus, "Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?". It is presumption to read into Paul's question a second baptism theme. Paul may have been inquiring if they had a nominal faith only. Or, he may have been enquiring whether they were disciples of Jesus, i.e. if they had heard the gospel. There were many disciples who believed many things.

The situation in Ephesus was this: Apollos had been there and gained some disciples, but he did not know the gospel. He "knew only the baptism of John" (Acts 18:25). Maybe he had heard John, but then travelled afar before hearing of Jesus, the resurrection and Pentecost. So when Paul questioned the disciples, they also knew only the baptism of John. They were not Christian disciples.

When Priscilla and Aquila met Apollos they instructed him and from that time Apollos “preached Christ”, proving from the scriptures He is the Son of God. Then when Paul came and found Apollos’ disciples he preached Christ to them and baptizing them in the name of Jesus, they were filled with the Holy Spirit. So these also received new birth and Spirit filling in one hit.

This leaves Acts 8, the only passage in the whole of scripture where the second baptism *could* be taken as *one among many* possible interpretations.

Does Acts 8 teach a second baptism? The events go like this. Many, at a city in Samaria, had given heed to Simon the sorcerer for the many great signs that he did. When they heard Phillip preach Christ and saw the greater signs that he did, they switched their allegiance to Phillip, believed the gospel and were baptized.

But then Peter and James came down from Jerusalem and, at this time, still the Holy Spirit had come upon none of the converts in Samaria. Peter and James laid hands on them and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. There were evidently some manifestations involved because Simon could see that through the apostle’s hands the Spirit was given.

So how do we interpret this? One possible scenario is that Spirit baptism is a second experience received sometime after new birth/salvation. Another possible scenario is that the converts were not born again until they had hands laid on them.

The passage does not make any statements about our question. Luke is merely reporting. It does appear to us though that the converts in Acts 8 were not born again until James and Peter laid hands on them. In Acts 2:38 Peter told the crowd, “Repent, be baptized and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

We can take the first two steps in this humanly. We can repent (believe the gospel) and be baptized without yet being born again. Many have done so. To repent is to change the mind and obey God’s word. To be baptized is also an act of obedience, or at least interest, sometimes done before people are born again. These are good, but are not in themselves new birth.

To receive the Holy Spirit and new birth is an act of God. Reception of the Spirit is not automatic to water baptism or water sprinkling, as Roman Catholicism might believe, or automatic with confession of Christ, as Evangelical/Pentecostals might believe. The question about Samaria is was their faith before the apostles came down just mental ascent, or was it through receiving the Spirit in new birth.

There is a mystery in new birth that cannot be taken away by human evangelical tradition. “The wind blows where it listeth (wills). You can hear the sound it makes, but cannot tell where it came from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” (John 3:8). We follow what the Holy Spirit does. We do not make methodologies out of what He does.

A theology of a *second* experience may arise because our theology of the *first* is not biblical. New birth is not “accepting Christ”, though it involves acceptance. It is the renewing of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). People are not saved by mental ascent, or by evangelical initiations such as water baptism or the “sinner’s prayer”. They may do these things and then after that come to a genuine inner faith. This is when they are truly saved.

Probably, not all the 3,000 on the Day of Pentecost went onto salvation. Simon the sorcerer believed and was baptized, but his heart had not changed. The text in Acts 8 at least shows this: Simon was not born again.

Some have said that God kept back His Spirit in Samaria until James and Peter came down. This was the first time that non-Jews had come into the church. It is claimed that God wanted to make sure that there was no schism and that they united under one apostleship, so that Jerusalem/Samaritan churches would not form by racial identity. This idea may hold weight, but again Luke did not say this.

We do not believe however, that any doctrine of the laying on of hands, or *apostolic succession*, is taught here about the reception of the Spirit. God gives the Spirit through the gospel of Jesus Christ. How He does that will always vary and is up to Him. The key to faith is not Peter. It is the finished work of Christ.

Our conclusion is that there is only one passage in the scripture where baptism in the Spirit may be interpreted as a second experience after salvation (as one of several possible interpretations) and that this is not a basis upon which to formulate a major doctrine.

Paul's Epistles

Paul is very articulate in his doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We will survey the main passages, starting with Romans 6.

Romans 6

...How shall we who are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Do you not know, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him in baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should also walk in newness of life. (Rom 6:2-4).

This is not speaking of water baptism. Water baptism is only the outward symbol. Paul is speaking of Christian baptism, Spirit baptism into Christ, which changes our inner nature and makes us Christians. In Romans 6 Paul speaks of our new birth/salvation as a baptism into Christ. *Baptism* is used to show that our salvation is a total submersion into Christ and a whole new creation.

We know that Paul is not speaking of water baptism here, because water is not able to put to death the old nature and renew the inner man. Rom 6:6 says that in this baptism the body of sin is destroyed. This has to be Spirit baptism. The baptism Paul describes destroys the power of sin and raises the believer up into new life. This is the "one baptism" of the Christian faith (Eph 4:5).

Some have taught that Romans 6 is speaking of a *second work* of sanctification after salvation. Such a thing is not apparent in Paul's teaching. It is by salvation, by being put into Christ, that the power of sin is destroyed.

Pentecostalism has clouded our understanding on Romans 6. Because we have seen Spirit baptism as *after* new birth, we have not seen Romans 6 as Spirit baptism, but have seen it as water baptism connected to new birth. For this reason we have had to disconnect water baptism from Spirit baptism, though the scripture never does this. In all of Paul's epistles there is a consistency. He taught that Spirit baptism is initiatory. It is our identification with Christ by the work of the Spirit in new birth.

Romans 8

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

This is baptism into Jesus Christ. The *law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus* means that we are raised up with Christ into newness of life. It is Christ in you, as you are baptized into Christ by faith. The eyes

are opened to sin and faith breaks its power. It is called a law, because Christ's life breaks sin's power. "For sin shall not have dominion over you, because you are not under law, but under grace." (Rom 6:14).

- (b) But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. (Rom 8:9).

Paul states here that to be born of God is to have the Spirit of God dwell in us. If one does not have the Spirit of God then he is not a Christian. This shows again what the new birth is. It is being indwelt by the Holy Spirit. It is receiving the Spirit.

We should not confuse becoming a Christian with a traditional ceremony for membership, or mental ascent to the correct beliefs, or giving our life to Christ. The Bible states being a Christian is receiving the Holy Spirit. Some have said that a born again Christian has the Spirit, but not the fullness of the Spirit. The Bible does not speak of the Spirit being given in instalments.

- (c) For as many as are led by the Spirit, these are the sons of God. (Rom 8:14).

The sons of God are those baptized in the Spirit. We cannot be led by the Spirit within, *the inner witness*, unless we are filled with the Spirit in baptism.

Some have claimed that the emphasis in the Greek here denotes *mature sons*, meaning that Paul spoke of different levels of sonship, one of merely saved people and the other of people who had a greater experience of the Spirit, or entered a *deeper life*. This is not Paul's mind at all.

Paul is speaking here about normal Christian sonship, by new birth. This sense of maturity in Paul's teaching is seen in Galatians 4, where a comparison is made between mature sons and Old Covenant infancy. When faith comes we pass from shadow (religion, rudiment, legalism, type) into the mature, perfect, complete, fulfilment and substance of Christ.

The coming of the Spirit, the baptism in the Spirit, matures (fulfils) the Old Covenant shadows and makes us sons of God in Christ Jesus. Paul taught that this occurs by faith alone, not by *deeper life exercises*.

This verse also states how we know a child of God: by the fruit of repentance. This is what it means to "be led by the Spirit": the fruit which the Spirit produces when leading us. This statement is Paul's "initial evidence" statement: how we know we are in Christ. John speaks of similar "initial evidence" throughout his first epistle. (1 John 2:6).

Fruit does not take long to appear. It is not as some trees that take years. This is the fruit of the Spirit, of Jesus. The fruit of Christ is seen as soon as Christ lives in us. The fruit has already been prepared and matured by Christ's work and blood. *Fruit* is our *initial* evidence. But it also continues and we grow with patience. He is the Vine, which we partake of by faith, grafted in by the Spirit (John 15:5). This describes Spirit baptism.

- (d) The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. (Rom 8:16).

Here is the inner witness of the Spirit, without which no one is a Christian. It is essential that one comes into this full assurance of the inner witness of Christ and the Spirit of God. This is faith. Faith is the initial evidence to our own hearts of the new birth and of the baptism in the Spirit. No one can tell us that we are born again because we have prayed a prayer. We know only by the full inner witness of the faith of the Son of God.

1 Cor 12:13

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

Here we have a very clear definition from Paul of Spirit baptism. Paul says that Spirit baptism is being baptized into Christ. That is, it is initiatory, or salvation/new birth. And he says we have all been made to drink of one Spirit. This is the drink that Jesus spoke of in John 4, 6 and 7. It is partaking of Christ, by the Spirit, through faith.

Pentecostals have worked this text to say the exact opposite to Paul's intention. Some have taught that there are *two baptisms*. First, the Spirit baptizes us in Christ, which is salvation. Then, Christ baptizes us into the Spirit, which is empowerment for service. They claim there are two baptizers: the Spirit and then Christ.

This teaching divides the body into two parts: those members who have the second baptism and those who do not. This divisiveness is a disservice to Christianity, but on the positive side the motive has been to rebuke lukewarmness. Paul's intention in 1 Cor 12:13 was opposite to disunity. He said this to show that we are all united in one body and have the same baptism.

There are not two faiths: one towards Christ and the second towards the Holy Spirit. There is one baptism, one faith and one body. This is what Paul was saying to the Corinthians; "You are not divided according to your personal spiritual prowess, but are one body through the merits of one sanctification and one Spirit in Christ. Christ is your spirituality, not your personal level."

This teaching of two baptisms has no biblical basis. Neither James, Peter, John nor Jude spoke of a second baptism. This text in 1 Cor 12:13 is not teaching that the Spirit baptizes us into Christ, as merely a first baptism. The Greek preposition *en* means *with, in, through* or *by* and refers to Jesus Christ as the baptizer, just as John the Baptist said.

This means that *by, with, through* or *in* one Spirit, Christ baptizes us into His body and into Himself. By submerging us into the Spirit, just as Jesus said in John 3:5, Jesus baptizes us into the trinity and fills us with the Spirit. There is only one baptism. Nowhere in the Bible does it say that the Spirit baptizes us. *There is one baptizer*, the Lord Jesus Christ: *Lord* meaning that He bestows the Holy Spirit on whom the Father wills.

Galatians 3

That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. (Gal 3:14).

Paul is speaking of the promise of the Father, made through the Old Covenant prophets. The Father promised the Spirit. This promise is fulfilled through Christ. We receive faith from God, whereby we can be partakers of the Holy Spirit through grace. Paul is saying that the promise of the gift of the Spirit made in Isaiah, Jeremiah and Joel, is fulfilled through new birth.

For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek...(Gal 3:26-28).

Here again, we see the unity theme of Paul. There is one baptism, of which all in Christ are partakers. Paul says that this is a baptism into Christ, salvation. Since the Spirit is *the Spirit of Christ*, Jesus baptizes us into Himself and His body through the Spirit.

This is Spirit baptism. Christ through the Spirit baptizes you into His life, into Himself, into the Godhead. This is the only baptism in the writings of Paul. It just means that the Spirit is on earth, through whom Christ heads His body.

Ephesians

- (a) ...in whom also, after you believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. (Eph 1:13).

In other translations the word is *having*, not *after*. "Having believed, you were sealed...". The sense of Paul is plain, that through faith we receive the Spirit, who was promised by the Father, who seals us in Christ. The whole reason we receive the Spirit in new birth is to seal us in faith. Sealing is not a second experience. When we are born again, we are sealed in Christ by the Spirit.

- (b) And be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs and making melody in your heart to our Lord Jesus Christ. (Eph 5:18-19).

The term "be filled with the Spirit" means *with, by or through* the Spirit who is in us. It means to "allow Jesus to fill you with the right attitudes and graces through the means of the Spirit". According to the Greek it is not the Spirit you are being filled with here, but by the means of the Spirit.

The idea of *refilling*, or *fresh anointings*, is not in this verse. There is one filling at new birth. In Acts some disciples were said to be *filled with the Spirit* at various times. This means filled with boldness, power, faith, etc, through the Spirit who was already in them by new birth. It is speaking of a sovereign manifestation of the *charisma* of Christ. The Greek is not speaking of a fresh infilling of the Spirit through works, but of grace; "Great grace was upon them..." (Acts 4:33).

Col 3:15-17 is a parallel passage to Eph 5:18-19. We are exhorted to be filled with the right Christian attitudes and graces by attention to teaching, admonishment, psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, with grace in our hearts to the Lord. This means that we can be filled with wrong attitudes through the aggravations of the day, or be filled with thanksgiving by the power of the Spirit within. We have the choice.

Philippians 4:6-8 tells us the same thing. Rather than anxiety, we should pray and then let peace rule our hearts, with thanksgiving and think on those things which are pure and of good report. This is what we should be filled with, by means of the Spirit.

As for "filled" as used by Luke (Luke/Acts), one author describes a common usage, "sudden, sovereign, unexpected, overwhelming, incident-orientated acts of enablement; undefined as to duration, lasting as long as its purpose and situation demand". This is supernatural grace: *charisma*.

That He might grant that you be strengthened with might, by (*with, in, through*) His Spirit in the inner man. (Eph 3:16).

Colossians

- (a) Completeness.

Paul wrote Colossians to put to rest any notion of *subsequence*, the need to add to what Christ did. Paul starts by highlighting the absolute supremacy of Christ. Christ is the *firstborn* (meaning that He has supremacy). There can be no magic, no power and no angel that can work against him. He is Creator and is over all principalities and powers.

He then shows that the fullness of the Godhead is in Christ. There is nothing of God lacking in Him. This means that once we have Jesus we also have the Father and the Spirit. They are one in Christ. We do not receive God in instalments.

The clincher is “and you are complete in Him.” (Col 2:10). “For in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily (in His body – the church). And you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principalities and powers.” (Col 2:9-10).

We cannot have Jesus Christ in us and lack sanctification or lack power. He who is sanctification and who is power resides within the believer. This does not mean that we control His power, but it does mean that it is in us. He brings it forth, according to the will of the Spirit, which is His will.

Then Paul warns against human philosophy. This means any human idea that seeks to add to Christ, rather than rest in Christ and His sufficiency (Col 2:16-23). He said we must hold to the Head, not to doctrine about what will perfect us, or enlarge us, or give us a greater access in faith, or enable us to overcome Satan, “every wind of doctrine”. The Head is Christ. Just hold the Head.

Once we receive Christ we receive His fullness. We do not go onto to different levels, or go deeper afterward. All these are winds of doctrine. “Of Christ’s fullness have we all received and grace for grace.” (John 1:16).

In all Paul’s epistles he assumes and teaches that when we receive Christ we receive the Spirit and all that is Christ. There is growth in understanding that and living in it, but not by accessing further levels by works. This is orthodox Christian teaching. There is no doctrine of subsequence or second baptism in Paul’s epistles.

(b) Christian Baptism

In whom also you are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also you are raised with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who has raised Him from the dead. (Col 2:11-12).

This again is Paul’s description of Spirit baptism. This is not water baptism. Here the Spirit operates by giving us faith, as we are submerged into Him. This passage shows the following:

1. That the circumcision of the heart is that which takes away the heart of stone and removes the sinful nature.
2. That “the putting off of the sins of the flesh” (sanctification) is described as new birth and not as a progressive sanctification.
3. That through a baptism in the Spirit our old man is crucified and buried. The old sinful nature, “the body of sin is destroyed”, in baptism (Rom 6:6).
4. That new birth is receiving the faith that God gives in His divine operation.
5. That new birth is Spirit baptism.

One Baptism

There is one body and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father over all and in you all. (Eph 4:4-6).

Here the scripture states there is one baptism, which is initiatory baptism, i.e. baptism into Christ and His body in salvation or new birth. This is not speaking about water baptism, for that does not place us in the body, or give us the one faith, but is only symbolic of faith.

It is speaking about real baptism, the baptism of Christ in the Spirit, which brings us into the one faith, into the one body. Christians should be water baptized, as a testimony to the gospel and obedience to Christ's command. We are not going into the value of sacraments, whether the Spirit is given in and through the sacrament. That requires too much discussion. The point is that new birth is the receiving of the Spirit through grace.

Hebrews 6

Hebrews 6 speaks of the *doctrine of baptisms*, meaning more than one baptism. Hebrews 6 is not speaking of Christian baptism though. It uses a Greek word not used for Christian baptism. The only other times this word is used are in Heb 9:10 and Mark 7:4, which both apply to Jewish ceremonial washings. Some Bible translations use the term *washings* in Heb 6:2, such as Weymouth, "teaching about ceremonial washings".

Hebrews 6 is speaking of the Old Covenant foundational lessons or doctrines, the shadow, from which we must move on, into faith in Christ. Heb 6:1-2 is telling the Hebrews to go on into perfection, meaning the substance of Christ, who is the perfection of the Old Covenant shadow and the fulfilment of the Old Covenant beginning or rudimentary principles.

The author is telling the Hebrews not to go back into the Old Covenant. This is the message of Hebrews and is the context of our passage here. "Baptisms" in Heb 6:2 refers to Old Covenant washings. It does not refer to Christian baptism. All the doctrines in Heb 6:1-2 refer to the foundational doctrines of the Old Covenant which point to Christ and have their perfection in Him. (See F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on Hebrews.*)

As David Guzik (available on the Internet) notes, "What is distinctively *Christian* about this list? Where is the specific mention of Jesus or salvation by grace alone? Can you believe or practice these things and not be a follower of Jesus Christ, believing Him to be the Messiah?". Yes, certainly. All synagogues believed and practiced these teachings.

Repentance from dead works (paganism) and *faith toward God* was the call of all the prophets. *Laying on of hands* was a practice of the priest. Along with *washings*, it depicted the baptism that Jesus would give. The *resurrection* and *eternal judgement* were taught by the prophet Daniel. All these rudimentary doctrines find their fulfilment in Jesus Christ.

We are not to deny these doctrines. They are foundational to Christianity. The author of Hebrews is warning Jewish believers not to go back to the rituals that shadow their fulfilment. There is no substance or reality in the symbols. Paul often warned believers to leave behind the rudimentary (lit., *first, foundational*) principles and embrace the substance of faith.

Let no man judge you in meat or drink, or in respect of a holy day, or the Sabbath, which are a shadow of things to come. But the body (*substance of the lesson*) is Christ...Wherefore if you be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world (first principle teachings), why are you subject to them...? (Col 2:16-17, 20).

The Bible teaches that there is only one Christian baptism, which is Christ the completion and perfection of all. This is the baptism that we must have. Focusing on water or sacrament, or on doctrines of subsequence, is not *looking unto Jesus*, who fulfilled the law and the prophets. Christianity is about the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work.

The Historical Scene

In this section we look at the development of the teaching of Spirit baptism in recent church history. We start by showing the established Christian belief before the ministry of John Wesley and then

trace the evolution of the doctrine through 19th Century revivalism. Some of these people/groups are mentioned in other chapters. Here we develop the relevant issues.

The Reformation set many truths of the gospel in order. Chief among these was the finished work of Christ. Luther reacted against the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church of his day, who demanded works and money for forgiveness of sins. The cry of Luther was “grace only, faith only, scripture only and the blood of Jesus only”. Charles Wesley’s hymns were often the same. They spoke of a sovereign God who births us and breaks the power of sin by the blood of Jesus alone, “His blood availed for me!”.

Calvin

In introducing the Reformed teaching on Spirit baptism we wish to say some things about John Calvin in general. Calvin further organised the Reformation in terms of writing and training revivalists and bringing the teachings to government and society through the establishment of democratic principles. He also developed Luther’s ideas on education which have blessed millions of people in many nations.

Calvin’s work helped spread principles on faith, government, education, theology, revival and church life. His influence helped bring the gospel to multitudes, establish the gospel in many nations, set them free from Catholic tyranny and bring about the *First* and *Second Awakenings* in America, establishing it as a Christian nation. His Reformed principles in many denominations were the foundation of prosperity in modern nations.

His ideas were the root of the American Revolution, constitution and modern educational system. (See John McNeill in *The History and Character of Calvinism*.) Ephraim Emerton, Harvard University, said, “There is no fact worth impressing more on modern liberal churches than this: that they have come to be what they are through a development out of the Calvinism they are only too ready to undervalue and to despise.” (*Evening Post*, 10th July 1909).

Modernist thinking has moved us away from Reformed ideas. Part of this is for good reason, as Calvinism and Puritanism have often portrayed legalism and lack of compassion. But modernist thinking is built on humanism, with a pragmatism that has betrayed God’s values and led us into a secularist society. We have also adopted some misinformed views about the past and not understood the history of the fruits that we still enjoy.

One common view is that Calvin killed heretics. Calvin was involved with the death of the heretic Michael Servetus, burnt by order of the Geneva parliament, but this is the only case. Calvin tried to save Servetus, travelling to visit him in prison. He tried repeatedly to get the parliament to commute death by burning to a more humane execution. In the end there was nothing that Calvin could do to prevent this burning.

How serious Servetus’ threat was, or the extent of Calvin’s error, we do not go into here. The incident helped awaken Protestant distaste of severe punishments. The Geneva parliament did execute others. Issues such as this need to be looked at in the context of the period, the grave dangers they faced, the thousands the Catholics were killing and the civil rebellions breaking out in different parts of the continent.

Today we have liberal democracy. We have the *freedom* to have heresy and all sorts of foul practices promoted in our classrooms, media and Internet. Homosexuality, abortion, atheism, paedophilia and all forms of ungodliness are at times openly encouraged, destroying millions of lives. This raises the issue about what real freedom is and how much government is supposed to regulate.

Post Reformation

After the Reformation the accepted view for most leaders continued to be that Spirit baptism was the new birth and that it also includes sanctification. John Owen, John Bunyan, George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, William Law, are among many examples of those who taught this.

They only taught that this new birth was not just confessing religion. They claimed it was a miracle of God and one had to be sure that one did not just have a nominal faith and lack the power of the Spirit through the gospel. They earnestly sought to ensure that people had the genuine new birth.

Owen describes salvation, "The renewing of the Holy Spirit, which He shed on us richly through Jesus...and this He does in the renovation of our natures, by the washing of regeneration, wherein we are purged from our sins and sanctified to God." (*The Work of John Owen, The Holy Spirit Vol. III.*).

On a commentary on Acts 19 George Whitefield said, "This is the Holy Ghost, who must move on the faces of our souls; this power of the Most High, must come upon us and we must be baptized with his baptism and refining fire, before we can be true members of Christ's mystical body."

It was not until John Wesley that this view in modern Christendom began to change.

John Wesley

John Wesley was born about 200 years after the Reformation. He began in High Anglican holiness traditions which followed Catholic principles of works without the gospel. Later he was saved and he then had respect for the Reformed faith, but did stray from it in a few of the main areas:

1. The need for a second work of grace, sanctification, after conversion.
2. After sanctification, a work towards Christian perfection through the application of daily disciplines which he drew from his previous holiness traditions.
3. He held to Arminianism, though not in the form in which it is held today by many.

Wesley believed that the new birth was a sovereign act of God and could not be achieved by any act of man. He believed that God did it entirely in His own time and as a creative act. This places his theology quite apart from modern Arminianism.

But Wesley also developed the idea of *subsequence*, meaning that the new birth was not enough and that the Christian needed something more than the new birth to live a victorious life in Christ. There were several influences in Wesley's life which contributed to his outlook. One of these was Pietism, but first we will see how Wesley's and Whitefield's theology conflicted.

George Whitefield

George Whitefield was the first founder of Methodism and initially the leading preacher. Wesley was at first not a strong preacher, but Whitefield encouraged him. When Whitefield went to America he left Wesley in charge of his various preaching stations, with instructions not to preach Arminianism or *second blessing*.

Whitefield was the preacher who began the outdoor revivals in England and was the main preacher to influence America for Christ in the *First Awakening*. He has been called the greatest preacher of the modern era. Many would fall down in his meetings under the conviction of the Holy Spirit.

Some historical details are not found in recent works about the era. A book called *George Whitefield Vol. 2* by Arnold Dallimore has the details, as do older publications. Whitefield moved in the truth of Reformed teachings and saw God move in significant nation changing revivals.

Pietism

Wesley's thinking came in part from Pietism, a Christian movement in Europe starting in the 17th Century. Pietism was a very helpful Christian movement, but in some respects its thinking was humanistic, or similar to Catholic ideas. Some denied that Christ was enough for sanctification and felt they must add something else.

This may take away from the gospel and reduce the significance of the new birth and the power of Christ within the believer. The result is that the believer looks for something else rather than attending to real gospel truths.

This can result in an unbiblical approach to spiritual warfare or an endless search for perfection, rather than a simple resting in the finished work of Christ. It puts the believer on a never ending quest to arrive somewhere, whether in holiness or spiritual satisfaction. This promotes human tradition as the means and ultimately frustrates the believer because they never get there.

Influences of Pietism

Pietism existed in Europe and in Britain and was a great blessing to Christianity as a whole, through men and movements such as George Fox and the early Quakers. But when Pietism moved away from its Reformed base it led to problems.

Some forms of Pietism have promoted separatism: the idea that natural occupations are not worthy of spiritual people. The idea that Christ is coming soon meant to some people that we should abandon "nation building". Their view on personal holiness, obtained through what we do not do (separation), stemmed in part from the Catholic monastery concepts.

Pietism contributed a lot to the church, emphasising the essentialness of the new birth, of a personal faith and of the Holy Spirit and not just correct doctrine or catechism. Pietists also emphasised world missions. Founders of Pietism such as A. Franke and Jakob Spener had strong Christian faith.

But some of the ways of Pietism were also wrong, in so far that they claimed that human experience, knowledge, or culture can add to the word of God. These claims appear today in pastoral counselling, mission and teaching theories. Also, claiming that we are made holy by our personal devotion or separation contributed to a reduction in the church's influence in public life.

The over emphasis on humanity, the importance of the individual's feelings and views, lent support to a "privatisation of truth". In other words each person believes what is right in their own eyes. This was also encouraged by the secular individualism of the Renaissance, an influence on Pietism. So instead of the cold academic faith that they stood against, Pietism can make personal experience, rather than the scripture, the standard for faith.

A fanatical devotionalism present in some forms of Pietism and Pentecostalism is not dissimilar to early Montanism (2nd and 3rd Centuries), which followed Greek philosophical ideas that the flesh was evil and must be denied. This included, in some quarters, breaking up marriages to pursue celibacy. Montanists also had a false zeal about the Second Coming that led the movement into false prophecy and cultism.

Wesley's "Second Blessing"

From Pietism and from his Catholic holiness teachings in the High Anglican church, Wesley developed the idea that we must seek and add something to new birth in Christ to be sanctified. He called his doctrine of *subsequence* the *second blessing*. He taught that believers need a second experience after salvation.

According to Wesley the second blessing was for the purpose of sanctification. He said that the new birth in Christ was not enough to sanctify a believer. They needed a further work of grace within the soul to deal with sin in their life. Wesley felt this need in his personal life after his salvation experience. He also felt that this was the answer to those in the church who thought they were born again, but who still lived in sin.

Sinless Perfection

Wesley believed in the doctrine of *sinless perfection*: that through devotional exercises Christians could work their way to a progress in spirituality where their sanctification was complete. This is to be achieved through a strict observance of various spiritual disciplines, such as daily devotions, specific daily times for Bible reading, prayer or fasting and by fulfilling various rules related to mature religious life.

The Keswick movement in England later also taught this pursuit of perfection by devotional discipline. Books by Myer Pearlman *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible* and *Pursuit of Holiness* by Jerry Bridges followed this thought.

Andrew Murray also taught these ideas in part, mixing his Reformed heritage with the Keswick movement. Watchman Nee taught Keswick doctrine, teaching that we must attain to something that Christ had not yet given us through His finished work. We will talk about this more later and see how God set Hudson Taylor free from this teaching.

These teachings come about because people do not know who they are in Christ and are not well founded in the salvation doctrines of Christ. They are then susceptible to being led astray and this brings them into captivity to human tradition. This is the reason that Paul was so adamant in Galatians and Colossians concerning our completeness in Christ.

The Keswick doctrine is called “progressive-sanctification” and is often a collection of devotional exercises to help the believer become more and more holy. The doctrine departs from the Reformed heritage by making salvation a two tier experience:

1. Justification, the forgiveness of sin.
2. Sanctification, deliverance from the power of sin.

The Bible teaches that these both occur at salvation. The new birth deals with both the forgiveness and the power of sin, by giving us a new nature. This is the whole point of Paul’s teaching in Romans 6. Catholics, Pietists and Methodists departed from biblical faith in this way, in so far as they promoted legalism as a means of holiness, rather than seeing holiness as the fruit of new life.

Revivalism

These teachings also arise because some leaders use them to promote “revivalism”. *Revivalism* can sometimes be seen as the promise to believers that they yet lack something and that they can get it at the next revival. It can then be used as a motivational tool for attracting members.

We believe in revival which is a sovereign work of grace, not for the born again believer, but for the lost. But we do not believe in *revivalism*, as we use the term here, which is stirring up the emotions of Christians, teaching them that there is something that they do not have and must come to receive. This is why some preachers will say we are not complete, that we need deliverance, or something else.

The Keswick movement, though Reformed in its background, joined with Wesleyan type practice in order to promote a type of revivalism among Christians. In as much that they promoted revivals to

lead many to the gospel and others to missions, this is good, but the doctrines of perfectionism are harmful to Christian faith.

We do believe that church attendance is always important and we do believe that believers need to grow in grace. But when we do have fellowship we need to hear the truth about the gospel. Paul did not mention revival for Christians in any of his epistles. He said we should walk in the love of Christ and be established and grounded in His truth.

Revival means to revive from death. It is for those dead in trespasses and sin. The New Testament speaks twice of revival. Once when Christ rose from the dead and once when Paul said "sin revived and I died". It was an Old Testament concept, for when God's people were not born again and kept going into bondage to sin. If Christians keep doing this they are not born again.

John Fletcher

John Fletcher was John Wesley's successor. Some significant changes were encouraged by Fletcher that shaped much of modern Evangelicalism and Pentecostalism. Fletcher introduced two new ideas. One was that he called the *second blessing* that Wesley spoke of *the baptism in the Holy Spirit*.

By this he meant that a Christian can be born again, without having power for sanctification and still be in the clutches of sin. According to this view, the believer's failure is because he does not have the Holy Spirit. When he receives the Holy Spirit after salvation, he is then delivered from sin, according to Fletcher.

The second idea that Fletcher introduced is called *Dispensationalism*. This was early Dispensationalism, somewhat different to the form popular today. Fletcher taught that history since creation is divided up into three dispensations. The Old Testament era was the dispensation of the Father, the life of Christ on earth was the dispensation of the Son and the church age is the dispensation of the Holy Spirit.

These two ideas together reshaped modern theology among normal Christian believers. Because we are told that we need to seek for the Spirit after salvation and because we are now in the dispensation of the Spirit, everything in theology is about two things, i.e. reaching out for what we do not have and the things of the spirit realm. The preoccupation of some in the church shifted to these two areas and away from *finished work* truth.

This was at the beginning of the 19th Century. Look through many of the commentaries written since then and you will see a lot of changes in that period. Satan became emphasised a lot more and human depravity less. Eventually spiritual warfare came to the fore as the solution, rather than a changed nature through grace. These shifts impacted upon all of the doctrines of the Reformation and Westminster Confession.

Not surprisingly John Wesley was against both of these innovations of Fletcher, though Wesley did not effectively prevent Fletcher from introducing them. In a letter written to Joseph Benson (Methodist preacher) in 1771, Wesley said that it would be wise to "abstain from speaking of...Mr. Fletcher's latest discovery".

Wesley continued that Methodists may call *entire sanctification* "receiving the Holy Ghost", but said that "the phrase in that sense is not scriptural and not quite proper; for they all received the Holy Ghost when they were justified". Wesley was concerned that Fletcher was teaching that normal Christians did not have the Spirit.

Here is the Pentecostal conundrum. Did we receive the Holy Spirit when we were born again and then later receive Him again in a different way? Is this a theology born out of people's experiences, or can it be defended in scripture? Many have tried to defend this in scripture, wanting to avoid biblical error,

spiritual elitism and spiritual lukewarmness. To date this attempt has not been successful. But neither is it a simple matter for any Bible scholar.

By the second half of the 19th Century, preachers such as Finney, Phoebe Palmer and Dwight Moody and the Keswick movement followed some form of this teaching on *entire sanctification*.

Dispensationalism

Fletcher's Dispensationalism was further developed by John Nelson Darby. Fletcher's idea of three dispensations gave way to Darby's more complex system including seven dispensations, which are held to be represented by the seven days of creation. The number of dispensations is not straight forward. Dispensationalists do not always agree on the number of dispensations, as no passage in scripture directly specifies such a number.

Restorationism

Associated with the new teaching on the baptism in the Holy Spirit and Dispensationalism was the idea of "Restorationism". This is the non-Cessationist version of Dispensationalism, adopted later by Pentecostals. Edward Irving in 1830 in particular followed this view. Restorationism is a twofold idea. First, it holds that since the Reformation God has been restoring truth to the church one part at a time.

This restoration has been in stages. First, He restored justification by Luther. He then restored water baptism through the Anabaptists. He then restored sanctification by Wesley. Then He restored power by the modern Pentecostals. Apparently Luther had to wait for Wesley to be sanctified and for Azusa Street to receive power, even though through him God turned Europe upside down! Luther taught all these themes, especially sanctification and power in Christ through the Spirit.

Restorationism becomes a cloak for strange teachings. When a teaching appears that does not have historical precedent in the fathers, Restorationism says it comes straight from God. It becomes an excuse for novelty and harmful errors, based on a *spirituality* we claim that our forefathers did not possess. Restorationism is *ahistorical*. It has little place or respect for history.

Outside of Protestant circles, movements such as Mormonism and the Jehovah's Witnesses claim to be restorationist.

End Times

The second idea in Restorationism is the belief that we are now in the very end of the last-days and when God has fully restored all truth, Christ will come. This belief held that the final restoration to the church would be *power*. God would release an avalanche of healing and miracles through His Spirit, the *latter rain*, just before the final harvest.

This last restoration would equip the church for the final world harvest of souls before the Second Coming of Christ. It is clear that this was the conviction of late 19th Century Evangelicals, such as Albert Simpson and John Alexander Dowie. Protestant Restorationism grew out of the Calvinist tradition, which saw the Spirit given for power and not for sanctification (as the Wesleyan tradition saw).

20th Century Pentecostals (AOG and Four Square Gospel) followed Calvinist Restorationism, but added progressive sanctification and later developed a pragmatic form of Arminianism, taken from Phoebe Palmer, who had earlier proclaimed in the holiness movement that the baptism of the Spirit was received by claiming it by faith. This idea was later developed in the *Faith Movement*.

Restorationism was the down fall of Dowie and other healing evangelists of the era, such as William Branham. They both believed that they were Elijah, come to restore all things before the Second

Coming of Christ. Healing evangelists that survived, such as T.L Osborn, were not led astray by eschatological fervour.

Answer to Restorationism

The answer to Restorationism is twofold:

1. In the Reformation and afterwards they had justification, sanctification and the power gifts of the Spirit. These never passed away from the church but were seen in early Quakerism, the Huguenots, George Whitefield, Charles Spurgeon and many others. Dispensationalism and other sectors of Cessationism tried to silence such gifts in the 19th Century, which was one of the reasons for the rise of Pentecostalism, where the Spirit could still move freely.
2. We do not know when Christ will come. Speculations about a final harvest are motivating, but do not have a biblical basis.

Dowie's life had a huge impact on early Pentecostalism. However, he did not believe that tongues were the initial evidence of Spirit baptism and was not in agreement with early Pentecostal leaders such as Charles Parham. William Faupel in his book *Everlasting Gospel* researched the history of this era with an unbiased and thorough approach. Christians should read this book to understand our heritage. It also has a proper historical look at Parham.

When Dowie died, Parham apparently tried to take over the Zion City in Chicago which Dowie established. Parham apparently then tried the same at the *Azusa Street Revival*, which Seymour established. Leaders like F. F. Bosworth, John G. Lake, Gordon Lindsay and T. L. Osborn came from the influence of Dowie. Though they had great healing ministries they did not all emphasise Dowie's Restorationist ideas to the same extent.

American Revivalism

Large Christian camp meetings were held in America in the 1800's. People camped for long periods and heard revivalist preachers from many different denominations. Several preachers would speak at once, in different locations of the large camp grounds. See for example the *Cane Ridge Revival* of 1801.

These camp meetings were often associated with strong emotional responses from those present. Laughing, barking, shaking, falling down and tongues were common experiences through the 100 years before the Azusa Street revival.

Such emotional responses were common in the *First Awakening* also, in Jonathan Edward's time in the 18th Century. Edwards, Whitefield and others did not necessarily associate these with the work of the Holy Spirit. They distinguished between emotional responses, the power of God and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Such manifestations are not a sign of revival. (See Isaac Watts & John Guyse, (eds.) *Jonathan Edwards on Revival*.)

There are two things about these that we need to understand. Emotional responses, even strong strange manifestations, are not the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Emotional responses are not wrong, but we need to know that they are not the Holy Spirit. The soul and spirit of man are capable of many varied and strong religious manifestations, which occur in all religions equally. They are not unique to Christian revivals.

Secondly, we need to neither encourage nor deny emotional responses. They should not be allowed to bring disorder and prevent the preaching of the word of God. They should not be stirred up or promoted. They should not be stopped either. Emotionalism is not wrong and people should be

allowed to express themselves in that way. But emotional responses are not fruit. They do not lead to a change of life. We should not judge revival by whether these types of manifestations are occurring.

Tongues occurred in these camp meetings. Tongues were not new to the Topeka and Azusa Street outpourings. *Pentecost* was a term used throughout the century before. The difference was that before the 20th Century, Christians did not insist on tongues as compulsory *initial evidence*. They *neither resisted nor insisted* on tongues. This is the stance that we should take.

Sanctification to Power

From John Fletcher's day (1729-1785), the baptism of the Spirit began to be seen as a second experience after salvation for the purpose of sanctification, or delivering someone from the power of sin. This idea remained through much of the early revivalism in the Holiness or Methodist side.

Reformed/Calvinist, Congregationalist, Presbyterian and many Baptist churches mostly resisted this view. However through the Keswick Convention, D.L. Moody and Charles Finney many of these groups also accepted *perfectionist revivalism* in the 19th Century, normally terming it "progressive sanctification".

This revivalism took on a more Restorationist flavour and they began to see the Spirit baptism as a baptism of power for service for the last-days, rather than for sanctification. This was especially associated with the changing eschatological view, where a pre-millennial return of Christ was now seen to be at hand.

By the end of the 19th Century the term *baptism in the Spirit* had evolved and come of age for 20th Century new Pentecostalism. It was now defined as a second experience after salvation when one received power by a baptism in the Spirit, the purpose of which was to release the gifts of the Spirit, for a last-days world wide revival, before Jesus returns to reign in Jerusalem for 1,000 years.

Holiness and Methodist style Pentecostalism continued to maintain their view of Wesley's second experience for sanctification and added the baptism in the Spirit for power as a "third blessing", received after sanctification and salvation. An example of this group was the *Fire Baptized Holiness Church* of Benjamin Irwin at the turn of the 20th Century, which had a very big impact in America until Irwin's fall.

Modern Pentecostalism

We can see the "evolution" of *baptism in the Spirit* teaching from the Reformation until today. It was held by Whitefield and the earliest revivalists to be the new birth, as church history before them for the most part had taught it. Then in Wesley's teaching, ideas began to shift towards *second blessing* concepts. Fletcher's Dispensationalism then saw the second blessing in pneumatological terms, as the baptism in the Spirit.

With the influence of Edward Irving's Restorationism, the meaning of the baptism shifted to power associated with the last-days. Finally, the doctrine was joined to an *initial evidence* teaching and 20th Century Pentecostalism was born.

For many, Pentecostalism is Methodist/Pietism that speaks in tongues and holds to a non-Cessationist form of Darby's Dispensationalism, with a dab of pragmatism thrown in. With the animistic superstition and *prosperity gospel* added, we can excuse some conspiracy theorists for thinking that Pentecostalism is a Roman Catholic plan kicked off by the Franciscan priest Francisco Ribera and Edward Irving's *Catholic Apostolic Church*.

We do not hold to this theory, but Pentecostalism is in some sectors appearing like a Counter Reformation movement. It is plain that we need to get back through this baggage to a Christ-centred

charisma. By *Christ-centred* we mean Spirit filled, but by grace through the merits of Christ and not by works/rules/methodology stemming from human traditions.

We do not criticise these things whenever we see them. We often do things because we like to or because that is how our church does it and that is good. We all have practices that are good. It is the *teaching of them as doctrine* that is contrary to the gospel. It is the bondage of them that hurts.

Wesley and Fletcher were not far wrong. Both Wesley's insistence that we need a work of God to be sanctified and Fletcher's insistence that we need the Holy Spirit to be sanctified are correct. The only issues we have are that this work of Spirit filling and sanctification is the new birth work and the work is of grace through faith alone.

So in as much as Wesley was serving God in the gospel so that believers may have a Spirit filled faith and not a nominal faith, then we are for it. And if this is *revival* then we are also for it. All the leading revivalists before Wesley were after one thing: that God might fill His people with the Spirit, to bring them into a genuine new birth and out of a nominal faith. This is the vital ministry and for this we pray, "Lord send forth labourers", preachers of this nature. This is Pentecostal revival.