

"Water and Spirit"

What is the difference between baptism with the Spirit and baptism in water commanded on the day of Pentecost? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Today we're looking about what the Bible says about the baptism that saves.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. God gave us His inspired word so that we might know His will. Rather than trust in feelings or in the words of men, let's turn to Scripture for what we believe. God's word will always lead us to the truth and set us free. We shouldn't settle for anything less than the eternal gospel in God's word. Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you and want to be a part of your life each week.

Jesus said to Nicodemus in John 3 verses 3 to 7, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'"

Being born again requires a birth of both water and the Spirit. You cannot have one without the other. And according to 1 Peter 1:23 and also verse 25, the Spirit causes our new birth through an imperishable seed, "the living and abiding word of God... and this is the word which was preached to you." The water is involved when one is baptized in water as a response to the preaching of the gospel. In baptism we are united with Christ; we are crucified with Him, buried with Him, and raised up with the Lord Jesus to walk in newness of life (Romans 6 verses 3 to 7).

Now this is an important study on water and Spirit; and we offer it free! If you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have free materials on our website www.searchtv.org. You can also see us on YouTube.

We will now worship in song, read from Titus 3:4 to 7, and explore how we are born again by water and the spirit.

Our reading today comes from Paul's letter to Titus chapter 3 verses 4 through 7. And there he'll describe how God saves us.

But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

That's a reading from God's holy word. Let's pray. Father we're thankful that through Your love and Your grace and mercy we can be washed and made new. And we pray Father that we will always love You for it and be willing to do Your will. In Jesus name, Amen.

Titus 3:5 to 7, which we just read, reveals when and how God our Savior saves us. He does this through the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit. He does this to justify us by His grace and to make us heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Now the word washing makes us think of Paul's experience in Acts 22:16. Ananias told him, "Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name." The new birth includes both water and Spirit, not Spirit

alone. Every ancient author who spoke of being born of water and the Spirit recognized that this passage, John 3 verse 5, and Titus 3:5 was speaking of baptism in water. It was not until the 1500s that anyone suggested otherwise. And this is a clear departure from a correct biblical understanding.

Now being baptized in water is emphasized repeatedly in the New Testament. John the Baptizer baptized in water. Mark 1:4 to 5 says that, "John the Baptist (or Baptizer) appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins." John 3:22 to 23 says, "After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He was spending time with them and baptizing. John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and people were coming and were being baptized." Acts 8:36-says that, "As they went along (that's Philip and the eunuch) as they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?" And Acts 8:38 to 39 then it say, "And he (Philip) ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch no longer saw him, but went on his way rejoicing." The baptism of the Eunuch was a baptism in water.

Ananias said to Saul of Tarsus in Acts 22:16, "Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name." Now water is clearly involved in this baptismal washing that causes sin to be washed away. 1 Peter 3:21 speaks of the baptism that saves. And it says, "Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Again, the picture of one of washing away his sins and giving at that time a person a good conscience. Now on each occasion, baptism in water always followed as a response to the preaching of the gospel.

Now the idea of being baptized "with the Holy Spirit" appears five times in the New Testament: John the Baptizer said in Matthew 3 verse 11, "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." He asserts this again in Mark, 1 and verse 8. Where he said, "I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." In Luke 3 and verse 16 John answered and said to the Jews who were asking questions, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

The book of Acts reveals the time when Jesus began baptizing. And how He baptized the apostles with the Holy Spirit. In Acts 1 verse 4 to 5 it says, "Gathering them together, (that is the apostle) He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, 'Which,' He said, 'you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'" Well we see this baptism take place, being fulfillment, this prediction fulfilled on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 verses 1 to 4. It says, "When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance." That's when they received power, that's when they spoke in tongues, and worked many miracles.

The Gentiles were also baptized with the Holy Spirit, but God did this, not to save them, but to convince the Jews that the Gentiles could become Christians. In Acts 11:15 to 18 the bible says, Peter says, "And as I began to speak (this took place before they heard the word and believed), the Holy Spirit fell upon them (that is the household of Cornelius) just as He did upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' Therefore if God gave to them (that is Cornelius and his household) the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?" When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life."

Now if the Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles when Peter began to speak, then the Holy Spirit did not cause their salvation at that point. You see, Acts 11:14 says Cornelius called Peter to be brought to Caesarea, "and he will speak words to you by which you will be saved, you and all your household." Cornelius and his household were not saved until after they heard the gospel, not before. Peter said in Acts 10 and verse 47, "Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?" And in verse 48 he says, "And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." They were baptized in water, a different baptism, and it was for the forgiveness of their sins, just like the people on the day of Pentecost.

So we conclude these things about the baptism with the Holy Spirit. First, John the Baptizer predicted it and contrasted it with his own baptism in water. Second, it was promised by Jesus, as He was discussing the kingdom of God. And third, it was identified by Peter as happening on the day of Pentecost and at Cornelius' house. What happened at Cornelius' house was the same gift. When the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius' house, it reminded Peter of the promise that Jesus had made about baptism with the Holy Spirit. And he concluded that God approved of baptizing Gentiles in water for the forgiveness of their sins as well as Jews.

Now several distinctive things separate the baptism with the Holy Spirit from both John's baptism and baptism into Christ. First, baptism with the Holy Spirit was never commanded. It's not something one can decide to do or to receive. It's accomplished by a direct act of God without any prescribed conditions on the part of the one being baptized. No one in the Scriptures ever prayed to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. And being baptized into Christ, however, is commanded. That is being baptized into Christ through water.

Second, Jesus Himself administered the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Now the apostles couldn't baptize anyone with the Holy Spirit. They couldn't accomplish it by laying on of hands or by prayer. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to the apostles and baptized them with the Spirit. He gave it only to the apostles and to the household of Cornelius. And while we realize that many received miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit by laying on of the apostles' hands, we have no record in Scripture of anyone else being baptized with the Holy Spirit.

Third, the baptism with the Holy Spirit didn't include salvation in the Scriptures. Fact they're never mentioned together. Baptism with the Spirit had a different purpose than the baptism commanded in Acts 2:38. The purpose of the baptism with the Spirit, to the apostle, was to give the power to work miracles that confirmed their message that it was from God. Hebrews 2 verses 3 to 4 says, "How will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His will." Once the message was confirmed, it did not need to be confirmed again and again.

The message confirmed was from the Lord Himself and given to the apostles. The Holy Spirit guided the apostles into all the truth in the first century (John 16:13). If they received all the truth in the first century, then we have no need for some new and different message today. We have all truth from the apostles. The word of God is indeed all-sufficient. 2 Timothy 3:16 to 17 says that, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." We do not need a new message in this century.

Baptism into Christ, that is baptism in water, has a different purpose. 1 Peter 3:21 says that baptism also now saves us. On the day of Pentecost, Peter commanded everyone to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. Forgiveness of sins is a different purpose. Baptism with the Spirit is not the baptism that saves. The baptism with the Spirit was a temporary promise and only fulfilled on two occasions, whereas baptism into Christ was a practice to last until Jesus returns at the end of time. Even in the case of the household of Cornelius, Peter commanded them to be baptized. And of course that would be in water (Acts 10 and verse 48).

Fourth, baptism with the Holy Spirit was connected to men immediately speaking in foreign languages they had not learned. Their speaking in foreign tongues was a miracle. And these languages were not some sort of ecstatic utterances but were discernible languages (Acts 2 verses 5 to 13) mentions them. Many today who imagine they have spoken in tongues differ with the apostles at Pentecost, who spoke actual languages to people from other nations. Acts 2 verses 7 to 8 explains, "And they were amazed and astonished, saying, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?'" Now many today who claim to speak in other languages are speaking more from their own imaginations than an actual language.

Fifth, baptism with the Spirit had no prerequisites. It was a promise to the apostles and revealed to the Jews that Gentiles such as Cornelius could then hear the gospel, repent, and be baptized. However, those who came for baptism into Christ were first required to confess their faith and repent of their sins.

Sixth, while the Lord Jesus Himself baptized with the Spirit (Acts 1 verse 5), Christ appointed men to make disciples and baptize into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28 verse 19). Baptism into the name of the Godhead is certainly different than baptism with the Spirit.

Seventh, baptism with the Spirit had no name attached to it; but baptism into Christ was attached to the phrase "in the name of Jesus Christ." To do things in the name of Jesus Christ means that you are doing it by His authority. The promise of forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus Christ was a promise for all time and for "all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself."

Let's pray together. Oh Heavenly Father we're thankful that You have given to us an opportunity to respond to the gospel. By faith and repentance and baptism into Jesus Christ. And Father we pray that we will do Your will and serve You always. And it is in the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

The apostle Paul in Ephesians 4 verse 5 clearly says there is "one baptism." Now baptism with the Spirit was a baptism promised to the apostles and also given to the household of Cornelius in order to convince the Jews that "God has granted to the Gentiles also repentance that leads to life" (Acts 11:18). That baptism was temporary and therefore couldn't be the one baptism for all time. The repentance and baptism that Peter commanded in the first gospel sermon, however, was universal. Acts 2:38 to 41 says, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself." And with

many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!" So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

When the church began on the day of Pentecost, Peter didn't tell people to say a prayer to be saved. He didn't teach they were saved by faith alone. He didn't teach speaking in tongues brought salvation. He told them to repent and to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins, and they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. He assured them that this was the calling of the word of God for all time in all places. And it was indeed the one baptism all Christians would experience for the forgiveness of sins. Why not answer the call today?

We pray today's study about water and the Spirit has helped you. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now there's also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches in your area at www.searchtv.org. And you can watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry." And be sure to like the programs you watch; this helps spread the program. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, we're not asking for money. We're here to help you draw close to God.

Focus your heart on God by worshiping at church. Everybody needs a church family. And I realize some of you for health reasons cannot attend worship; I'm speaking to those who can attend and haven't been. There's probably a church of Christ that's near you. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. We'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us tell a friend about this program let em know you watch. And God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.