

# a study of the *Holy Spirit*

## Special Study: Holy Spirit Baptism vs. Water Baptism

Many people believe that there are two baptisms today—water baptism and Holy Spirit baptism. They believe water baptism is for those who are not yet "spiritual" enough to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The exact manner in which one receives the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not clearly understood—some say we pray for it, others claim that we must have one to lay hands on us, others contend that it comes during worship.

### 1. Consider Holy Spirit baptism

a. Christ was to administer Holy Spirit baptism (Matthew 3:11).

1. When one reads of the Holy Spirit being given by the laying on of hands (only the Apostles did this), such *is not* the "baptism of the Holy Spirit."
2. Never in Scripture do we read where a person received the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" through the imposition of hands.
3. See John 1:33-34.

b. The baptism of the Great Commission *is not* Holy Spirit baptism.

1. This is determined by reading WHO is to administer this baptism (Matthew 28:19).
2. Who was to do the going? Who was to perform the baptizing?
3. This baptism (Matthew 28:19) had to be WATER baptism; for only Jesus could administer SPIRIT baptism (Matthew 3:11; John 1:33-34).
4. Another reason for believing the baptism of the Great Commission is water baptism is found in the words "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Certainly the Holy Spirit baptism would not be done "in the name of...the Holy Spirit," that is by the authority of the Spirit Himself.

### 2. Consider some differences between water baptism and Holy Spirit baptism.

- a. Water baptism is for "all nations" and is required of "every creature" who is a believer (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16). Holy Spirit baptism WAS NOT for all men (John 14:17).
- b. Water baptism is a command of God (Matthew 28:19; Acts 10:48; 22:16). Holy Spirit baptism was a promise of God to a very few people (Acts 1:2-5).

- c.  Water baptism is an act of obedience, an act of man (Acts 2:38; 22:16; 10:48). Spirit baptism was an act of the Lord, *not* an act of man (Acts 1:5).
  - d.  Water baptism is a condition of salvation to a lost world (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:20, 21). Spirit baptism revealed the gospel, or confirmed it (John 16:13; Hebrews 2:4).
  - e.  Water baptism is administered by man, by those doing the teaching (Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 1:14). Spirit baptism was administered by the Lord Himself (Matthew 3:11; John 1:33).
  - f.  Water baptism is an act of faith (Galatians 3:26-27; Mark 16:16; Colossians 2:12). Spirit baptism was not an act of faith because it was *not* an act of man (Luke 24:48-49).
  - g.  Water baptism is "in the name of Christ" (or by His authority), and of the Son, Father, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38; 8:14-16; 22:16). Holy Spirit baptism was in no name at all, it was not performed by man (Matthew 3:11).
  - h.  Water baptism is both a burial and a resurrection—as Christ was buried and raised (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12). Spirit baptism had no resurrection, and no visible burial (Acts 1:5; 2:4).
  - i.  Water baptism is a baptism "of repentance" (Mark 1:14; Luke 3:3)—that is, it grows from repentance. Holy Spirit baptism came three and one-half years after the Apostles repented and were baptized in water (Mark 1:14; Luke 7:29-30; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4).
  - j.  Water baptism is a condition of cleansing from the guilt of sin (Acts 22:16; Ephesians 5:25-26). Spirit baptism came after the Apostles were already "clean" (John 15:3) through the Word.
  - k.  Water baptism puts one "into Christ" (Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:26-27). The Spirit baptism of the Apostles came after they were already "in Christ" and had been urged to "abide in Him" (John 15:1-6; Acts 2:1-4).
  - l.  Water baptism is the way to receive the "ordinary" gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; 5:32). Spirit baptism was the reception of the miraculous gifts administered by Christ (Acts 1:5; Matthew 3:11).
  - m.  Water baptism is to continue in God's program "always even to the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19). There is no promise of the Holy Spirit baptism this side of 64 A.D. when Paul wrote Ephesians 4:5 there was only "one" baptism.
  - n.  You can obey the Lord's command to be baptized in water (Acts 2:38; 10:49, 48; 22:16). But there is not a thing you can do to obtain Spirit baptism.  There is only ONE baptism today! (Ephesians 4:5)
3.  Only the Apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit—only they had the ability to bestow

miraculous measures on others through laying on of hands. Several have offered objections to this statement. Listed below are these objections and a proper answer to each.

- a. ❓ There were only twelve Apostles, but over twelve languages were spoken. Therefore there must have been more than twelve speakers in order for more than twelve languages to be spoken.

❓ ANSWER – The passage does not say that each person spoke only one language during the entire period of time. The miracle is very impressive if we view the Apostles as speaking in different languages at different moments.

- b. ❓ Joel promised that women would receive the Spirit, but no Apostle was a woman (Acts 2:17). However women were included in the larger group of disciples (Acts 1:14). Therefore, others than the Apostles must have received the baptism of the Spirit on Pentecost!

❓ ANSWER – There is NO record of women public preachers in the New Testament. Although women did teach (Acts 21:9). There is no reason to believe that *every item* in Joel's prophecy was fulfilled at the very moment on Pentecost. Gentiles were also included by Joel, but none of the Apostles, nor the larger group of disciples were Gentiles. So although it is true that some of their daughters DID TEACH and prophesy in some capacity, it was not until at a later date.

- c. ❓ Was not John's promise that Christ would baptize in the Holy Spirit broader in scope that just the Apostles and the household of Cornelius? (Matthew 3:11).

❓ ANSWER – If we limited our considerations to this one passage we would get the above conclusion. However it is a well known principle of Bible study that to get the complete view of any subject we must not limit ourselves to the study of one passage. Jesus tells us that the Holy Spirit baptism *would not* include everybody (Acts 1:2-5). So we can see that a statement which seems to be a general statement may be limited by other texts.

- d. ❓ It has been stated that if only the Apostles and Cornelius were baptized by the Holy Spirit, then meager results came from a mighty promise.

❓ ANSWER – This objection misunderstands the results and purpose of Holy Spirit baptism. The results were not puny but tremendous!

#### 4. Conclusions drawn from the above considerations.

- a. ❓ Holy Spirit baptism can *only* be administered by Christ for a *specific* purpose!
- b. ❓ Since Holy Spirit baptism can **ONLY** be administered by Christ, mortals cannot administer it.

- c.  Holy Spirit baptism stands in complete contrast to the baptism of the Great Commission.
- d.  The baptism of the Great Commission is the baptism which ALL creation is commanded to obey.
- e.  Christians cannot take part in the baptism of the Holy Spirit because there is only ONE baptism in force today (Ephesians 4:5).
- f.  Holy Spirit baptism was never intended to be universal. It applied ONLY to the Apostles and household of Cornelius.