

E. Spirit Baptism

Refer to the following Scriptures: Matt 3:11, Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, John 1:33, Acts 1:5, 11:16, Rom 6:1-4, 1 Cor 12:13, Gal 3:27, Eph 4:5, Col 2:12.

1. Problems in understanding Spirit baptism
 - a. Not operative before Pentecost or after the rapture of the church. This is probably the key to understanding Spirit Baptism and the nature of the church. Baptism is a distinguishing mark of saints in the present age. To ignore this fact will lead to all manner of doctrinal problems.
 - b. Not same as regeneration (new life provided by the Spirit) or indwelling (abiding presence of the Spirit) or filling (controlling power of the Spirit).
 - c. Not subsequent to regeneration as a second work of grace for *some* Christians; it applies to *all* Christians.
 - d. Not equated with the exercise of special gifts such as tongues etc.
 - e. Not experiential, i.e. felt or resulting in a feeling. The filling of the Spirit is experimental, but not Spirit baptism. In this regard, it can be likened to the concept of citizenship in a country. It is positional.
 - f. Not same as water baptism. Spirit baptism is “real” and water baptism is “ritual.”
2. Who is baptized by the Spirit?
 - a. All Christians, regardless of race (Jews or Gentiles) or social status (bond or free) – 1 Cor 12:13
 - b. Supported also by Eph 4:5 where Paul speaks of “one baptism” being the same for all believers. Not all believers have had water baptism at any given point in time; some do not even practice it at all (not that these are the way things ought to be!). “One” indicates the unity of all believers in the things listed.
3. When does Spirit baptism happen for the individual?
 - a. At salvation – Tie Acts 1:5 to 11:15 and the Cornelius account.
 - b. Implication also of the absence of any command to be baptized by the Spirit.
 - c. It is once and not repeated (as filling is repeated or continuous)
 - d. See also Rom 6:3-4, Col 2:12, and Gal 3:27 for the time of Spirit baptism for the individual.
4. When is Spirit baptism operative in general?
 - a. During the present age only, since it is tied to the formation of the Church, which is only in this dispensation (Pentecost to Rapture).
 - b. It is not mentioned in the OT. Acts 1:5 is a future reference “not many days hence” and 11:16 is a past reference which ties the beginning of this ministry to the Day of Pentecost. It was not in the OT nor after the rapture.
 - c. For other predictive references, see Matt 3:11, Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, and John 1:33. These prove that Spirit baptism is a work of the Holy Spirit future to the time of Jesus. OT believers did not experience it.
5. Permanency of Spirit Baptism and the Meaning of Baptizo (βαπτίζω)
 - a. The word for baptize means to dip or immerse in its physical connection. Thus, we baptize by dunking people under water!
 - b. In its secondary or metaphorical meaning, it means to identify, to “immerse” one thing into something else so completely that the former is identified with the latter.

- c. Obviously the physical connotation is a temporary “dipping,” otherwise, you would have to hold your breath a long time ☺
 - d. The secondary meaning is of a permanent nature. Spirit baptism is not a quick in and out type thing. Once you are in, you remain in!
6. What is Spirit baptism?
- a. It is a placing of a believer **into the body of Christ** – 1 Cor 12:13 “into one body”. Walvoord calls this the “union” of the believer with the body of Christ which is a result of Spirit baptism.

As a result, the body is well-formed (Eph 4:16) and not just a random collection. Each person is specifically brought into the body and has his own place there.

- 1. Formation and increase – Acts 2:47, 1 Cor 6:15, 12:12-14, Eph 2:16, 4:4-5, 16, 5:30-32, Col 1:24, 2:19
- 2. The Head of the Body – 1 Cor 11:3, Eph 1:22-23, 5:23-24, Col 1:18
- 3. Work of Christ in the body – Eph 5:29, Php 4:13, Col 2:19
- 4. Sanctification of the Body – Eph 5:25-27
- 5. Gifts – Rom 12:3-8, 1 Cor 12:27-28, Eph 4:7-16

- b. It is placing the believer **into union with Christ**, giving him a new position – John 14:20. This “is primarily **identification**...with Christ in His righteousness, His death, His burial, His resurrection, and His glorification” (Walvoord, *Holy Spirit*, p 142). Rom 6:1-4, Col 2:12.

It results in a standing before God where the believer is seen in Christ, loved as Christ, etc. Eph 1:6 and John 17:23. Walvoord p 145: “It is the active joining of a soul to the body of Christ in a point of time.” p. 147 it is “a sovereign act of God in which the soul is taken to Himself [God].”

- c. These two things (the placement into the body of Christ and the union with Christ Himself) are symbolized in water baptism.
 - d. It is an act whose immediate instrument is the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:13) but whose ultimate agent is the Lord Jesus Christ (John 16:7).
7. Some results of Spirit Baptism
- a. Put into the body of Christ – 1 Cor 12:13
 - b. Put on Christ – Gal 3:27
 - c. Identification with Christ in his cross work – Rom 6:4, Col 2:9-13
 - d. Unified with the body of Christ – Eph 4:5
8. Spirit baptism is a positional truth, not experiential
- a. It does not depend on “spiritual maturity, yieldedness, or indoctrination. Every believer, while totally unconscious of the reality of the truth until taught, is baptized by the Spirit as soon as faith is placed in Christ.” (p. 147)
 - b. Position is the ground of experience, but not experiential itself. It has built into it the possibility of proper experience, the expectation of proper experience, and “frees up” God to work with you and in you (Php 1:6, 2:12-13) so that the possibility is exercised to meet the expectation.
 - c. It is an instantaneous work of God.