

STUDY 3: Two baptisms

Water and the Spirit!

And this was John's message: "After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. I baptize you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

– John 1:7 & 8

On one occasion, while Jesus was eating with them, He gave them this command: "Do not leave... but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard Me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." – Acts 1: 4 & 5

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. – Acts 2:4

With the awesome blessings & benefits of salvation comes responsibility. This involves obedience to commands God gives and things He expects from you. And this obedience and faithfulness on our parts comes not from a sense of duty, but **from love**. Because we love Jesus and are thankful, we desire to not only do what He wants, but receive those things from Him that will help us follow Him as we want to.

That is why this study will discuss the two baptisms the Bible instructs us about: in water & in the Spirit.

What does the Biblical term 'baptize' mean? The word 'baptize' comes from a Greek word that signifies, "to immerse in so as to change the character of". Hence, when we are baptized in water and the Spirit we

It's about obedience!

can expect to be changed! Something really happens! So, let's first discuss:

WATER BAPTISM

Not only was Jesus Himself baptized, but He commanded the church to make sure it baptized everywhere the church expanded (Matthew 28: 19, 20). It is not a requirement of salvation, but it is a requirement of obedience. You might say that baptism is a first step of discipleship. It is the new believer's way of identifying himself or herself with Christ as one of His follower's- a public declaration through a meaningful act of Jesus as Lord and Savior of one's life.

In a very real sense, water baptism points back to the work of God in saving you and forward to the life of faith you intend to live.

There is so much rich symbolism and teaching in the Bible on this!

Jesus Himself was baptized! Why shouldn't you be?

"When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as He was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on Him..."

– Luke 3:21, 22

Baptism involves
being immersed
completely in water

It doesn't have to
be in church-
many have used
lakes, pools,
rivers, etc.

But it is always
'public', i.e., in
front of witnesses

In the New Testament, baptism is for believers (Acts 2:38; 8:12-13, 36-38; Eph. 4:5). Water apart from personal commitment to Christ makes no difference in the life of anyone. In the New Testament, baptism occurs when a person trusts Christ as Lord and Savior and obeys the command to be submerged in water and raised from it as a picture of the salvation experience that has occurred. Baptism comes after conviction of sin, repentance of sin, & confession of Christ as Lord and Savior. To be baptized is to preach a personal testimony through the symbol of baptism. Baptism testifies that "you are washed ... you are sanctified ... you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11).

There is also a very real spiritual ramification of water baptism for the believer. The book of Hebrews likens baptism to the crossing of the Red Sea by the people of God in their escape from Pharaoh and the slavery of Egypt (1 Corinthians 10:1, 2). The Egyptians were drowned after God saved His people. This teaches us that when we get water baptized there is a power released by God in our life that separates us from the sin and bondages of our past! When we 'pass through the water', God causes us to die to our old lives and He erects a barrier between us and our previous life that keeps the old away- and makes it hard for us to go back to those old patterns, habits and friendships that separated us from Jesus.

This is why, perhaps, the Bible then points us to a necessary second baptism- one in the Holy Spirit!

This is a baptism that comes with a gift!

The baptism in the Holy Spirit opens the door to a life of power and victory by empowering your prayer life

God's gift for personal empowerment is the prayer gift of tongues

SPIRIT BAPTISM

As we said above, water baptism is an act of obedience. Getting baptized in the Holy Spirit is the receiving of supernatural, God-given power to live out in one's life what they have testified to with their mouth and their water baptism. We need help beyond our own willpower to live the Christian

life! That's why Jesus told all who would follow to wait until they were clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:49). In essence, this now makes the definition of the word 'baptize' make total sense: *it is the baptism in the Spirit that changes the character of our lives.* Nowhere is this more apparent than in the life of Peter who, before His

baptism in the Spirit publically denied Christ three times. After being baptized in the Spirit and praying in tongues in Acts 2, this same man preached to an entire city and later in life died for his faith in Christ – crucified upside down according to historians. **We need this type of transformation!**

Did you know?

Historically, there is an unbroken record of people being baptized in the Holy Spirit & praying in tongues from Acts 2 until our modern day. The greatest number has occurred in the last century all over the world.

BE FILLED WITH GOD'S SPIRIT

“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Holy Spirit enabled them.”

- Acts 2:4

“This gift is for you and your children and for all who are far off—all whom the Lord will call”

- Acts 2:38

The expression "baptism of the Holy Spirit" is based on a number of predictions found in our four Gospels and in connection with these the record of their fulfillment in the Book of Acts: Mark 1:8 & 3:11, Luke 3:16, John 1:33 7:37-39.

The Book of Acts provides us the following five accounts of people receiving the fullness or infilling, or baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4; 8:14-25; 9:17-20; 10:44-48; 19:1-7). In all these accounts, there are five common factors:

1. There was an enormous inbreaking of God's presence experienced by **all who were present**.
2. There was an **evident transformation** in the lives and witness of the disciples who were filled.
3. What they experienced in the baptism of the Spirit became the impetus

for church growth as they preached every day, everywhere, with miracles confirming their message.

4. The **immediate** evidence of their filling was praying in tongues, either seen directly in all these texts, or in the people after their experience.

The ultimate purpose of this experience was **empowered witnessing** (Acts 1:8) and a **deeper dimension of Christian commitment** for the achievement of happiness (Ephesians 5:18, 19), gratitude (Ephesians 5:20), humility (Ephesians 5:21), and fruitfulness (Galatians 5:22-23).

No wonder Jesus wants you baptized in His Spirit!

Before we go any further, it is important to note that once you confessed Christ as Savior and got saved or born-again, you received the Holy Spirit. He is the one who put Christ in your heart (Titus 3:5, 6). But it is one thing to have the Holy Spirit and quite another for Him to have you. It is the difference between drinking a glass of water and having the water in you and you jumping into the ocean—where the ocean has you!

In keeping with the analogy of water, you might say that an empty, dirty glass can represent your life before salvation. When you repented, came to Christ, and were water baptized, He cleaned the glass and came in to live inside you—represented by a clean glass filled with pure water. But what

happens if you leave the glass out under the sun, (which we will use to represent life in the world with its temptations)? It evaporates!

This happens to many people. They start with Christ, but their spiritual life dries up! God doesn't want this. That is why He baptizes in His Spirit. He takes the glass, puts it under the faucet and turns the water on- never to turn it off! That is what Jesus means in John 7 when saying of this baptism that it is like a stream of living water and that we will never thirst again!

Don't you want this? Who wouldn't!

The baptism in the Spirit is an experience one receives after

being born-again, whether they have been water baptized or not. It is one that comes about through a process of yielding one's complete self into the guidance and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This in no way means being mindless or getting into a trance! We simply refer to an assertive, prayerful, heartfelt quest for God! The mind is active and you physically participate as you worship and pray out loud in words God gives.

Some people have the mistaken notion that not everyone will have the gift of tongues. The problem arises from attempting to separate the person of the Spirit from all He is and does. 1 Corinthians 12 states that *everyone* is given the manifestation of the Spirit. The gifts, ministries and effects of the Spirit are merely

an expression of the one Spirit who is already in the believer who has received the baptism! If you have the Spirit and He has you, how can you not have all that comes with Him?

What exactly is this gift of praying in tongues? It is a supernaturally given language of prayer that one prays in every day! It is not learned, cannot be taught, and is totally real! You speak it by choice (you are the one who does it- see 1 Corinthians 14:15).

It is a *devotional help* to the believer who is "weak and does not know how to pray as he should" (Romans 8:26, 27). This is especially important when you consider that our spiritual life is only as strong as our prayer life is. And our prayer lives are very weak!

To each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given...

When praying to God, this devotional use of tongues need not be interpreted. This is also true when the church gathers. At times of corporate worship and prayer, when all speech is directed toward God, it is appropriate to address God in this Holy Spirit given form of expression.

How do you receive the baptism in the Spirit and this gift of tongues?

Simple! Ask! You can do this on your own or, as is more common, you can ask a born-again, Spirit-filled believer to pray with you. They will lay hands on you (like in the Bible!), say a prayer over you, ask you to repeat a prayer that asks for this wonderful gift and then simply give you the instruction to, "Speak!"

At that powerfully beautiful moment God will fill you and you will lift your voice with theirs and begin to speak with them in other tongues. And you will love it! This is a gift of power in prayer you will definitely want (and need) to use ever day.

We will discuss this more in our study on prayer.

WHAT HAVE YOU
LEARNED?

ANSWER THE
QUESTIONS ON
THIS PAGE...

UNDERSTAND
WHAT THE BIBLE
TEACHES ON:

TWO BAPTISMS-
ONE IN WATER,
ONE IN THE
SPIRIT

1. **Read Romans 6:4. What happens when we are water baptized?**
2. **Why should your water baptism be in front of witnesses?**
3. **Who was baptized in water who didn't need it?**
4. **When you are baptized in the Holy Spirit, what do you receive?**
5. **Read and study the five instances of people being filled with the Spirit (see p. 3). List out the common factors you observe in these occurrences.**
6. **Romans 8:26, 27 states what? What does it say about you? What does it say about God?**
7. **Have you made time and arrangements to be baptized in the Holy Spirit? When?**