

On the day of Pentecost, the world was given the greatest example of God's power to transform the lives and character of men, so as to make the weak strong and powerful. Pentecost was the pouring out of the "former rain" (Hos. 6:3) of God's Spirit, just as in these last days there will be an outpouring of the "latter rain" (James 5:7). By His death on the cross, Jesus made such a great atonement for sin that God could safely pour out His Spirit on all mankind without the universe thinking that he was regarding sin lightly. It was the atonement of Christ, therefore, that purchased this great Pentecostal gift for the world.

James G. Lawson in *Deeper Experiences of Famous Christians*

Prayer Study #285

THE DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMS

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Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

Hebrews 6:1-2

THE SIX FOUNDATION DOCTRINES OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

1. Repentance from dead works
2. Faith toward God
3. The doctrine of baptisms
4. Laying on of hands
5. Resurrection of the dead
6. Eternal judgment

Notice that the writer of Hebrews speaks of baptisms, not baptism. The word *baptism* is actually a Greek word with English letters. The Greek word is actually *baptidzo*. It means *to cause something to be dipped, or to immerse something beneath the surface of water or some other fluid*. According to Derek Prince, "*It is total in the sense that it involves the whole person and the whole personality of the one being baptized; it is transitional in the sense that, for the person being baptized, it marks a transition—a passing out of one stage or realm of experience into a new stage or realm of experience never previously entered into. The act of baptism may thus be compared to the opening and closing of a door. The person being baptized passes through a door opened up to him by the act of baptism, out of something old and familiar, into something new and*

unfamiliar. Thereafter the door is closed behind him, and there is no way of returning back through the closed door into the old ways and the old experiences."

The Greek scholar Rick Renner adds this, *"The Greek word baptidzo originally meant to dip and to dye. A person who comes to Jesus Christ can be likened to an old garment that needs to be dipped into a vat of dye so its color can be changed. However, the person isn't dipped into a vat of colored dye, but into the precious blood of the Lamb!"*

The verse in Ephesians 4:4-6 (*There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and in you all*) does not negate the fact that there are baptisms. This particular verse is in reference, I think, to water baptism where we confirm publically our born again experience and believe in Jesus, thus making us part of the universal Church.

The baptisms we will look at are the following:

1. John's Baptism
2. Water Baptism
3. Baptism of the Holy Spirit
4. Baptism of Fire
5. Baptism into His Sufferings

JOHN'S BAPTISM

John the Baptist was one of the most unique men in the Bible. While there is no miracle ascribed to John the Baptist, Jesus said of him in Matthew 11:11, *"...among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist..."* and in Matthew 11:9, *"But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet."*

Mark 1:4-8 tells us the purpose of John the Baptist's baptism: *John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Then all the land of Judea and those from Jerusalem went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."* So we see that John

made two demands, in order to be baptized under his ministry: repentance and public confession of sins. Those who met these requirements were baptized in the Jordan. Thus the Pharisees and Sadducees who came to John for baptism were not baptized by him because they showed no real evidence of or desire for a changed life: Matthew 3:7-8-*But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance."* Thus, John's baptism was an outward sign of an inward transformation that had already taken place.

Derek Prince speaks of John's baptism, *"Those who sincerely met John's conditions enjoyed a real experience of repentance and forgiveness which was expressed in lives changed for the better. [However,] those whom John baptized did not receive abiding, inward peace and victory over sin, made possible only through the full gospel message of Jesus Christ; but their hearts were prepared to receive and respond to the gospel message when it should be proclaimed."*

We know that there was a big difference between John's baptism and Christian water baptism from Acts 19:1-7: *And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism." Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. Now the men were about twelve in all.*

In summary, John's baptism emphasized repentance which is not only turning from sin but also turning to faith in God. *Repent* was not only the first word of John's ministry (Matthew 3:2) but also of Jesus' ministry (Matthew 4:17). Before their ministries on earth, the prophets also continually cried to Israel, *"Turn to the Lord!"* which involved repentance. And repentance remains one of the six foundational doctrines of the Christian faith.

So why did Jesus insist on being baptized by John? He had never committed any sins which He need to confess or repent of, a fact that John himself recognized for he said, *"I have need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?"* (Matthew 3:14) Jesus answered John, **"Permit it to be**

so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness” (Matthew 3:15). Jesus is thus setting an example and pattern for all Christian believers to follow. Derek Prince explains it this way, “... *It was through this outward act of obedience and dedication to God that He actually entered into the active life of ministry by which He fulfilled the plan of God the Father. So it is with all true, believing Christians who are baptized. Such believers are not baptized merely because they are sinners who have confessed and repented of their sins. This would place Christian baptism right back on the same level as John’s baptism.... True Christians have not merely confessed and repented of their sins. They have done this and more. By faith in the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, they have been justified; God has imputed to them the righteousness of Christ Himself on the basis of their faith.*”

CHRISTIAN WATER BAPTISM

Do you know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by baptism in to death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His.

Romans 6:3-5

In First Love Ministries, we believe in what is called *credobaptism*. What this means is that we only baptize believers in Christ. Baptism is an outward and visible sign of an inner work in a person’s life of being truly born again by faith in Christ Jesus. We go through baptism, first of all, to tell the world publically that we are believers in Jesus. Secondly, we are baptized to remind ourselves that we have been spiritually dead in trespasses and sins but now are spiritually alive only because of Jesus and His giving of His life for us that we might have life. Finally, we go through baptism to follow the Lord’s own example, remembering that He is the Pattern Son, as He, though without sin, was baptized by John the Baptist. The act of baptism is an obedience to scripture.

Fellow believers are eligible to baptize other believers. When we administer baptism, we always remind the baptismal candidates that ALL people have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. ALL are in need of a savior, and there is ONLY ONE savior, JESUS CHRIST. The scriptures

make it very clear that He is the only way to heaven. Any religion or set of beliefs that contradicts this is false.

The Apostle Peter gave two commands to the Jewish audience that acknowledge their belief in Jesus after Peter's preaching. They asked, "What shall we do?" to respond to the Christian message:

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said to them, "Repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:37-38). Those two commands were to repent and then be baptized.

While we do not take baptism lightly, we do not believe that it is a requirement to go to heaven, based on the fact that Jesus said the thief on the cross would be with Him that day in Paradise (Luke 23:39-43), and he obviously was not baptized. However, Jesus Himself said, **"...Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned"** (Mark 16:15-16).

There are many different teachings on baptism. I feel that many of these are legalistic bondages and that Jesus never intended for the doctrine of water baptism to be so controversial. There are those, for example, who believe that, if a person is not immediately baptized after accepting Christ in that minute, they are not true believers. Others believe that candidates should be baptized in the name of Jesus only (I wonder how they explain away the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-**"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"**?). Some sprinkle; others dip; still others insist on water immersion only. We prefer this last method, although we recognize other denomination's baptisms whatever method they use. For us, baptism is not the experience. It is a symbol of an experience in Christ. In fact, as important as we think water baptism is, we recognize that again the thief on the cross, Zaccheaus, the Samaritan Woman at the well, the disciples, and others were not baptized as far as we know from scripture. Additionally, there is no record that Jesus baptized anyone.

On the other hand, the Church of the New Testament took Jesus at His word, and we see over and over new converts being baptized. A good example is the Philippian jailer who was saved at midnight. Paul and Silas baptized him and his whole household almost immediately (Acts 16:25-34).

So we see that a new believer should believe, repent and be baptized. Peter adds another condition in 1st Peter 3:21: *There is also an antitype*

which now saves us, namely baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Peter is comparing baptism to the experience of Noah and his family in the Ark. What he is saying is that baptism has nothing to do with the cleansing of the physical body but is based on the inner response of the believer's heart.

A Few of the Many Scriptures on Water Baptism

Colossians 2:12: *And you were buried with Him in baptism, in which you were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.*

Acts 8:26-40: *And the angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Get up and go toward the south into the way that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaze, which is desert." And he got up and went and behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure and had come to Jerusalem to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot reading Isaiah the prophet. And Philip ran up to him and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" And he said, "How can I, except someone should guide me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture, which he read, was this: He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away and who shall declare his generation? For his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom is the prophet speaking? Of himself or of some other man?" Then Philip opened his mouth and began at the same scripture and preached to him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See here is water; what keeps me from being baptized?" Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may," and he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and Philip baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no more, but he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.*

Galatians 3:26-27: *For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.*

In summary, baptism is a type of burial wherein the believer accepts God's sacrifice for the believer's sin and realizes that he is the guilt one but the sinless Son of God took his place on the cross, died, was buried, and rose again. Thus, the believer symbolically dies in a watery grave but rises up out of the waters in Resurrection power.

THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

I believe with all my heart that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit will be absolutely necessary for the days that are soon coming. Only the *dunamis* power of the Holy Spirit will help us overcome what is coming on the earth. If you have not had this experience, you are no less a Christian, but it is available for those who seek and really want it.

Jesus Himself is the Baptizer in the Holy Spirit. Mark 1:8 gives us the words of John the Baptist: *I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.* Matthew 3:11, also quoting John the Baptist, confirms this: *I indeed baptize you with water into repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.*

Jesus told His disciples, shortly before He ascended into heaven, to expect the baptism of the Holy Spirit: ***For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.*** Their wonderful baptism came ten days later on the day of Pentecost where they were praying together in one accord (Acts 2). He had previously spoken of the Holy Spirit's coming in John 7:37-39: *Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes on Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

This glorious event happened on the Day of Pentecost, 50 days after Jesus had been crucified and ten days after His ascension into heaven. Acts 2:1-4: *When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then*

there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Several miracles happened on that day following this experience of the 120 disciples being filled with the Holy Spirit. They exited what most believe was the Upper Room, speaking in tongues so loudly that they drew a crowd, and the crowd was astonished because every one heard these disciples speaking in his own dialect. These were Galileans, not known for their education and certainly had not been trained in these languages. Obviously something miraculous had happened. Throughout Acts we continue to see believers baptized in the Holy Spirit. We will be looking at this experience, in greater detail, later in a future handout because this is what this whole study is essentially about, i.e. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

The Power of the Holy Spirit

David Wilkerson

Those who were headed for the Upper Room loved Jesus dearly. They were compassionate, self-sacrificing, soul-loving. But they were not yet qualified to be His witnesses. It takes more than a love for Jesus and a compassion for souls to qualify you as His witness.

They had been taught in the school of Christ. They had healed the sick, cast out demons, and performed miracles. They had seen Jesus clothed in His eternal glory on the Mount.

They had been nearby when He sweat drops of blood as He prayed and then they had seen Him hanging on the cross. They had seen Him resurrected, viewed the empty tomb, eaten with Him, and talked with Him in His glorified body. They had even seen Him ascend into heaven! Yet they still were not ready to witness of Him.

Why couldn't Peter go to those milling crowds in Jerusalem and immediately testify to His resurrection? Hadn't he witnessed that event firsthand? It seems he could have preached, "Jesus is alive! He ascended into heaven! Repent!"

Peter makes a powerful statement to the chief priests: "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey Him" (Acts 5:32).

Through the words of the Holy Spirit speaking through Peter, the priests “were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them” (Acts 5:33). The Holy Spirit also had spoken through Peter on the day of Pentecost, and all who heard “were pricked in their heart” (Acts 2:37).

Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, preached to the religious leaders: “Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do ye....When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth” (Acts 7:51 & 54).

When you emerge from seeking God, full of the Holy Spirit, you will be able to stand with boldness before fellow workers, family, anyone, and your witness will provoke one of two reactions. They will either cry out, “What must I do to be saved?” or they will want to kill you! You will speak a word that cuts to the heart. The difference is found in the power of the Holy Spirit.

THE BAPTISM OF FIRE

We have previously discussed this baptism in a previous handout. I will repeat the information here. There are three theological opinions about the baptism of fire. 1) Some believe Christians are automatically “baptized with fire” at the same time they are baptized with the Holy Spirit. They cite the “tongues of fire” that came down unto the disciples at Pentecost in Acts 2. The problem with this view is that there is never any mention, in scripture, of fire when other people received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. 2) Others believe that the context of the scripture indicates that Christians will receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but non-believers will be “baptized with fire” (i.e. the “Lake of Fire” in Revelation 20:15) or sent to Hell. The problem with this view is the “Lake of Fire” is never referred to as a “baptism of fire.” Most theologians, however ascribed to the 2nd view because it does make sense in the context of Matthew 3:4-12. 3) The third view is that the baptism of fire comes after the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I believe the third view is correct. I see the baptism of fire as both setting spirit-baptized believers on fire to do the ministry and including a refinement, involving trials and tribulations, that will purify these believers. I believe that these believers are His Third Day Church of Hosea 6:1-3-*Come, and let us return unto the LORD; for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and*

He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us; in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD; His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come upon us, as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.

THE BAPTISM IN HIS SUFFERINGS

This is not a popular baptism in our American church which is more interested overall in worshiping in a comfortable building and being taught a Gospel that requires no sacrifice. The Baptism in His Sufferings is seldom talked about, and too often those of us who do talk of it don't really understand the cost of this baptism.

James and John, prompted by their mother, come to Jesus and ask to be put in the primary positions in His Kingdom: *Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Teacher we want You to do for us whatever we ask." And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink and with the baptism I am baptized with, you will be baptized; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared"* Mark 10:35-40.

Paul calls this baptism, *the fellowship of His sufferings*. Philippians 3:8-11 reads: *Yet indeed I count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith, that I may know Him and the power of the resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means I may attain to the resurrection of the dead.*

Jesus said of this baptism in Luke 12:50, ***But I have a baptism to be baptized with and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!***

This is not a baptism of fire where we go through trials and tribulations but it a baptism that identifies us with the crucified Christ. The emphasis is not on us and our sufferings; it is on Jesus and what He did for us. Among the characteristics of this baptism are the following:

1. **Men will hate you because of the Christian message that you preach:** Luke 6:22-23: *Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, for in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.*
2. **You will be persecuted:** John 15:20: *Remember the word that I said to you, "A servant is not greater than his master." If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.* 2nd Timothy 3:12: *Yes, and all those who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*
3. **You will experience shame:** Acts 5:41: *So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.*
4. **You will suffer:** Philippians 1:29: *For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.* 1st Peter 4:12-19: *Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God, and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now if the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear? Therefore, let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.*
5. **You may be called upon to bear in your body the marks of Jesus Christ:** Galatians 6:17: *From now on let no one trouble you, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.* Paul's physical body permanently showed the scars, the marks, the wounds, and disfigurement of the beatings that he had endured for the Lord Jesus. The word *marks* in this passage is the Greek word *stigmata*, which means scars. Paul is saying, "If you want to know if I am a follower of Jesus, look at my scars." In 2nd Corinthians 11:24-28 he tells us

where these scars came from: *From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.*

Barclay explains these marks: *Often a master branded his slaves with a mark that showed them to be his. Most probably, what Paul means is that the scars of the things he had suffered for Christ are the brands which show him to be Christ's slave. In the end, it is not his apostolic authority that he uses as a basis of appeal; it is the wounds he sustained for Christ's sake. Are you willing to bear in your body the marks of Jesus Christ?*

We may well have to answer that question one day either on the mission field or even in a reprobate nation that no longer respects the things of God.

God Leads Us Along
George Young
1903

In shady, green pastures, so rich and so sweet,
God leads His dear children along;
Where the water's cool flow bathes the weary one's feet,
God leads His dear children along.

Though sorrows befall us and evils oppose,
God leads His dear children along;
Through grace we can conquer, defeat all our foes,
God leads His dear children along.

CHORUS

Some through the waters, some through the flood,
Some through the fire, but all through the blood;
Some through great sorrow, but God gives a song,
In the night season, and all the day long.