

THE
Holy
SPIRIT

Baptism In the Holy Spirit

“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. And His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire” (Matthew 3:11, 12).

The idea of being baptized “with the Holy Spirit” appears in the Bible only five times: in Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:4; and 11:16. It is applied to only two occurrences in the New Testament: the baptism of the apostles (Acts 1:4, 5) and that of Cornelius, along with his family and friends (Acts 11:15, 16). In spite of the infrequent reference to Holy Spirit baptism in the New Testament, some assert that it is for every Christian today.

The Bible does not speak of a baptism which is administered by the Holy Spirit.¹ Baptism in the Holy Spirit was administered by Jesus, as is evident from John’s words in Matthew 3:11: “. . . He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit. . . .” As water was the element in which John baptized (Matthew 3:6), the Holy Spirit was the element in which Jesus would baptize (that is, to “immerse” or “overwhelm”). Those who teach a baptism administered by the Holy Spirit fail to realize that it was Jesus, not the Holy Spirit, who did the baptizing.

John—the one who immersed in water—was the first one to mention baptism in the Holy Spirit. He introduced the subject as he spoke of how superior Jesus was in comparison to himself.

Some have concluded that all Christians should expect baptism in the Holy Spirit because of John’s phrasing in Luke 3:16: “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.*” (Emphasis mine.)

Two questions should be raised concerning such a conclusion: “To whom was John talking?” and “How does such a conclusion correspond with other Bible teaching?” In order to answer the first question, the setting of John’s statement must be considered.

Luke wrote concerning John, “He therefore began saying to the multitudes who were going out to

¹Some argue that there are two baptisms involving the Holy Spirit: “baptism of the Holy Spirit” and “baptism with the Holy Spirit.” Such teaching cannot be correct. The Greek word *en*, which is translated “with” in Matthew 3:6 and 3:11 is best translated “in,” but can accurately be translated “with” or “by.” Two separate baptisms involving the Holy Spirit are not taught in these passages.

be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?'" (Luke 3:7). In the same context, Luke wrote, "And the multitudes were questioning him, saying, 'Then what shall we do?'" (Luke 3:10). John was speaking to the multitudes when he "answered and said to them all, '... He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire'" (Luke 3:16).

Among the multitudes was a "brood of vipers" (Luke 3:7), which included many Pharisees and Sadducees (Matthew 3:7) who had come to be baptized by John. Because they would not repent, they were in danger of being "thrown into the fire" (Matthew 3:8–10). Surely, the multitudes included some people who would not receive the Holy Spirit (John 14:17). John did not say, "He will baptize *all* of you with the Holy Spirit." He said to them all, "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

John's statement could be compared to a factory representative speaking to a large group of people gathered to apply for a few job openings in the factory. He might introduce Bill Jones and say to all those gathered, "This is Bill Jones, the man who will hire you." This would not in any way imply that everyone there would be hired, but would only indicate "to all present" *who* would do the hiring. In essence, that was what John was doing: He was identifying the great person who would baptize in the Holy Spirit. He was not saying that Jesus would baptize *all* of them with the Holy Spirit. Other Scriptures are more specific on who would be immersed in the Holy Spirit.

HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM PROMISED AND FULFILLED

Whom did Jesus include when He promised baptism in the Holy Spirit in Acts 1:5? A consideration of the pronouns used in the context of this promise shows that Jesus included only the apostles. The phrase "the apostles" has been inserted after each pronoun in the following quotation to emphasize that they alone were meant.

... He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen. To these [the apostles] He also presented Himself alive, ... appearing to them [the apostles] And gathering them [the apostles] together, He commanded them [the apostles] not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you [the apostles]

heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you [the apostles] shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:2–5).

"You" and "them" are pronouns that refer to the antecedent "apostles," mentioned specifically at the beginning of verse 2.

Holy Spirit Baptism and the Apostles

"Not many days" (Acts 1:5) after Jesus made His promise, the apostles received the Holy Spirit. The following evidence shows that the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4) came only to the apostles.

1. The apostles were the ones to whom the Holy Spirit had been promised.

2. Acts 1 ends with a reference to the apostles. Luke wrote concerning Matthias, "... and he was numbered with the eleven apostles" (Acts 1:26). Luke then stated, "*They* were all together in one place. . . . And *they* were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance" (Acts 2:1b–4; emphasis mine). Again, the pronoun "they" refers to the last mentioned noun, "apostles."

3. The ones who were speaking in tongues were "Galileans" (Acts 2:7). This fact eliminates the multitude, for they were "from every nation under heaven" (Acts 2:5; see also vv. 8–11).

4. The apostles were the center of attention, which must indicate that they were the ones who were full of the Spirit and were speaking in other languages. "But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: '... these men are not drunk, as you suppose, . . .'" (Acts 2:14, 15). The ones accused of being drunk were those who were speaking, and the ones who were speaking were the ones who had received the Holy Spirit. Peter stood with the eleven—those who had been accused—and said, "These men are not drunk." This evidence further indicates that only the apostles had been baptized with the Holy Spirit.

5. Peter declared, "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses" (Acts 2:32). The special witnesses of Jesus' resurrection were the apostles (Acts 1:22; 4:33; 10:39–42; 13:31; see also 1:3).

6. The multitude addressed the apostles, which indicates that the apostles were the ones speaking to them. "Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter

and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brethren, what shall we do?’” (Acts 2:37).

7. The apostles were the teachers of the people (Acts 2:42), indicating that they were the ones who were being given God’s Word through the Spirit (John 14:26).

8. Following the coming of the Spirit, the apostles performed signs and wonders. For a while, they were the only ones mentioned as exercising the enabling power promised by Jesus in Acts 1:8.

Many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles (Acts 2:43b).

And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus (Acts 4:33a).

At the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people (Acts 5:12a).

The evidence is adequate to draw the conclusion that neither the multitude nor the 120 in Acts 1:15 had been baptized in the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised baptism in the Holy Spirit only to the apostles, and they alone received that baptism on the Day of Pentecost.

Holy Spirit Baptism and the First Gentile Christians

The baptism in the Holy Spirit was given twice in the New Testament. In the beginning, the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit. Years later, Peter found it necessary to think back to what had happened on that occasion (Acts 11:14–16) to find a comparison to what Cornelius and his friends received. Apparently, no other Jews had been baptized in the Holy Spirit since that beginning event on Pentecost. A few years later, Peter referred to this second event—when the first Gentile converts were baptized in the Holy Spirit—to prove to the Jewish Christians that God would accept Gentiles without circumcision (Acts 15:7–9). Again, this must indicate that no other Gentiles had been baptized in the Holy Spirit since the baptism of Cornelius and his household.

In order to prove that offering salvation to the Gentiles was His choice and not a human decision, God broke with normal procedure and did something unusual. Not only did God give Gentiles the indwelling of the Holy Spirit when

Cornelius’ household was converted (Acts 10:47; see also Acts 2:38), but He went beyond that. Before they were converted, He baptized them in the Holy Spirit with the same baptism He gave the apostles in the beginning of Christianity (Acts 10:44; 11:15). To the surprise of the Jewish Christians, God did this before they had been baptized for the forgiveness of sins. This is the only case after the coming of the Holy Spirit on the apostles in which anyone was given the Holy Spirit before baptism. Also, it is the one recorded time when anyone besides the apostles was baptized in the Holy Spirit.²

Not even Jesus received the Spirit before being baptized in water (Matthew 3:16, 17). Since only Cornelius’ household, and perhaps the apostle Paul, received the Holy Spirit as the apostles did on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38; 8:14–18; 19:5, 6), Cornelius’ household must be thought of as the exception instead of the rule. G. R. Beasley-Murray, a noted scholar, correctly observed, “The gift of the Spirit without baptism must be viewed as exceptional, due to a divine intervention in a highly significant situation, teaching that Gentiles may be received into the Church by baptism even when they have not removed their uncleanness through circumcision and sacrifice ([Acts] 11:18).”³

God used this exception to prove that salvation now was to be offered to Gentiles. This unusual instance of Holy Spirit baptism was used as a sign, which was necessary because of the attitude of the Jews. Before the events leading up to Cornelius’ conversion, Peter, as well as other Jews, thought that they should not keep company with Gentiles. He said, “You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him; and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean” (Acts 10:28).

Jews insisted that Gentiles had to be circumcised before they would associate with them (Acts 11:3). Among the Jews, Gentiles were con-

²We may reasonably assume, but cannot prove conclusively, that Paul was also baptized in the Holy Spirit. Paul’s baptism in the Spirit could be implied by his statement in 2 Corinthians 12:11: “. . . in no respect was I inferior to the most eminent apostles, . . .” If so, he was the only other person to receive that baptism.

³G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Baptism in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977), 108.

sidered unworthy of salvation. Jewish Christians, therefore, were preaching the gospel to Jews only (Acts 11:19). God wanted to prove that He would accept Gentiles as well as Jews.

By baptizing Gentiles in the Holy Spirit, God made four statements to Peter and the early church: (1) Jewish Christians could associate with Gentiles; (2) Gentiles could become Christians by being baptized in water to be saved; (3) they could do so without circumcision, that is, without becoming Jews; and (4) Gentile converts were not to be treated as second-rate Christians, but were to be accepted by Jewish Christians as brethren. By giving Gentiles a baptism which He had given to no one else but the apostles, God showed that Gentile Christians were not to be considered inferior in any way.

If the Holy Spirit had been given to them in the normal way,⁴ there would have been no external evidence of their receiving of the Spirit. Some indisputable evidence was necessary to show that God was the One making the choice. If the Holy Spirit's visible signs had been given to them through an apostle's hands, as in other cases (Acts 8:14–18; 19:6), then the conclusion could have been drawn that the choice was man's and not God's.

God used this exception as He used exceptions to the laws of nature when He performed signs in Egypt (Exodus 10:2) and as Jesus used miracles to identify Himself as the Son of God (John 20:30, 31). The manifestation in the home of Cornelius showed that God Himself, and not Peter, was offering Gentiles forgiveness through the gospel.

This baptism in the Holy Spirit proved to Peter that God was making the choice to accept Gentiles for salvation and for membership in the body of Christ. They were to be considered equal to the Jewish Christians. Peter was progressively led to this final conclusion through an interesting series of events. First, God told him three times in a vision to kill and eat various kinds of animals (Acts 10:16). Afterward, while he was reflecting on the vision, the Spirit told him to go with the Gentiles "without misgivings" (Acts 10:20). Eventually, Peter drew the conclusion

⁴The normal way to receive the Holy Spirit today, as it was in the church of the New Testament, is to become a child of God through baptism (Galatians 3:26, 27) for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38).

that he "should not call any man unholy or unclean" (Acts 10:28). Based on these facts, he was willing to associate with the Gentiles. He also came to believe "that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right, is welcome to Him" (Acts 10:35).

Even at this point, Peter needed more proof. Not only was he to stop thinking of Gentiles as ordinary or unclean, but he was also to offer them salvation and accept them as brothers. In order to lead Peter and other Jewish believers to accept Gentiles as worthy of salvation, another miracle was needed. Thus God gave the Gentiles the power to speak in tongues through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Then Peter asked, "Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?" (Acts 10:47). His meaning is plain: Man cannot refuse what God has chosen.

Gareth L. Reese aptly observed, "Peter recognized that what has been poured out on Cornelius and his friends is the same thing that happened to the apostles at Pentecost."⁵ Peter concluded, "If God therefore gave to them 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?" (Acts 11:17). Obviously, the baptism of the Gentiles in the Holy Spirit proved to Peter that God, not man, had made the choice. Not only was this proof for Peter and believing Jews, but it is also proof for every succeeding generation. God proved once—and never needs to prove again—that He will accept Gentiles without circumcision and without their keeping the Law (Acts 11:3; 15:1, 7–9).

Frederick Dale Bruner wrote concerning Peter's statement in Acts 11, "He stresses that the Holy Spirit had come upon [Cornelius'] household 'just as on us at the beginning' (v. 15). This remark is important. Peter does not say that the Holy Spirit came upon Cornelius' household 'just as he always does with everyone.'"⁶

The implication seems clear. God had baptized no one else in the Holy Spirit since the Day of Pentecost (unless Paul is counted). The apostles

⁵Gareth L. Reese, *New Testament History, Acts* (Joplin, Mo.: College Press, 1988), 404.

⁶Frederick Dale Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1970), 194.

were the first, the ones “in the beginning”; and until the household of Cornelius, they had been the last and only ones baptized in that way. The same event that in the beginning had opened the door for Jews to become Christians had at last opened the door for Gentiles. By opening the door for Jews and Gentiles in the same manner, God illustrated that Jews and Gentiles who become Christians have the same standing with Him.

Peter used this case years later to answer questions that arose concerning the status of uncircumcised Gentiles who had become Christians. He said, “Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us” (Acts 15:7, 8). This is an indication that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was not a continuing event.

Another fact becomes apparent. God’s requirement for forgiveness of sins is the same for Jews and Gentiles. Peter was to speak to Cornelius words by which he would be saved (Acts 11:14). Peter said nothing about the Holy Spirit, but he did tell Cornelius to believe and be baptized (Acts 10:43, 47, 48). These were the actions which Jesus said would bring salvation: “He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16a). Peter had also told the Jews to “repent, and . . . be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins” (Acts 2:38a). In like manner, “he ordered them [the Gentiles] to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ” (Acts 10:48a). Baptism in the Holy Spirit was no substitute for water baptism, but rather was evidence to Peter that he should command Cornelius and his Gentile household to receive water baptism (Acts 10:43, 47, 48).

Baptism in the Holy Spirit was not a gift to show salvation. The apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 1:4, 5; 2:4) to give them power (Acts 1:8), not salvation. John, the one who baptized, was given the Holy Spirit from his mother’s womb (Luke 1:15). This was not for his salvation, but rather was an indication that God had chosen him for a special work. The New Testament contains no indication that anyone was ever given the Holy Spirit in order to receive salvation. He is given to those

who are sons (Galatians 4:6), not in order to make people sons of God.

The report that reached the Jewish Christians in Judea concerning the Gentiles was that they had received the word of God (Acts 11:1). The Gentiles’ response in receiving the word was the same as that of three thousand Jews on the Day of Pentecost: “Then, those who had received his word were baptized” (Acts 2:41a). The word they had gladly received was Peter’s statement “Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins” (Acts 2:38a). The Gentiles received the same message from Peter.

What they did to be saved followed the norm: They heard the word, believed in Jesus, repented, and were baptized. Other passages in the Bible show the same pattern (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Colossians 2:12, 13; 1 Peter 3:21). The exception in the case of these Gentiles was their baptism in the Holy Spirit.

By baptizing these first Gentiles in the Holy Spirit, God showed His choice to accept the Gentiles. Further, He showed that Gentiles were *not* an exception with regard to what is required of them before they can be forgiven. (The only exception was the way God used Holy Spirit baptism to reveal His choice to accept Gentile converts.) They had to receive the gospel (Acts 15:7), the word by which they could be saved (Acts 11:14; Romans 1:16; Ephesians 1:13). The Holy Spirit was given not to show that they were already saved, but to show that they were to be offered salvation through the gospel (Acts 15:7–9). In the case of Cornelius, God deviated from the general rule (John 14:17) only to prove that He, not Peter, was opening the door of salvation to the Gentiles.

Through these first Gentile converts, God demonstrated that people of every nation can have salvation through Jesus when they receive water baptism. In opening the door for Gentiles, He did not make a statement that baptism is nonessential for salvation, but rather emphasized its importance (Acts 10:47, 48).

ONE BAPTISM COMMANDED BY THE NEW TESTAMENT

While several “baptisms” are mentioned in the New Testament, only one baptism was recognized by Paul in Ephesians 4:5 as common to

all people. In Ephesus, John's baptism was shown no longer to be applicable (Acts 19:1–5). The baptism of Israel into Moses (1 Corinthians 10:2) is certainly not for people today. Jesus had already endured the baptism of suffering (Luke 12:50; see also Mark 10:38, 39). The baptism in fire for punishment is yet future (Matthew 3:10–12). None of these baptisms can be the one baptism Paul had in mind. The one baptism common among Christians is baptism in water (Matthew 28:19), for through water baptism we are baptized into Christ. In water baptism, all people become one (Galatians 3:27, 28). The one existing baptism at the time when Paul wrote to the Ephesians was water baptism.

Not Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Because of Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 12:13, "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body," some have concluded that baptism in the Holy Spirit is the one baptism of Ephesians 4:5. Bruner has pointed out,

If this verse is interpreted as speaking of a second, subsequent, and separate baptism in the Holy Spirit, beyond baptism in Christ, for only *some* Christians, then violence is done not only to the words of the text—"all . . . all"—but to the purpose of the text in its Corinthian context. The burden of Paul's Corinthian message is the oneness of *all* the baptized in Christ Jesus.⁷

After a thorough study of baptism, the following becomes evident concerning the one baptism mentioned by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:13:

Paul said that *all* had received this one baptism, which was for the unifying of all believers by placing them into one body. The implication of his argument is that *all* Christians had received this baptism; therefore, *all* were in one body regardless of their race, background, or social standing. If only a special few receive Holy Spirit baptism, then all are not baptized by the one Spirit and brought into the unity which Paul was teaching.

Water baptism is the one baptism experienced by all believers according to the Book of Acts, while Holy Spirit baptism was given to a very limited few. For this reason, 1 Corinthians 12:13 must be construed to mean that through water baptism the Holy Spirit brings all believers into one body. To conclude that all are baptized by the Holy Spirit into one body does

not take into account the historical evidence of the Book of Acts.⁸

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the New Testament in connection with miraculous powers and/or divine revelation, and not in relation to personal indwelling. Jesus told the apostles concerning their being baptized in the Holy Spirit that they were to ". . . wait for what the Father had promised, 'Which,' He said, 'you heard of from Me'" (Acts 1:4). Jesus was referring to His statements as recorded in Matthew 10:19, 20; John 14:17, 26; 15:26; 16:7–15; 20:22. He had made these promises only to the apostles.

Two promises to the apostles were to be fulfilled upon the coming of the Holy Spirit: divine guidance into all truth (John 14:26; 16:13) and power (Acts 1:8). Baptism in the Holy Spirit should always be associated with these. The assignment of the different gifts of the Spirit to provide this guidance and power was dependent on the will of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:11; Hebrews 2:4). Even though Cornelius and his household were baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 11:15, 16), they were not given the same gifts as the apostles. (Special gifts were given as signs of apostleship; 2 Corinthians 12:12.) Neither were Cornelius and the others guided into all truth as were the apostles.

Not Baptism in Fire

Though mentioned along with baptism in the Holy Spirit, baptism in fire is not to be associated with it. Those who will be baptized in fire are those whom Jesus will submerge in fire as a matter of punishment (Matthew 3:12).

Jack Lewis has stated,

On the basis of the two objects of the preposition in the dative case, joined by a connection to the one preceding preposition, it has been frequently argued that John speaks of a single baptism of two elements. Grammatically, something can be said for the argument, but the context contrasts two groups immediately before and after the expression. "Fire" in verse 10 is for the burning of fruitless trees, and in verse 12 for burning of the chaff. Since it is unlikely that the import of the word is changed in the middle expression, it is reasonable to suppose that the fire of hell—the lake of fire (Revelation 20:15)—is in view. The fire, then, is

⁷Ibid., 292.

⁸Owen D. Olbricht, *Baptism: New Birth or Empty Ritual?* (Delight, Ark.: Gospel Light Publishing Co., 1994), 108–9.

here a symbol of judgment, rather than of the Holy Spirit. The fire of Pentecost, often connected with this verse and the only live alternative to the interpretation suggested above, is only a symbolic comparison—"tongues as of fire" (Acts 2:3)—and not fire itself.⁹

Instead of desiring baptism in fire, we should seek to escape it. Normally "fire" suggests punishment (Matthew 3:10; 5:22; 7:19; 13:40, 42, 50; 18:8, 9; 25:41). When Jesus told the apostles they would be "baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5), He did not include "with fire." Peter did not include "fire" when he recalled what Jesus said concerning baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 11:15, 16). Neither should we associate fire with baptism in the Holy Spirit or with the "one baptism" of Ephesians 4:5.

Baptism in Water

The general rule is that if the baptism referred to in a passage is a baptism administered by man, it means baptism in water. Baptism

given by God is baptism in the Holy Spirit. When the word "baptism" appears in the New Testament, it refers to baptism in water unless qualified by other terms.

Albrecht Oepke included this idea in his definition of "baptism." He said, ". . . New Testament references to baptism should be thought of as water baptism unless the context indicates otherwise. Baptism means technically 'to baptize in water.' Hence it is unnecessary to specify a medium."¹⁰

Examine the chart below, which compares water baptism with Holy Spirit baptism. Much of the information in the chart is easy to understand and needs no explanation. However, perhaps a little more should be said about the results (see number 10 in the listing). The Gentiles and Jewish Christians did not become apostles or children of God through baptism in the Holy Spirit. Converts always become children of God in the same way, by being born of water and the

⁹Jack Lewis, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, Part 1, *The Living Word Commentary*, ed. Everett Ferguson (Austin, Tex.: Sweet Publishing Co., 1976), 63.

¹⁰Albrecht Oepke, "Bapto, baptizo," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), 539.

A COMPARISON OF BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT & BAPTISM IN WATER

Baptism in the Holy Spirit

1. Administered by Jesus (Matthew 3:11)
2. Sent by Jesus from the Father and poured out to immerse in the Spirit (John 15:26; 16:7; Acts 10:45)
3. Sent by the Father in Jesus' name (John 14:26)
4. Given directly from God on those who waited in Jerusalem and on unsuspecting Gentiles (Acts 1:4, 5; 10:44)
5. Received as a promise (Acts 1:4, 5)
6. For the apostles (Acts 1:1-5)
7. Received by the apostles (Acts 1:26-2:4) and the first Gentile converts (Acts 11:15, 16)
8. Purposes were to reveal Jesus' teaching (John 14:26), give power (Acts 1:8), and open the door to the Gentiles (Acts 10:47; 11:17; 15:7-9)
9. Those baptized in the Spirit spoke in tongues (Acts 2:4; 10:44-46)
10. Signs of apostles was the result (2 Corinthians 12:12); God's choice of salvation for the Gentiles was revealed (Acts 15:7-9)

Baptism in water

1. Administered by man (Matthew 28:19)
2. Immersed in water (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12)
3. Administered by man in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19)
4. Administered to those who believe and repent (Acts 2:38; 8:12; 18:8)
5. Obeyed as a command (Acts 10:48)
6. For all nations (Matthew 28:19)
7. Received by all believers everywhere (Acts 2:41; 8:12, 13, 38, 39; 10:48; 18:8; 19:5)
8. Purpose was forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Colossians 2:12, 13)
9. Those baptized in water rejoiced (Acts 8:39; 16:33, 34)
10. Being children of God was the result (Galatians 3:26, 27)

Spirit (John 3:5; Romans 6:4; Galatians 3:26, 27; Colossians 2:12, 13).

CONCLUSION

Baptism in the Holy Spirit was administered by Jesus to the apostles in order to prepare them to be His special representatives. In connection with this baptism, Christ revealed His word to them and endowed them with power that set them apart as His apostles (2 Corinthians 12:12). Giving Gentiles the Holy Spirit baptism which had previously been given only to the apostles proved that Gentiles could become first-class Christians in the kingdom of Christ. The baptism in the Holy Spirit fulfilled God's purpose to elevate the Gentiles and to lay a singular foundation that could unite these two estranged groups—Jews and Gentiles—on an equal standing in the church of Christ (Ephesians 2:11–16). By giving the first Gentiles the same baptism that had been given exclusively to the apostles, God showed that He is impartial. Having fulfilled these purposes, baptism in the Holy Spirit was not needed for anyone else and thus has not been given to anyone else since that time.

Since baptism in the Holy Spirit was for a special purpose, only a few received this baptism. If all Christians received Holy Spirit baptism today, they all should have miraculous gifts like the apostles had. Otherwise, they should have received baptism in the Holy Spirit for the purpose of making known God's special choice of them, as in the case of the first Gentile converts. If these circumstances were required in the New Testament cases, why would they not be required today?

Baptism in the Holy Spirit was not given to all Christians, but was a unique baptism which God reserved for His own particular purposes. It was not a baptism that was sought, prayed for, or obtained through human effort. God gave it according to His own discretion to serve His own divine purposes. People today who seek and expect this baptism are trying to obtain a baptism which was neither commanded nor promised for them. The fact that the Scriptures reveal only two cases of such a baptism (not including Paul) should cause us to realize that it was not a baptism for all people or for all times.

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