ST2, Baptism in and Filling with the Holy Spirit 7/23/23

[This lesson heavily depends on Sinclair Ferguson, The Holy Spirit, “Pentecost Today?”]

The NT emphasizes, through its pervasive teaching of Christ’s people being IN HIM that his great redemptive actions have profound and eternal implications for those united to him by faith.

For example, our sanctification is rooted in Christ’s death and resurrection. His death secured our death to the old way of life. His resurrection guaranteed our walking in newness of life. Romans 6 focuses upon this reality.

**Rom. 6:3-4** Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus **were baptized into his death**? **4**We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, **just as Christ was raised** from the dead by the glory of the Father, **we too might walk in newness of life**.

Just as Christ’s once for all actions of dying and rising profoundly touch the lives of his people, so likewise does his once for all action of baptizing or immersing his people in the Holy Spirit. **1Co 12:13 declares,** For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. This personal Spirit baptism experienced by everyone that receives Christ is rooted in the once for all baptism that the ascended Christ gave his people on the Day of Pentecost.

This humongous ,redemptive event had been promised and emphasized by John the Baptist in his proclamation concerning the Messiah: **Luke 3:16** John answered them all, saying, “I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. **He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit** and fire.

Likewise, Jesus himself emphasized this vital redemptive accomplishment in his Upper Room discourse (John 13-16) and in his final words to the Apostles before he ascended.

**Acts 1:5** And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; **5**for John baptized with water, **but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”**

**TRANSITION:** Our study this morning is concerned with this subject of The Baptism and Filling with the Holy Spirit. We will ask and answer four questions. The goal is to better understand and appreciate the once for all Gift of the Holy Spirit. But we will interact with the subject recognizing that the pervasive influence of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movement has contributed to distortion and confusion about the Bible’s teaching. To be more specific, we want to address head on the question, “Is the baptism in, by, or with the Holy Spirit a SECOND WORK of grace that is usually subsequent to coming to faith in Christ, or are we baptized in, by, or with the Spirit in union with coming to faith in Christ? FOUR QUESTIONS.

1. **WHAT IS THE RELATION BETWEEN PENTECOST AND THE DISCIPLES’ EARLIER EXPERIENCES OF THE SPIRIT?**

**The disciples were genuine believers before Pentecost.**

**Matt 16:15-17**He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” **16**Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” **17**And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

**Question:** Does the fact that the disciples were believers long before they received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost suggest that their experience provides a paradigm for every believer?

A: No, it does not. The disciples were believers before all of the most significant redemptive actions were accomplished. Christ had not yet died for sins. He had not yet risen. He had not yet ascended. He had not yet, as the exalted King, poured out his Spirit.

**The disciples spanned the period of transition from old to new covenant faith.** They experienced, like every old covenant believer, the work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was not absent in the old covenant age. But his work was less widespread, less full than what characterizes his work in the new covenant age. His larger work awaited the redemption accomplished by Jesus, to whose person and work he would draw attention to and magnify.

1. **WHAT IS THE RELATION BETWEEN PENTECOST AND THE EXPERIENCES OF THE SPIRIT RECORDED IN ACTS, IN SAMARIA, IN THE HOME OF CORNELIUS, AND IN EPHESUS?**

Along with Acts 2 (the Day of Pentecost), Acts 8, Acts 10, and Acts 19 draw attention to the Holy Spirit coming down upon people that had already believed. Do these narrative accounts indicate that what happened on those occasions is a pattern for what normally happens to every follower of Jesus?

1. **The Coming of the Spirit in Samaria- Acts 8:14-17**

**Acts 8:14-17**Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, **15**who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, **16**for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. **17**Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

As with the apostles, there is described her a distinct 2nd stage in the experience of the Spirit. Those who had already believed in the Lord Jesus LATER received the Holy Spirit.We must recognize and appreciate, however, that a new redemptive epoch was being ushered in during which the now Exalted Christ had poured out his Spirit.

**Question: What was NEW about SAMARIA receiving the word of God?**

**A:** Jesus had told the disciples: **Acts 1:8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea **and Samaria**, and to the end of the earth.” A new frontier had been reached with the message of the crucified, risen, ascended, Spirit-giving Lord. The gospel had advanced beyond Jerusalem and Judea, spreading into Samaria! A huge wall had been breached!

1. **The Coming of the Spirit in the Home of Cornelius- Acts 10:1-2, 44-48**

**Acts 10:44-48** At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, **2**a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God.

44While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. **45**And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. **46**For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, **47**“Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, **who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?**” **48**And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.

Cornelius was an old covenant proselyte, a Gentile who had come to believe in the God of Israel. We don’t know if he was acquainted with the preaching and baptism of John the Baptist. Perhaps he was. He had not, however, been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Like the disciples, Cornelius spanned the transition from old covenant to new covenant. Peter interpreted his reception of the Holy Spirit as being just like his own reception of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. V 47, “(they) have received the Holy Spirit JUST AS we have”.

As with the Samaritans in Acts 8, the coming of the Spirit upon Cornelius and his household marked yet another definitive advance of the gospel.

**Question:** How does Acts 10 depict yet another major wall being breached through the message of Christ crucified, risen, and exalted?

A: Now, the gospel was reaching Gentiles! It was beginning to go “to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Remember how the Jewish believers in Jerusalem responded when they heard Peter’s report of what had happened?

**Acts 11:18** When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, “**Then to the Gentiles also** God has granted repentance that leads to life.”

1. **The Coming of the Spirit in Ephesus- Acts 19:1-7**

**Acts 19:1-7** And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. **2**And he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” And they said, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” **3**And he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” They said, “Into John's baptism.” **4**And Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus.” **5**On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. **6**And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. **7**There were about twelve men in all.

These disciples knew only the baptism of John. They had not even heard of the Holy Spirit. Once again, we’re reading of those that spanned the transition from the old covenant to the new.

And Ephesus, even more than Caesarea, where Cornelius lived, demonstrated that the message of the exalted Lord was indeed moving out from Jerusalem towards the ends of the earth. This was Christ’s program. This was the mission: Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. The promised Holy Spirit had been poured out, empowering the followers of Jesus to take his message to the people.

Having briefly surveyed Acts 8, Acts 10, and Acts 19, let me make this important point: **The Coming of the Spirit at Pentecost was a Definitive Fulfillment of a Promise that the Father Had Made to his Enthroned Son.** Jesus had promised to give his people what his Father had promised to give him once he was exalted at the right hand of the Father.

**Ps. 2:6-8** “As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.” **7**I will tell of the decree:  
The Lord said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you. **8**Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.

**Note how Peter interpreted this psalm and its fulfillment on the Day of Pentecost:**

**Acts 2:33 Being therefore exalted** at the right hand of God, **and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit**, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

The coming of the Spirit at Pentecost is no more repeatable than the crucifixion, the resurrection, or the ascension of Jesus Christ. It is a key event in the accomplishment of redemption that is directly tied to God’s Son having been exalted as the Mediator King of his people.

1. **WHAT IS THE RELATION BETWEEN PENTECOST AND THE SPIRIT-BAPTISM OF WHICH PAUL SPEAKS IN 1CO 12:13?**

**1Co 12:13** For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

Pentecostals have argued that there’s a difference in this baptism and the one described in Acts 2, 8, 10, and 19. In this one, it is alleged, the Spirit is the baptizer and the body of Christ is that into which believers are baptized. In Acts, Christ is the baptizer and the Spirit is the element.

The words, however, used in 1Co 12:13 are the same words used by John the Baptist (Mt. 3:11, Mk. 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33), by Jesus (Acts 1:5), and by the Apostle Peter, quoting Jesus (Acts 11:16).

**Matt 3:11** “I baptize you with water for 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.

**Acts 11:16** And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’

1. **WHICH, IF ANY, ELEMENTS OF PENTECOST ARE ONCE FOR ALL, AND WHICH ELEMENTS CAN BE VIEWED AS REPEATABLE AND EVEN NORMATIVE IN THE EXPERIENCE OF THE CHURCH?**
2. **Several elements of Pentecost were once for all.**

**Question: Name one of the elements of Pentecost that is not repeated in Acts itself.**

**A:** Even in Acts itself, the rush of wind and tongues of fire are not repeated. Likewise, nowhere else are disciples told to WAIT for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

It’s true that speaking in tongues is repeated in Caesarea (Cornelius, Acts 10) and Ephesus (Acts 19) and possibly in Samaria (8:17-18), where it was “seen” that the Spirit had been given.

But these 3 incidents are not normative even within the history that Acts records.

**Question: What is the most famous conversion of all that Acts records?**

**A: That of Saul of Tarsus.** But Saul did not speak in tongues. Think of the Ethiopian eunuch (8), Lydia, the Philippian jailor (16), and the 3,000 plus converted on the Day of Pentecost itself (2). None of these received a subsequent baptism of the Spirit. None spoke in tongues as a manifestation of having received the Spirit.

1. **The element of Pentecost that is repeatable, even normative, is that the Spirit fills his people, strengthening them both in character and in service.**

In the NT, two key words are used in the original to describe this being filled with the Spirit. One primarily refers to a life that is under the lordship of the Spirit, exhibiting his fruit.

**Acts 6:3** Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, **full of the Spirit** and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.

**Eph 5:18-21** And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but **be filled with the Spirit**…

The other word primarily describes being empowered in kingdom service, especially in bearing witness. The word is used to describe what happened to Elizabeth and Zacharias (Luke 1:41-43, 67-79).

**Acts 2:4** And they were all **filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak** in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

**Acts 4:31** And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and **they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak** the word of God with boldness. [Cf. 4:8-10; 9:17-20]

Clearly, this filling with the Spirit is repeatable. Peter was filled with the Spirit at the beginning of Acts 4 and again at the end of Acts 4! We can experience this kind of filling again and again. And we should pray for that, yearning for more of the exalted Christ’s presence and power in our lives and in our service.

1. **REVIVAL**

Revival is *“when professing believers are aroused and non-Christians are brought into the kingdom in large numbers, each with an individual sense of sin and need, but in the context of a widespread sense of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit” (SF, p90).*

These outpourings of the Spirit do NOT solve all problems! But they do bring monumental advances in the kingdom of Christ. We see it in Acts. And we see it in church history.

O Spirit of the Lord, prepare All the round earth her God to meet;  
Breathe thou abroad like morning air, Till hearts of stone begin to beat. (#253, TH)

1. **THE GOAL: To restore glory to a fallen creation.**

*“This world was made as a theatre for God’s glory” (Calvin).*

**Rom. 1:21** For although they knew God, **they did not honor him as God** or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

**Rom. 3:23 …**for all have sinned and **fall short of the glory** of God,

**Heb. 1:3** He is **the radiance of the glory** of God and the exact imprint of his nature…

**2Co 3:18** And we all, with unveiled face, **beholding the glory** of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image **from one degree of glory to another**. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

1. **RECEIVING THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The Father gives the Spirit (Luke 11:13). But he is also RECEIVED by individuals through FAITH.

**Gal. 3:2** Let me ask you only this: **Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith?**

**Luke 11:13** If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, **how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”**