

The Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

*The following is a sermon preached by Brother James Knox at
The Bible Baptist Church of Deland, Florida.*

Open your Bible to Ephesians 2, Hebrews 11 and John 6. Follow along with me, because I have my opinion, you have your opinion and every man in the world has his opinion, but we like to open the Bible and see what the word of God has to say. I promise you, we will not change, alter, amend, or “correct” one verse of the Bible. We hope that if we find something in our life that is lacking, we will allow God’s word to amend, alter, change and correct our lives. That is the difference between religion and Biblical Christianity. We do not sit in judgment upon the Bible. We try our very best to allow the Bible to sit in judgment upon our lives.

With these three portions of the Scripture we will lay a foundation, and then we will have five or six other stops to make in the Bible to build upon these truths.

We are in the midst of a study of what the Bible says about the matter of baptism. We have learned that baptism, according to the scriptures, is a matter of immersion in water of those who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. In a later lesson, we saw that water baptism is a good work, but that good works do not save. Therefore, water baptism is not, and can not, be the means of salvation. Rather, in every case recorded for us in the book of Acts, (that is, in the history of the early church) water baptism was something administered to those who had believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was not a rite, and was not a sacrament. It was not a ceremony. It was not performed on infants or upon those who had no idea what they were doing. It was not performed by proxy, i.e., someone being baptized for someone else. But again, according to the Bible, water baptism by immersion, that it might

picture the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and our death with Him, or our trust in that death, and a picture of our resurrection, to walk in newness of life with the Lord Jesus Christ.

It has been simply said that water baptism is a visible symbol of an inward transaction.

In this lesson we want to take a look at that inward transaction. There is in our New Testament, the doctrine that is known as the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Now let us make some comparisons. Put religion on one hand and put the Bible on the other.

Religion always emphasizes the visible. The Bible always lays the emphasis on the spiritual.

Religion emphasizes sight, with its icons, images, baptisms, offerings, robes, etc. The Bible always emphasizes faith. I believe in a God I do not see. I am bound for a heaven I have not seen. I am trusting a Jesus I have never seen, and His death upon the cross, although I did not see the cross or the empty tomb.

Religion emphasizes the building. Religious people call the building the church. The Bible calls the believers the church.

Religion emphasizes water baptism. The Bible emphasizes Holy Spirit baptism.

Religion emphasizes Christ on the wall or Christ on the necklace. The Bible emphasizes Christ in the heart.

Religion emphasizes good works done by man for God. The Bible emphasizes good works done by God for man. My trust is not in the good things I have done for God, but in the good things God has done for me. That is why I have confidence and assurance. I know my works don't count for anything in the sight of God. They may count for something in your sight. You may say, "Brother James is a fine man. He is a diligent minister. He is a faithful husband and father," and that may mean something to you. But my works in the eyes of the holy God are not very impressive.

So I choose to trust what He did for me, rather than what I have done for Him.

Now notice the order in Ephesians chapter 2:1-3. ***And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.*** What

was my part? I was dead in trespasses and sins. What was God's part? He quickened me. ***Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.***

God says everyone has lived the life of sin, rebellion, disobedience and transgression. For those who have been quickened by God, that life is rendered in the past tense.

I realize our churches are full of people living wicked lives, rebellious lives and disobedient lives and that such people call themselves Christians. But if I wore a sign around my neck saying, "I am the President of the United States," I would only be kidding myself. Such a declaration would not make me the President.

Look at verse four, ***But God...*** Hallelujah. In verse two is my disobedience. In verse three are my lusts. In verse three I am labeled a child of wrath. Yet, in verse four and five is the glorious news, ***But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;).***

Religion says, "Yes, you may be a bad person living a bad life. Get all that cleaned up and straightened out and then come to God and He will give you a home in heaven."

But the Bible says I am in sin, living a wicked life of disobedience, but God loved me while I was yet in my sins. The word declares Jesus Christ quickens me and gives me new life.

And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of – not of our good works --no, but the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

In heaven, no one is boasting of the church they attended. In heaven, no one is bragging about the good things they did. In heaven, all the praise goes to Jesus Christ, because everyone there knows had it not been for Jesus Christ, they would not have

been there. So He does the saving. He does the good works. And He gets all the praise.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast (Ephesians 2:8-9). So you say, “Well, then we will just live how we want to live. Exactly. We do just what we want to do. Precisely.

Every unsaved man does what he wants to do. He wants to pursue the lusts of his flesh. He wants to live in sin, and that is what he does. Every truly regenerated and born again believer wants to live for the Lord Jesus Christ, to bring honor and glory to Him, and that is what he does. No truly saved individual is serving the Lord because he has to, because of the fear of death or execution at the hands of God. Rather, all such service is the outworking of a thankful heart.

Verse 10 of our passage states: ***For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.***

For example, water baptism is a good work, performed by believers. If you perform that good work before you are in Jesus Christ by God’s grace, through faith, it counts for nothing. It won’t get you in Christ. Once you are in Christ, a life of good works will follow. That is why God saved you. That is why God re-created you in Christ, to live a life of good works.

So again, religion puts the harness on the cart, and then puts the reins in the horse’s mouth. It has the whole thing backwards. We are saved by grace, through faith in Christ Jesus by the operation of God and THEN the good works follow.

Next we read Hebrews 11:1. ***Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*** Ephesians 2:8-9 says, ***For by grace are ye saved, through faith...*** What is faith by Biblical definition? It is the evidence of things NOT seen. Then water baptism is not the way of salvation. You can see it. Church membership is not the way of salvation. You can see it. Giving is not the way of salvation. You can see it.

These all may be good works, but good works are the outworking of salvation. They can not purchase salvation.

Next we go to John 6:63. Some of you may say, “That guy thinks he is better than anyone else. He says he is going to

heaven.” No, I think Jesus Christ is good enough to get me there, and apart from Jesus Christ, I would not open my mouth about going to heaven, because I know I would never get there. John 6:63 is setting the stage for what the Bible says about Spirit baptism. Jesus Christ is speaking, and He says, ***It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.***

Where does this quickening, life-giving, regenerating power come from? Not the flesh. Whatever deeds or works I might perform in my flesh would profit me nothing in the eyes of God. The quickening I need, the rebirth, the passing from death unto life, from a child of disobedience dead in trespasses and sins, to a child of God alive in Jesus Christ, that quickening power comes from, by, through, and in the Spirit of the living God.

There are four Biblical passages that speak of the baptism of the Spirit, and none of them have to do with someone jabbering in a church service. It doesn't matter what you and I think the baptism of the Spirit is. All that matters is what the Bible says the baptism of the Spirit is. The first of these passages is in Luke chapter three, where we see John the Baptist preparing the way for Jesus, as prophesied in Isaiah chapter forty.

And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire (Luke 3:15-16).

John puts up a barrier. He puts up a division and says he was baptizing with water, but someone else was coming who would baptize in an entirely different fashion. John said the one who was coming would baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

In rushes the careless minister. He sees someone in a church service jumping about in excitement and enthusiasm. There is nothing wrong with excitement and enthusiasm, but it must not be confused with sound doctrine. The preacher, mishandling the word of God says, “Glory to God. He got the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire.”

No! The same one whom John has announced, the same one John is introducing, baptizes with the Holy Ghost and with fire. But you will receive one of those baptisms or the other. No one will ever receive both.

Let us go on and look at verse sixteen, which does not end with a period. It ends with a colon, which means we have an additional thought in verse seventeen, ***Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will, first, gather the wheat into his garner; second, but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.*** John says Jesus is going to baptize number one, with the Holy Ghost, number two with fire.

Lest you think the two are the same, he goes on in verse seventeen to illustrate. There is wheat that is good grain. It is going to be gathered in, and the Lord is going to keep that for Himself. And then there is chaff, which is no good, which is going to be burned. John says there is a baptism of the Holy Ghost, whereby the Lord receives the good grain and gathers it unto Himself to be kept, and there is the baptism of fire, whereby the worthless chaff is burned up.

These are two entirely different baptisms, but the same baptizer.

Now turn in your Bible to 1 Corinthians 12. Jesus will baptize with the Holy Ghost. Anyone who receives that baptism with the Holy Ghost, or of the Spirit, will be gathered unto the Lord. ***For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit*** (1 Corinthians 12:13). So, those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, are said to be baptized by the Holy Spirit. They are not said to be baptized by a man into water, but by the Holy Spirit, into the body of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Someone replies, "Well, I don't understand that. I can't comprehend all the depths of that." No man living can comprehend the depths of an eternal, everlasting God and His wonderful works for the sons of men, but that is what He said in His word.

Now come back up to 1 Corinthians 12:3. ***Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God***

callesth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Popular religious phraseology today is “Jesus is Lord.” You hear it all over the place. But that is not the proclamation the Bible tells us to look for. The confession is not that Jesus is Lord. He is not one among many. The confession is “Jesus is **the** Lord.” He is the only one.

Now look at verses four to six in the chapter at hand. ***Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.*** (Do you see the trinity in those verses? The Spirit, verse four; the Lord, verse five; God, verse six. That is no writer’s trick. That is God pointing out something to you).

Notice everyone who has been saved and born again gets the same Spirit. The one Holy Spirit is given to every believer.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: (1 Corinthians 12:7-11). All believers receive the Spirit. All believers will manifest the indwelling presence of the Spirit. HOWEVER, not all believers will manifest the Spirit in the same way. This much is clear from the passage. If you have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, having trusted Him as your personal Savior, the Holy Spirit of God placed you into the body of Christ. As part of your new birth, to enable you to be a blessing and a help to others, the indwelling Holy Spirit has gifted every truly born again believer. Every truly born again believer, who has been so gifted, will manifest those gifts in their life. But everyone won’t do the same thing. And everyone who has a similar gift will not exercise it in the same way. There are different manifestations. There are diversities. There are different operations. There are different administrations.

You can not say that every saved man will be a pastor. Nor can you say that every preacher will preach in the same manner with the same emphasis and the same demeanor. But this much

you can say; every saved, born again believer will manifest in his life some working of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

I take a lot of criticism for this, but I still can't find anywhere in the New Testament epistles where a person can be saved and born again, and not be showing some evidence of it in their life. You can't find that in the Bible.

Next, look in Romans chapter six. The Holy Spirit of God places all believers into the body of Christ. That is the baptism of the Spirit. You are immersed. You are placed fully into Jesus Christ. The Spirit will be manifest in the life of the believer. From Romans 6:1, we read, ***What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*** "Well, I'm saved by grace. If it doesn't matter how you live, if you are going to heaven because of God's grace and not by your good works, I may as well just go out and live in sin." What does he say to such a libertine attitude? ***God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*** (v.2). Now watch carefully. ***Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man, (Ephesians 2:2-3) is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin*** (vv. 3-7).

Ephesians 2 said I was a child of wrath. It was my nature as a disobedient sinner to go after the lusts of my flesh. I can go through every program, through every rehab, and join every church in town. But there is something on the inside of me that tends to go the wrong way every time. I can pay some shrink forty dollars an hour to tell me it was your grandma's fault or my daddy's fault. I can join a political party that will tell me it is the fault of the economic system I am living under. I can find something or someone to help me excuse my actions, but the truth of the matter is, I am going to go the wrong way every time.

This is true of every one of us. You may fight it. You may war with it. You may lament over it. But there is something on the inside that pulls you in the wrong direction.

So how marvelous to learn that the Bible says, when you trust the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior and the Holy Spirit of God places you into the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, that the death He died on the cross of Calvary becomes your death. That is what the water baptism pictures. My old life is dead. It is over. I am buried. It is done.

A man can sing a song his granddaddy wrote before he died, but his granddaddy is not going to stand up and sing it with him. His life is over and done. That is the picture. God is placing me into the Lord Jesus Christ, and my old life of sin is over and done.

You may reply, "Well, I don't want to be a Christian if you can't live a full life and have a good time."

Agreed. But, not only are we dead with Him, but then God says He did not leave us there. That is why when we baptize people we don't hold them under the water until they drown. We bring them back up, and that is also a picture of something. It is a picture that Jesus was laid in the tomb, but three days and three nights later He rose from the dead. And if I don't miss my guess, He is not bored. He is not miserable. If I don't miss my guess, He is having a wonderful time in *bringing many sons to glory*, and enjoying the praise and worship of the heavenly host.

So the Bible says the saved are not just dead – unable to do anything but wait until Jesus comes to take them to Heaven. No, we are not only buried with Christ, but we are raised to walk in newness of life. We are no longer a slave to our lusts, no longer a slave to our passions, no longer with a ring in our nose being led around by every sin that comes down the road.

I am free now; free to live a decent, clean, holy life of peace and satisfaction, and all that was done by the work of God's Holy Spirit, when I believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. I did not bury myself with Him. I did not raise myself from the dead. Every one of these passages we have read are giving honor and glory to God, for what God has done on our behalf. We have not read one word about what we had to do for God to earn these things.

Our next stop is Colossians 2. ***Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power...***(Colossians 2:8-10).

In steps religion again. If religion can't keep you from coming to Jesus Christ, it will show up as soon as you get in Christ, and try to mess you up.

What if you don't live it?

What if you don't hold on?

What if you don't know enough?

Remember, in 1 Corinthians 12, the Holy Spirit placed me in Christ. Now Colossians 2 says, ***For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye, the believers, are complete in him.*** Not only did He put me in Christ, bury the old life, and raise me up to live a new life, but in Christ I have everything I need to live the Christian life on this earth. The Father has made me complete in Jesus Christ.

In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross (Colossians 2:11-14).

All my transgressions, all my offenses, all my crimes against the holy God were borne by Jesus in His body on the cross. As a sinner, when I came to God and put my faith and my trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, I was saved without the deeds of human hands.

We are not talking about a physical rite or ceremony of the church. The operation whereby I am saved is one performed without hands. God performs a *spiritual* operation. He cuts me off from the sins of my past. I am free. I am no longer in

bondage to that life of sin. I have been cut loose. It is a separation, not by something I have done, not by something another man has done on my behalf, but by the operation of God Almighty, in and through His Holy Spirit.

That is why we sing the song,
I need no other argument,
I need no other plea.
It is enough that Jesus died,
and that He died for me.

So the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the operation whereby the Spirit of God places the believer into the body of Jesus Christ. The death of Jesus becomes the believer's death. The resurrection of Jesus becomes the believer's resurrection. The saved are free to walk in newness of life, in fellowship with the Lord.

Now, you may not want that. You may not desire that. Someone with whom I went to school wrote me a letter and said, "All those years that you knew about God and knew about the Bible, how come you never lived for the Lord?"

Honestly, everyone I knew who went to church and was active in church was either miserable (at least they appeared to be) or were ashamed (at least they acted as though they did not want anyone to know they were Christians). They couldn't do this, they couldn't do that, and they couldn't go there.

My attitude was, and still is, "If I can't have a good time, I don't want any part of it." I was never around Christians who were having a good time living for Jesus Christ.

"Well, didn't you go to youth activities at church?" you ask. Yes, and as soon as I got out of sight of the preacher or Sunday school teacher, out came all the sins I had practiced from my youth up. What good was it?

So you too may say, "I am not interested in that church stuff. Religion is for women and old people. When I get ready to die, I'll try to get right with God. But right now, I don't need it."

But, there is another baptism. The same one who baptizes with the Holy Ghost also baptizes with fire.

Find two places in the scripture, Revelation 19 and Ezekiel 20.

In Revelation 19:20, we read, ***And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.***

Now what is water baptism? It is immersion into water. In every case of water baptism recorded in the Bible, the recipient went down into the water.

What is Holy Spirit baptism? It is the process whereby the Holy Spirit immerses the believer into Jesus Christ.

Do you know what happens to the beast, the false prophet and those who took the mark of the beast? They are immersed in a lake of fire.

Look at Revelation 20:9-15. ***And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell (these are men and women standing before God, to be judged according to their works. What happens to them?) and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.***

Consider Revelation 21:8. ***But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.***

Now, look back for just a minute to Revelation 20, because those men and women who are bound for hell were always trying to get rid of the place. I don't know anyone who knows Jesus Christ as their Savior, who is on their way to Heaven, who is the least concerned about what the temperature is in the lake of fire. They are not going there. But people who have a sneaking suspicion they are headed that way are always trying to get rid of the place, or at least improve it. They say, "Well, this isn't literal." They say there really is a throne in verse eleven, there really are people standing in verse twelve, there really is a God, in verse twelve, there really are books and really is a judgment, but in verse thirteen, hell there really means the city garbage dump. Or maybe it means annihilation. Or it could be a bad frame of mine. Anything but what the Bible actually says.

Such infidels think this is modern thought, or something they call "new age." In our new enlightened, modern generation, men and women don't believe that old primitive hell-fire and damnation stuff anymore. They claim to be more enlightened than that. Yet, they are no more enlightened than those living in the Babylonian captivity of 800-700 BC.

Go to Ezekiel 20:45-49. Let us travel back several hundred years before the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ, for a modern, updated, enlightened view of a Hell.

Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face toward the south, and drop thy word toward the south, and prophesy against the forest of the south field; And say to the forest of the south, Hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree: the flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south to the north shall be burned therein. And all flesh shall see that I the LORD have kindled it: it shall not be quenched. Then said I, Ah Lord GOD! they say of me, Doth he not speak parables?

You are not very modern if you say that talk about hell is just a parable. You are not very up to date, if you say that such passages are not literal but are just figurative speaking. Unbelievers were saying that hundreds of years before Jesus showed up.

Ezekiel said, The Lord is going to send a fire. He is going to burn you up, if you don't get right. And his audience said, Oh, that is just a parable. It doesn't really mean to burn us up. It kind of means inflation and gas prices are going to be higher next year.

Anything but what God says.

Men want a literal heaven from the Bible, but not a literal hell from the same source. Men want a literal God, but a fellow in red leotards with a pointed tail for a devil. Men want to believe in light, but deny darkness. Men want the good but work overtime to explain away the evil.

The truth of the matter is, the same Lord Jesus who baptizes with the Holy Ghost, baptizes with fire. If you believe on Him, by faith and trust His finished work, His Holy Spirit will immerse you into Jesus Christ, where you can enjoy life for evermore. If you refuse Him and trust in your works, (no matter what kind they be, good, bad, or in between), you will receive the baptism of fire. You will not suffer this immersion because you are a bad person, but because you did not receive the only Savior that God provided for man, the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So there are two baptisms which Jesus administers, the baptism of the Holy Ghost and the baptism of fire.

The Lord leaves it up to you to decide which one of those you will receive.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved
(Acts 16:31).

Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12).