

Acts 1:1-5

In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach 2 until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. 3 After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. 4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit

Acts study – why study a history book? The Gospels introduce us into the life and ministry of Jesus while Acts introduces us to the creation of the church. What ties the Gospels & the book of Acts together = the **Holy Spirit**. A few of us know a lot about the Holy Spirit, but a lot more of us who don't know much about it at all.

The Holy Spirit:

1.) Had a very limited role in the **Old Testament**. The Holy Spirit would come upon select individuals for a particular role; empower them to act, and then leave. He was only for a few people for special events. Joel 2:28-29 looks forward to the time when the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon ALL people, not just the select few.

2.) He is the **3rd Person** of the Trinity! "He" is not an "it" or a "ghost."

3.) He convicts us of sin and brings us to salvation in Christ.

4.) He is the "The Helper." We are not left alone. John 14 & 16 are the places where Jesus spoke about the Holy Spirit.

5.) He reproduces the life of Jesus within a believer.

6.) He empowers us to live as His disciples (Acts 1:8).

7.) He gives us Gifts (I Corinthians 12 and 14) and helps cultivate "Fruit" of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 13, Galatians 5:22-23)

Historical context –the disciples had seen Jesus Ministry (both doing/teaching), the ascension, post-resurrection appearances, the topic of his conversation (Jesus' 40 Days study on "the KOG"). It culminates in his one command (*wait for the gift my Father promised*)

1:6 shows they are still confused. They are thinking inside the box. But after the day of Pentecost in Acts 2, they never ask again about the political nature of the Messiah or the Church. They understand that Jesus did not come to overthrow Rome and to grant political freedom to the nation of Israel, but that He came to usher in the Kingdom of God for all people.

Our key verse: 1:5 *For **John** baptized with water;*

John the Baptist was the great link between the Old and the New Testament. He was the forerunner for Christ. He preached a message of repentance. He also baptized people

(hence his name) for the forgiveness of their sin. When John baptized people it meant they were going to be “dipped” or “immersed.”

*but in a few days you will be **baptized with the Holy Spirit***

Jesus, has a different baptism and a different meaning from John. Jesus did not actually baptize anyone. He does not use water, but baptizes us with the Holy Spirit. He pours out His Spirit upon all flesh (as Joel 2:28-29 yearned for).

Water baptism is of a one-time nature. It is about **initiation**. It marks a beginning point in the Christian life. “I was baptized on such and such a date.” For those baptized as infants, it is an initiation into the Christian life, but the vows are parental in nature. The infant grows and takes vows of initiation at their confirmation. Our liturgy is: “Until he or she by the power of God shall accept for himself or herself the gift of salvation and be confirmed as a full and responsible member of Christ’s holy church.”

Personally, I was baptized as an infant, confirmed in the 6th grade, but never truly gave my life to Christ until I was in the 9th grade. It was at this point where I made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as truly being my Lord and Savior. I had joined the church previously, but did so because that’s what I was supposed to do.

The process that was developing in me is best understood in terms of explaining God’s grace in 3 categories:

- 1.) **Prevenient** Grace (literally, the “come before” grace). This is God’s wooing, or calling us to Him. This is like a couple dating.
- 2.) **Justifying** Grace. This is our receiving Christ as Savior of our lives. This is like a couple getting married: “I do!” People refer to this in different terms (“conversion,” being “born again,” “regeneration,” “being saved,” etc.)
- 3.) **Sanctifying** Grace. This is our cooperation with God’s. If justification is where we “marry” God, sanctification is what we do to build upon after the wedding vows. There are certain things we can do to create a good marriage, and certain things which will sabotage it.

When Jesus introduces “the gift” He uses terms of initiation. He uses the term “**baptized**” to mark the beginning point of the journey.

<u>Water Baptism</u>	<u>HS Baptism</u>
"dipped" or "immersed"	“uniting with”
Outward & Visible	Inward & Invisible
Done by another human	Done by God
MY Confession of Faith	My being Changed/Empowered for Ministry (Witness/sharing the Gospel)
Jesus as Savior	Jesus as Savior and Lord
Justification	Justification + Sanctification

One time event

Be Filled continually

The HS comes into our lives @ the time of conversion. 1 Corinthians 12:3 *Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.*

The Gift is the HS, not speaking in tongues or some other gift. The Holy Spirit gives all believers gifts. Some speak in tongues; others do not. (See 1 Corinthians 12)

Application:

How am I “baptized with the Holy Spirit?”

- 1.) Give your life to Jesus Christ. Invite Him to come into your life as your Savior. Recognize that while God loves us, we have all sinned and fallen short of God’s glorious ideal. All persons stand in need of redemption. Jesus came from heaven to teach us, to be an example, and to die for our sins. His claims are forever validated because of the resurrection.
- 2.) You may have a definite emotional experience that is deeply personal or it may be more of a slow and gradual process. Your experience will be uniquely yours. Do not compare yourself with others.

Am I being filled with the Holy Spirit?

- 1.) Make yourself available to the work of the Holy Spirit. Open yourself. This is done through prayer and Bible Study. It also happens in Christian community and in places of service. God not only wants to be in us, God wants to empower us to act. The Book of Acts is about this.
- 2.) Here’s a good question: “Am I under Jesus’ command or am I my own commander? Have I drifted away?”
- 3.) Note what is happening in your life. Are you growing in your faith? Am I changing in my attitude from a worldly perspective to a godly one? Are you sharing your faith with others? Are you finding other Christian companions? Is your heart prone to worship (and not just on Sunday)? Are you growing in your understanding of the Bible? Are you developing a generous heart in regards to your money, your prayer life, and your service?
- 4.) Don’t go seeking an experience, simply seek Jesus. There can be a sense of pride with this.

One Caution

Don’t get legalistic on this! Don’t insist that your experience is the only way. There is a certain amount of mystery in this!

(Dick Read recommends John Stott’s book on Baptism and Fullness.)