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HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM

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Concerning Holy Spirit baptism, John, the forerunner of Christ, said:

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

"Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Matt. 3:11,12.

(Note: Where the King James Version uses "Ghost" the American Standard uses "Spirit." They are used interchangeably in this tract.)

This passage should be considered in the light of the time and circumstances in which it was spoken; and in the light of its fulfillment.

John was addressing a mixed audience. Some were righteous and some were not. Of some in his audience, he said: "O generation

of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" It is further evident that John has two classes in mind by the illustration of the wheat and the chaff. Therefore, we should not draw the conclusion that the same ones who were to receive the baptism of the Spirit were to also receive the baptism in fire.

HOLY SPIRIT AND FIRE DISTINGUISHED

When Jesus, after the resurrection and before his ascension, had the Apostles assembled he told them that they would be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence, Acts 1:5. Jesus omits the baptism of fire. Evidently, therefore, the Apostles did not receive it.

In addition to the illustration used by John, other passages associate fire with the punishment of the wicked at the end of the world, II Thess. 1:7-9; II Pet. 3:7.

FACTS ABOUT HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM

1. It was always a promise and never a command.
2. There are only two recorded cases in the New Testament: Acts 2, the Jews; and

Acts 10, the Gentiles. Joel's prophecy was fulfilled when all flesh—both Jews and Gentiles received it.

3. The purpose of Spirit baptism was to fill a definite need. It was to endow the Apostles with power to accurately recall and teach the truth, Jno. 14-26; to be guided into new truth, Jno. 16:13; and to confirm their mission and their message with miracles, Mk. 16:20, Heb. 2:3,4. When Cornelius and his house received it, it was to assure the Gentiles and to convince the Jews that salvation is for Gentiles the same as for Jews, Acts 11:18; 15:7,8,

4. *Holy Spirit baptism was always accompanied with miraculous power.* The Apostles spoke in tongues — which were languages that could be understood, Acts 2:4-6. They could also do other miraculous things, Acts 2:43; 5:12. Cornelius and his house also spoke in tongues, Acts 10:46. There is no record that they performed other miracles; but Peter said, ". . . *the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.*" Acts 11:15.

The Apostles were to be witnesses for Christ; but he did not send them out without power to confirm their mission and their

message as both being of Divine authority. He assured them that they would receive this power when the Holy Spirit came upon them in a baptismal degree, Acts 1:5; 1:8 Lk. 24:49. Some of the powers that they had are as follows:

"And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

"So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." Mk. 16: 17-20.

The Apostles could also raise the dead, Acts 9:41; 20:12.

If men today received the same baptism, they would have the same powers; if not, why not? If they do not have miraculous manifestations that accompanied Holy Ghost baptism, it is evident that they do not have the baptism.

5. Holy Spirit baptism never knocked a person down. The Apostles were sitting up (not lying down at the altar) when they received it, Acts 2:2. The Spirit fell on Cornelius as Peter "began to speak," Acts 11:15. It was not after a great excitement was worked up.

6. Holy Spirit baptism never did make a person run, jump, or fall and act like a maniac. It was an evil spirit that caused a boy to fall and foam at the mouth, Mk. 9:17,18.

APOSTOLIC HANDS

In the cases of Holy Spirit baptism, the Spirit overwhelmed, or took control of the minds of the recipients and gave them miraculous power. In addition to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, miraculous power was also given by the laying on of Apostolic hands.

1. In the Jerusalem church, signs and wonders were done *only by the Apostles*, Acts 2:43; 5:12. This was true UNTIL AFTER THE APOSTLES LAID HANDS ON THE SEVEN who were chosen to serve tables, Acts 6:6—THEN both Stephen and Philip performed miracles, they evidently

could not impart this power to others. After many of the Samaritans received the word, believing and being baptized, Acts 8:12, 13; the Apostles sent Peter and John from Jerusalem to Samaria to lay hands on at least some of the new converts and give them the Holy Ghost, Acts 8:14-18. If Philip could have given them the Holy Spirit, why were Peter and John sent to do so? What Simon wanted to buy was power to give the Spirit to others by the laying of his hands, Acts 8:19.

3. Another case is Paul and the Ephesians, Acts 19:1-7. These men who had been baptized unto John's baptism, were rebaptized by Paul into Christ as John's baptism was no longer valid. *"And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."*

"ONE BAPTISM"

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Eph. 4:4-6.

The first case of Holy Spirit baptism, the

Apostles, Acts 2:4, was about A. D. 33. The last recorded case, Cornelius and his house, was about A. D. 41. When Paul penned Ephesians, and said there is one baptism, it was about A. D. 64. Thus, it was about 23 years after the last example of Holy Spirit baptism that Paul wrote and said there is "one baptism."

There are a number of passages that show that this one baptism is water baptism. In this same book, Eph. 5:25-27, Paul declared that the church had been sanctified and cleansed by the washing of water by the word. The expression "washing of water" most certainly refers to water baptism.

About the same time, Peter wrote and said that Baptism is in water, I Pet.. 3:20,21. Since there is just one baptism and it is in water, therefore, Holy Spirit baptism had ceased by this time.

NO HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM TODAY

Since baptism of the Spirit ceased even before the death of all the Apostles, we need not expect it today.

(1) *There is no need for it today.* It fulfilled its purpose in the first century of making possible the revelation and confirmation

of the great salvation. It was never given, primarily, for the personal benefit of the recipients. We now have the truth revealed, confirmed, and written. There is no claim for needing the baptism of the Spirit but what it can be pointed out that the word of God supplies that need. Christians of the first century did not have the New Testament, but it was being written by inspired men. They lived in the age of inspired men. WE ARE LIVING IN THE AGE OF THE INSPIRED BOOK.

(2) *There is no evidence of it.* There is no one today that has the baptism of the Holy Ghost. All who make such claim, regardless of how honest and sincere they may be, are either self-deceived or have been deceived. If a person had it, he could perform miracles: raise the dead, heal the sick, drink deadly poison, speak in foreign languages, open eyes of the blind, remove glass eyes, and replace cork legs, etc. AFTER THE APOSTLES RECEIVED THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT, *they never tried to heal a person and failed*, "and they were healed every one." Acts 5:16.

BURDEN OF PROOF

Logically the burden of proof falls on

those who make the claim for special power. Can they prove it? Nay, verily! Their proof is lacking; and their claims bog down in a multitude of absurdities, inconsistencies, and contradictions. They try to prove their miracles by the Bible. The Apostles proved their word *by their miracles*. Paul's preaching was "in demonstration of the Spirit." I Cor. 2:4; II Cor. 12:12. He did not just argue that he had miraculous power—he demonstrated it. Signs were for the unbelieving, I Cor. 14:22; they were to make believers, Mk. 16:20.

It is scriptural to test a man's claims. We are commanded to try the spirits, I Jno. 4:1. Jesus commended the church in Ephesus for it: ". . . *thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.*" Rev. 2:2.

INCONSISTENT SITUATION

There are many religious bodies claiming to have the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Yet they are not in fellowship; and they differ in their doctrine and practice. If the Spirit were guiding them, they would all teach the same things; and they would all be in fellowship. If not, why not?

God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. Yet confusion is characteristic of the

“Baptism-of-the-Holy-Ghost” sects. There is neither command nor example to “carry on” as they do.

No religious group claiming spiritual gifts can establish their claims. No one group can establish their claims over those of the others. They all offer practically the same kind of “evidence.” They jabber and expect us to believe that it is a tongue. They want us to believe that *they* have seen persons healed, instead of demonstrating so we can see for ourselves. They claim that they have raised the dead, but they refuse to go to the cemetery and prove it. Jesus went to the tomb to raise Lazarus and he had been dead four days, Jno. 11:17.

The Apostles established their claims by their miracles. Men today try to establish their “miracles” by their claims.

Jesus said, “By their fruits ye shall know them,” as he was speaking of true and false teachers. What does a teacher or a religious body teach? All who claim to have Holy Spirit baptism **TEACH AND PRACTICE THINGS CONTRARY TO THE BIBLE.** This we are prepared to prove, and challenge anyone to deny it in public discussion.

CONCLUSIVE PROOF

They do not have the Lord's Supper in their weekly worship on the first day of the week as the early Christian did, Acts 20:7.

They add mechanical music to their worship when the Bible plainly declares that the **KIND OF MUSIC GOD WANTS IS SINGING**, Eph. 5:19; and we are taught not to add to or take from God's word, Rev. 22:18,19.

They cannot converse with foreigners in this or any other country. Hence, they cannot speak in tongues. They work themselves up into a semi-hypnotic condition and merely utter a senseless jargon.

They cannot do other miraculous things as could the Apostles; such as, drinking deadly poison, and raising the dead.

They teach (few exceptions) sinners to "pray through" at the altar and there is no such teaching and practice found in the New Testament. Paul prayed for three days and could not "get through;" he had to obey through, so he was commanded: "*Arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord,*" Acts 22:16. If a

sinner can be saved at the altar, then he cannot be baptized "for the remission of sins" as the Spirit declared through Peter, Acts 2:38. Jesus also put baptism between the sinner and salvation, Mk. 16:16. When a person insists that he *knows by feeling* that he is saved before and without being baptized in water "for the remission of sins," he is contradicting what the Spirit and Jesus teach. He is also claiming salvation apart from the blood of Jesus because we are baptized into his death and benefits of his blood, Rom. 6:3,4, Eph. 1:7.

They teach there are three baptisms—the Bible teaches that there is only one, Eph. 4:5 and that it is in water, I Pet. 3:20,21.

They refuse to follow the pattern of the New Testament church in its organization which consisted of elders and deacons, evangelists and teachers. There were no centralized headquarters, and no human head, nor general overseer. See Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1; I Tim. 3; Eph. 1:22,23.

Kind reader, how can anyone have the audacity to claim baptism of the Holy Ghost when he refuses to follow the teaching of the Holy Ghost as revealed in the New Testament?

The fact that the so-called "Baptism-of-the-Holy-Ghost sects flatly deny what both the Spirit and Christ teach sinners to do to be saved, worship a different way, and maintain a different organization to the church revealed in the New Testament is undeniable proof that their claims are false.

THEY ARE NOT BEING LED BY THE SPIRIT—THEY ARE NOT EVEN FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT — AND MOST CERTAINLY NOT BAPTIZED WITH THE SPIRIT.

REPLY TO ARGUMENTS

1. "Holy Ghost baptism is for all time because Jesus is the same, Heb. 13:9."

Reply: He is the same in character—but not in method. God is the same. Mal. 3:6; but his law changed, Heb. 7:12. Jesus once walked the earth in fashion as a man, but he is not doing so today. He confirmed his Divine Sonship with miracles; but he is not performing miracles today. "These are written that ye might believe," Jno. 20:30,31.

2. "The gospel needs to be confirmed constantly."

Reply: A TRUTH ONCE CONFIRMED AND PROPERLY RECORDED IS FOREVER CONFIRMED. The Apostles confirmed their mission and their message as being from God by their miracles, Mk. 16: 20. The great salvation "WAS CONFIRMED," Heb. 2:3,4. It is not necessary that Christ repeat his miracles, or that the Apostles repeat theirs. *We now have the written record.*

3. "Signs are to follow all that believe."

Reply: (1) Signs and miracles of the first century confirmed the Divine origin of Christianity, *and serve as credentials for all believers.* But not all believers of the first century could perform miracles. (2) The 3000 could not do so—only the Apostles, Acts 2:43; 5:12. This was true UNTIL AFTER the Apostles laid hands on the seven, Acts 6:6. Immediately thereafter Stephen and Philip performed miracles, Acts 6:8; 8:6. (3) The Samaritans who believed and were baptized could not perform any signs UNTIL AFTER the Apostles laid hands on them, Acts 8:12-18. (4) Regardless of how strong a person's faith is today he cannot perform signs or miracles. *Hence, these facts prove that it was never God's plan that all believers do signs and wonders.*

4. "The gift of the Holy Ghost is the baptism of the Holy Ghost and is promised to all who are baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of sins."

Reply: The answer to the previous argument also answers this one.

(1) Those baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of sins received "the gift" as promised in Acts 2:38—but they could not perform miracles, Acts 2:43; 5:12; 8:16-18.

(2) But all who had Holy Ghost baptism could perform miracles, Acts 2:4; 10:44-46.

(3) *Therefore, "the gift" as promised in Acts 2:38 is not the baptism of the Holy Ghost.*

5. "But," it is insisted, "the promise is unto you, and to your children; and this has reference to Holy Ghost baptism."

Reply: "The promise" here cannot mean Holy Ghost baptism. Proof: The fact that all who were baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of sins received "the promise" yet they could not perform miracles—

UNLESS the Apostles laid hands on them proves it.

The Jews were interested in "the promise" made to Abraham—that in him and his seed all nations were to be blessed, Acts 26:6. John said, "*And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.*" I Jno. 2:25. All who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. "*And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise.*" Gal. 3:27-29. (See Eph. 2:8; Rom. 6:23).

6. "Was Paul baptized with the Holy Spirit? if so, does this not make more than two cases of Holy Spirit baptism?"

Reply: Paul was evidently baptized with the Holy Spirit, but it is not recorded. There are two recorded cases.

7. "Holy Spirit baptism puts one into the body or church and I Cor. 12:13 so teaches."

Reply: (1) All who received Holy Spirit baptism could speak in tongues, Acts 2:4; 10:44-46.

(2) But all in the church in Corinth could not speak in tongues, I Cor. 12:30.

(3) *Therefore, they all had not been baptized with the Spirit.*

(1) Through the agency of Spirit-guided men, the Corinthians (and all Christians of the first century) had been baptized into the body of Christ, I Cor. 12:13.

(2) But they all had not been baptized with the Spirit—if so they all could have spoken in tongues.

(3) *Therefore, the baptism of I Cor. 12:13 is water baptism.*

8. "The baptism of the great commission, Matt. 28:18-20, Mk. 16:15,16, is Holy Ghost baptism."

Reply: (1) This baptism was to be performed by men—and men cannot baptize with the Holy Ghost. (2) This baptism is essential to salvation, Holy Ghost baptism never was. *Therefore, this baptism which was performed by the Apostles and their co-laborers and is to continue "even unto the end of the world," is water baptism.*

9. "Holy Spirit baptism is needed to remove all desire to sin and thus enable one to live above sin."

Reply: Holy Spirit baptism never did do

this. Peter sinned after being baptized with the Spirit, Gal. 2:11-14. Paul had to keep his body under subjection constantly, I Cor. 9-27.

10. "Spirit baptism is needed to remove 'inborn' sin."

Reply: There is no such thing. Sin is transgression of law, I Jno. 3:4. "*The son shall NOT bear the iniquity of the father . . .*" Ezk. 18:20.

WARNING—LYING WONDERS

Be not deceived. Both Jesus and Paul warned against signs and lying wonders being used to deceive, Matt. 24:24, II Thess. 2:10-12. God sends a strong delusion to those who love not the truth—that they may believe a lie and be damned. Is it not evident that a person does not love the truth when he follows his feelings instead of the truth? Those who believe that Spirit baptism and miraculous gifts are in operation today deny and reject some of the most clear-cut and plain passages—as previously pointed out.

The pretended miracles today are merely counterfeits of the original. They are "lying

wonders." No true follower of Christ is going to claim that he has power that he does not have. For one to do so makes it evident that he is deceived.

THE MIRACULOUS HAS CEASED

In I Cor. 13:8-10, Paul teaches that the miraculous gifts would cease when that which is perfect is come. We now have the perfect law of liberty, Jas. 1:25—the complete and final revelation of Gods will. In Eph. 4:10-16, it is taught that spiritual gifts were of a temporary nature and were to last only "TILL we all attain unto the unity of THE faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God . . ." The faith was once for all delivered to the saints, Jude 3. The faith has been revealed, delivered, confirmed, and recorded. That which is perfect has come; that which was miraculous has ceased.

CONCLUSION

Yes, we believe in the Spirit. We believe that he operates today through the Spirit-inspired word. The word is the sword of the Spirit, Eph. 6:17. There is a sense in which God, Christ, and the Spirit all dwell in Christians: those who believe, repent, confess, and are baptized for the remission of sins, Mk.

16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-4; 10:10; II Cor. 6:16; Acts 5:32. It is explained that Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, Eph. 3:17. Paul admonishes that we be filled with the Spirit, Eph. 5:18; and in a parallel passage, he says: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly . . ." Col. 3:16.

We must be led by the teaching of the Spirit in becoming a Christian and in living the Christian life, Rom. 8:14. If we permit the Spirit-inspired word of Christ to dwell in us richly, then we will bear the fruit of the Spirit, Gal. 5:22,23.

But no one today has the baptism of the Spirit. If there is one who wants to so affirm in public debate, the writer will be glad to deny the same.

"The Churches of Christ Salute You."

Rom. 16:16