

BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

There is one, historic, and collective baptism of the Spirit of all believers into one body. All who believe today, share in it as an accomplished fact, but not as an individual experience. In this manner, baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs at the time of salvation. It is a fact but not an event. See 1 Corinthians 12:12,13; Ephesians 1:22,23; Hebrews 12:23. The believer is never exhorted to be baptized with the Spirit, but is commanded to be filled (Ephesians 5:18). These truths are spoken with authority in the Epistles, see 1 Corinthians 14:37; 2 Peter 3:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:2, so that we may “rightly divide the Word of Truth.” By one baptism of the Spirit (albeit by four diverse manifestations) various kinds of believers were united into one Church Body. It is not a feeling or an experience, but a fact at the time of salvation.

Although baptism of the Spirit was one baptism, it was manifested on four separate occasions. The wisdom of God is shown, in thus dealing with four different types of believers.

1. The JEWS had to be baptized in the name of the very One whom their nation had rejected and crucified, and they thereby repudiated the national rejection. See Acts 2.
2. The SAMARITANS were despised of the Jews, and were “religious” rivals. A separate manifestation of the Spirit’s baptism “at the hands of two Jews, Peter and John, provided unity rather than proud discord (that is Rome and the East). See Acts 8:14-17.
3. Another manifestation of the one baptism was to a small group of John the Baptist disciples, whose knowledge was limited, but who heard and trusted a greater revelation of the gospel through the preaching of Paul. See Acts 19:6.
4. The other manifestation was to Cornelius and other heathen Gentiles with whom the Jews could have no lawful association. See Acts 10:34-48. That which “God hath cleansed” the Jew was now “not to call common.” Acts 10:15.

Every believer is born of the Spirit (John 3:6; 1 John 5:1), indwelt by the Spirit, whose presence makes the believer’s body a temple (1 Corinthians 12:12,13; 1 John 2:20,27), thus sealing him for God (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30). Having the Spirit is true of all believers - being filled with the Spirit is the Christian’s privilege and duty. (Compare Acts 2:4 with Acts 4:29-31, see also Ephesians 1:13,14 with Ephesians 5:18). There is one baptism of the Spirit (which accompanies salvation), but the possibility of many fillings of the Spirit. Read about the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22,23. The believer is not to grieve the Holy Spirit, by sin in the Christian life (Ephesians 4:17-31). When sin is present, it is to be confessed for forgiveness and cleansing (Proverbs 28:13 and 1 John 1:19). Nor is the Spirit to be quenched, through failure to obey His leadings (1 Thessalonians 5:19 and James 4:7). Rather the believer is to be filled by the Holy Spirit, as indicated in the illustration of Ephesians 5:18. The Emmaus course entitled THE HOLY SPIRIT AT WORK is informative and interesting.