

There Is One Baptism: Holy Spirit or Water Baptism? (1)

David Halbrook

The Bible tells of several baptisms (of John Matt. 21:25, with the Holy Spirit Acts 1:4-5, in water Acts 10:47-48). Paul told the Ephesians *there is one baptism* (Eph. 4:5). So which baptism is the *one baptism*? Acts 19:1-5 shows Paul did not teach John's baptism, but what about the other two?

In Scripture, sinners were commanded to be baptized in water because that was the instruction of Jesus (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16). After convincing the Jews of their sin, Peter commanded and exhorted them to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38). A few years later, Peter gave the same instructions to the Gentiles (Acts 10:47-48).

Baptism with the Holy Spirit was quite different. No one asked for and thereby received it or was commanded to seek it. Jesus promised that the apostles would be baptized with the Holy Spirit—a *promise* He would keep, not a command for them to keep (Acts 1:4-5). They waited in Jerusalem for the Spirit to come, having no idea when it would happen.

These two baptisms are very different and clearly cannot *both* be the "one baptism." We'll continue this study next week (or contact us for a free audio CD on this subject).

Editor's Note: The subject of the Holy Spirit often draws immediate interest from many people. If you will gather the courage and love to clip and hand someone a copy of this article from *Arkansas Weekly* it is very likely to be read. What happens next is not up to you, but giving someone the opportunity to hear may only come from you. Will you try? If you know someone who would listen to a lesson on this topic, David Halbrook will provide you a CD to give them.

Simple opportunities to teach the lost and assist each other.

Pray for: Ed & Janice White, The Ledgerwoods, Novela Puckett, Noleka Hopper, Samuel Southall, others with ongoing trials, and new Christians among us.

Join us each Sunday at 10AM (classes), 10:45AM, & 5PM and Wednesday at 7PM.

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*
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When People Lose Their Way (Joe R. Price)

Just about everyone by now has heard about Bruce Jenner. (The Sunday night lesson will address transgender and the Bible.) I want to use this space to remind us what the Bible teaches us to do when someone loses their way in sin. And clearly, Jenner has lost his way. He now believes he is a female because he has made external physical changes and internal emotional decisions. The even greater loss is that he continues to live in sin, lost and away from God.

When someone loses their way in sin, we remember that God loves them. God's love for the lost is defined by the death of His Son on the cross (Jno. 3:16). God loves each of us this way, because all of us have sinned (Rom. 3:23). Christians have been forgiven, so it behooves us to remember that God wants to forgive those who have lost their way in sin. God's love of them does not mean God overlooks their sin. This is a grave mistake made by many. (If He does, why did Jesus die?) Remember, the wages of sin is death - God said that, too (Rom. 6:23). Those lost in sin need saving, and the gospel of Jesus is the only way for them to be saved from their sin (Acts 4:12; Rom. 1:16).

When someone loses their way in sin, we remember that love corrects them. Parents lovingly correct their children, and God corrects us when we choose to disobey Him (Heb. 12:5-11). That is what love does. Sin must be identified so it can be corrected according to God's truth. By identifying sin and showing God's correction for it, we are acting in harmony with God's love. It is not a vindictive desire to hurt the sinner that compels us to call sinners back to the truth of the gospel. We are not your enemy when we tell you the truth (Gal. 4:16).

When someone loses their way in sin, they should remember there is a way back to God. The prodigal son came to himself and in repentance returned to his father, who joyfully received him (Lk. 15:17-24). God is ready to receive every single sinner who repents (Lk. 15:7, 10). All is not lost. You still have the opportunity to be

forgiven by God and live with Him now and forever (2 Pet. 3:9).

Yes, many have lost their way. Perhaps you have, too. Jesus is the way home (Jno. 14:6). Always remember that.

“Plane”ly Immodest Dress (David Halbrook)

On July 3, 2007, a 23-year-old college student was told by a Southwest Airline (SWA) employee to change her outfit which consisted of a white denim upper-thigh-length skirt, a tank top covered by a light cardigan, and high heel sandals. She was later allowed to simply alter it. While SWA has been criticized for hypocrisy (due to its former practice of having stewardesses wear “hot pants”), the heat has primarily come from people who say it is inappropriate to say someone’s choice of clothing is inappropriate.

There were some interesting comments made during this mini-controversy. One columnist who was critical of SWA asked, “Who knows where the lines are drawn these days, particularly when it comes to dress?” It is interesting that he admits that he doesn't know where the line is. If he doesn't know where the line of limitation is, how does he know whether or not the young woman's dress crossed proper limits? Either there are limits or there aren't. If there are limits and he doesn't know where they are, how does he know that SWA wasn't correct? Of course, the standard of society was the only appeal that he could make, “If you watch television, or visit the mall, or take in a game at Petco Park, you'll see women dressed in ways that, 50 years ago, were pornographic. Today they are stylish.”

The young woman's mother, while trying to side with her daughter, even admitted “My daughter. . . dresses provocatively, as do 99 percent of 23-year-old girls who can. But they (SWA, dh) were out of line.” Is the mother saying that 99% of 23-year-old girls who dress provocatively wear white denim? Is it the white denim that is provocative? Of course not.

Another writer, when asked what she would have said had she been on that flight replied, “I hope she's not sitting next to my husband. . . She's pretty. She wears her clothes well. But I wouldn't complain about it.” Is the female writer afraid that the young woman's high-heel sandals would catch the eye of her husband? Since no one seems to know where “the line” is, what line is being discussed? Are we talking about denim and sandals?

The fact is that even in worldly controversies, the thigh and the chest are repeatedly the “lines” which cause a stir. Of course, it is the clothing which reveals the thigh and the chest which the mother admits is provocative. It is the same understanding which

makes even a west-coast wife at least a little leery of the idea of her husband sitting next to someone who can wear those clothes “well.”

At the least, there could be a case built which would argue, like Paul did regarding the veil in the culture of Corinth, *judge among yourselves*, is it proper to reveal your chest or thigh? Paul said that in Corinth's culture some things were understood by nature, which can mean “a mode of feeling and acting which by long habit has become nature” (Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon). In Corinth, due to long-standing cultural practices, even the heathen identified some things as inappropriate, and the Christians were to respect that perception. Christians in America can see that *even our permissive culture* recognizes the problem with this type of dress. The fact that athletic fields, gymnasiums, shopping centers, weddings (funerals?!), and even worship services have become places where some Christians are exposing their nakedness is shameful. But, this line of reasoning falls short of what God has revealed concerning identifying what should be covered.

In the beginning, Adam and Eve's partial coverings caused them to be naked until God clothed them (Gen. 3:7, 10, 21). Under Moses’ law, God warned against publicly uncovering nakedness that could result from exposing the thigh and taught them how to avoid improper exposure (Ex. 20:25-26; 28:42). Under the authority of Christ, Christians understood the existence of “the shame of nakedness,” so that John could even use that expression in a figurative way (Rev. 3:22). Figurative language necessarily implies that there is a reality that is understood, else the figure has no meaning. If sowers didn't really plant seed and birds didn't eat seed off the sidewalk, then Jesus' parable would have had no meaning (Matt. 13:3). And if nakedness was not shameful, then John's statement loses all effect.

If uncovering the thigh “isn't necessarily naked or sinful” for the Christian today, then neither is uncovering the chest (Ex. 28:42; Prov. 5:19). They both biblically stand or fall together when understanding what God considers naked.

Each congregation must identify and discipline (in every form) those who walk disorderly (1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6), but on the Day of Judgment the decision, word, or opinion of any elder, preacher, article-writer, or airline representative will not determine where you will spend eternity. God will judge you according to the gospel of His grace which “teaches us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and justly” (Acts 20:24; Ti. 2:11). Therefore “as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy'” (1 Pet. 1:15-16).

all non-biblical quotations from http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20070905/news_1m5braun.html