

There Is One Baptism: Holy Spirit or Water Baptism? (3)

David Halbrook

Is the one baptism water or Spirit baptism (Eph. 4:5)? Note the different purpose and results of these two baptisms.

The purpose of water baptism and Jesus' blood are stated in the same ways: save (1 Pet. 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:2-3), wash (Acts 22:16; Rev. 1:5), cleanse (Eph. 5:26; Heb. 9:14), and the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Matt. 26:28). Jesus' blood is the power, not water. Access into the benefits of Jesus' blood is given by faith at water baptism (Rom. 6:3; Col. 2:12).

The purpose of Holy Spirit baptism is identified by its results. When the apostles were baptized with the Spirit, as Jesus promised, it proved salvation in Christ was available (Acts 1:4-11; 2:12, 36-38). This baptism did not occur again until the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius (while water baptism persisted). Peter cited the uniqueness of those events to convince the Jews that salvation in Christ was open to the Gentiles (Acts 11:15-18). Spirit baptism proved that Christ's salvation was offered to sinners. This record is our evidence.

Today, we do not need ongoing miracles to know salvation is open to all, but sinners still need to be saved. Thus, water baptism is the one baptism. Send us comments or questions.

Editor's Note: As you go through your weekly routine, remember that the majority of people you work with or casually pass by are lost. You can't talk to and teach all of them, so find a way to say or do something to help someone think about unseen, spiritual things. Consider how to use our *Arkansas Weekly* articles in your plans.

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.

Pray, prepare for, and (per ability) participate in our Summer Bible Series (July 27-31) and gospel meeting with Donnie Rader (September 13-18).

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*
church of Christ--Quail Valley
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Familiar Passage, Renewed Meaning

Craig Thomas

On 9/28/05 we returned from China with our new daughter, Dawne Xia Thomas. This precious little girl turns sixteen on 12/1/15. In 2012 she obeyed the gospel and remains a faithful Christian. This fall she begins high school! We feel very blessed to have the privilege of adding Dawne to our family. In all this we experienced much joy, but also a great deal of stress as we integrated a new person into our family and faced the daunting task of nurturing a youngster that's been plucked from their familiar environment and transported halfway around the globe to a new culture, new language, new climate, etc. Dealing with the strain of this situation makes a familiar passage take on a renewed meaning: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:6-7)

1) **Anxious For Nothing.** Have you ever thought about the power of that command? It's wonderful to contemplate that as faithful Christians we cannot find ourselves in a situation that can overwhelm us IF we truly trust in God! It isn't easy when the going gets really tough to find this level of faith, but we must. I do so by focusing on God's great and mighty power. His power spoke the universe into existence from nothingness! (Heb. 11:3) His power delivered the Israelites from bondage (Ex. 7:5). His power cured the incurable (e.g., Jn. 5:1-9). His power brought forth the dead from the grave (Jn. 11:43). It is only through His "glorious power" that we can joyously endure with "patience and longsuffering" (Col. 1:11). We must also ever remember that the magnitude of His power is "exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20). Thus, we can truly be "anxious for nothing" by trusting in His awesome power! For truly, "If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:31-32)

2) **By Prayer and Supplication, With Thanksgiving.** To overcome our anxious fears we don't have to rely on anyone or anything but Him! For we can be free of anxiety when we humbly beseech our Heavenly Father through thankful prayer (cf. Isa. 57:15). Recall the wonderful promise Jesus made? "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!" (Matt. 7:7-11) When troubles close in, we especially need to go to our closet in thankful prayer: "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving" (Col. 4:2).

3) **Let Your Requests Be Made Known.** Think of all the truly great problems in this world: war, crime, poverty, racism, etc. Yet in the midst of all this it is truly comforting to know God cares enough about each of us individually that He earnestly desires to hear our requests. We can "cast all our care upon Him, for He cares for you." (1 Pet. 5:7) Let us never shrink from sharing our problems with Him, for we can confidently "Cast our burden on the LORD," and be confident "He shall sustain" us and that "He shall never permit the righteous to be moved." (Psa. 55:22)

4) **Peace Surpassing All Understanding.** Our Father never does anything in a half-baked fashion. The peace of mind we can attain, the freedom from anxiety that He alone can provide, is of no partial measure. Just like Him this peace is thorough, complete, and unparalleled. Regardless of how large our problems seem, our great Almighty God is able to restore to us an utterly calm and serene spirit if we simply ask in thankfulness. Just as He parted the mighty waters of the Red Sea and provided safe passage for the Israelites, He too will part the stormy waters of life and provide us a path to true peace of mind if we simply have the faith to ask. Thus, let us make Him our constant focus, for He "will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You." (Isa. 26:3) What a grand and glorious promise!

Strange

Terry Benton

The world should think us strange. After all, our principles have changed from theirs to a whole different set of values and guiding principles.

1 Peter 4:3-5 - For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles — when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. 4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.

We changed from a set of values guided by selfish lusts and desires, worldly aims, and pride to a relationship with a Holy God that matters more now to us than anything else. Whereas we "fit in" before, we cannot enjoy the profanity, the drinking, the immodesty and lasciviousness that guided and controlled our hearts before. Now we "fit in" with holy people, but no longer fit in with worldly people.

We must not fear being different and even being rejected as "strange" to worldly people. Woe to us if all men speak well of us. If we can fit in with everyone we are able to do what Jesus could not do.

Jesus was misunderstood. He was strange by other people's standards. We would rather be strange to people than strange to God and His will. The Early Church was misunderstood. They did not set on a mission to be despised and rejected, but when their own internal values changed so drastically to "proving what is acceptable to the Lord" instead of "conforming to the world" (Rom. 12:1-3) they became "strange" to former friends.

Previously we were estranged from Christ and had nothing in common with His holiness. Now, our sense of holiness has changed our sense of modesty and dress, our vocabulary and choice of words, our places of interest, our activities and behavior is in a growing process. Now those we once had so much in common with are thinking us strange that we do not run with them, drink with them, dance with them, talk like them, or think like them. We are strange to our old way of living, thinking, dressing, talking, but we love the new things we have come to know and enjoy in Christ. Everything is new, different, and better. (2 Cor. 5:17)

Now we think it strange that we were so blind for so long, and wish others could have their eyes opened by the gospel. Don't be afraid or ashamed of being strange to the world. We should be ashamed if we are not.