

Elementary Doctrines Baptism—Practical Application

Studio Session 36

Sam Soleyn

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We have concluded the substance of discussion on “baptisms” under the series of teachings entitled the Elementary Doctrines. Now what I would like to do is go back and take a look at how each of these baptisms occurs so that if there is a particular need that you may have for one of these baptisms and that this need should be met by an administration, that you will be able to avail yourself of that baptism. To recap, we said that there were four basic baptisms under the doctrine of baptism. First we talked about the Baptism “of” the Holy Spirit, secondly: the Baptism “by” the Spirit, third: the Baptism of Fire and fourth, Baptism in Water.

We mentioned that being baptized by the Holy Spirit and being baptized in fire were two administrations of Jesus Christ—that is, He himself baptizes you with the Holy Spirit and He baptizes you with fire. Baptism of the Spirit—when the Spirit does something to you—that's an automatic work. And then finally we talked about water baptism.

Now let's—in an orderly fashion—look at how each of these baptisms occurs. For some, anything that has to do with the Holy Spirit, they believe has to be done spontaneously. Otherwise they do not believe that it is a true work of God. Now, baptism “by” the Spirit—when Jesus baptizes you with the Holy Spirit—that may occur spontaneously. In my case it did. I was traveling along a road one day, after I had preached for an entire week against the gifts of the Spirit, and suddenly my car was filled with the presence of the Holy Spirit and I experienced a transforming event, spontaneously. And I know that for a number of you it happens that way. But you see the thing about *that* is you cannot manufacture a spontaneous event. So what if you've been taught the need for the baptism of the Spirit, you desire the baptism of the Spirit, what do you do then? Since you cannot generate a spontaneous baptism how do you resolve the question? Well, thankfully God knew of that dilemma and has provided a specific way by which you might obtain baptism of the Spirit. And in some senses, we are moving ahead into another one of the elementary doctrines, which has to do with the doctrine of the laying on of hands. But there is more to it than what I am going to use it for now so we will study the doctrine of the laying on of hands independently.

Now in the book of **Acts** there are some brethren in Samaria, and this is from the **8th chapter** of the book of **Acts**. I'd like for us to take a look, beginning in **verse nine**. Philip has gone to the city of Samaria and he's preaching the good news to them. There is a great revival that breaks out in that city. There were signs and wonders, miraculous things had occurred and demons were driven out, paralytics were healed, and so on and so forth, and there is great joy in the city. Now, it picks up with Simon the magician in **verse nine** of **Acts 8**. (Inserted - Actual Verse- "**Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, 'This man is the divine power known as the Great Power.'** They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his magic. But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw." – **Acts 8:9-13**) And he offers to buy the Holy Spirit for money. (Inserted – actual verse—"When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money and said, 'Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.'" – **Acts 8:18,19**) He himself was a sorcerer but prior to his offer to buy the Holy Spirit—the gift of the Spirit—for money it says this in **verse 13**, it says, "Simon himself believed and was baptized and he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles which he had done."

Now, go back just a moment, just a verse or two, it says, **verse 11**, "the people followed Simon the magician because he was a great one and he amazed the people." But after they saw what Philip did in support of the preaching of the Kingdom, it says this, (**vs. 12**) "But when the people believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women" then it goes on to say (**vs. 13**) "Simon himself believed and was baptized." So everybody saw what Philip had done and was amazed at the great works of God. Now it's clear that they believed and they were baptized. Now what happened was that the word of this came to Jerusalem. When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When Peter and John arrived in Samaria, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them, they have simply believed in the name of Jesus. **Verse 17** says a very, very important thing, "**Then Peter and John placed their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.**" Did you see that? The brethren in Jerusalem heard that in Samaria—as a result of the preaching of Philip—many of the people already believed and were baptized. But the Holy Spirit had not yet fallen on them. Now this is interesting because **Acts 2:38** says "If you repent and are baptized you'll receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Inserted-Actual Verse—"Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of

you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.")

Now you may recall, from an earlier study, we distinguished between the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We distinguished it by looking at the last chapter of the book of **John**, the **20th chapter**, in which it was said, "Jesus breathed on his disciples and he said 'receive ye the Holy Ghost.'" (Inserted-Actual Verse—"And with that he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'" – **John 20:22**)

Obviously at that point they received the Holy Ghost. But Jesus ascended to heaven and then he sent the Holy Spirit to baptize them. In fact, before He ascended to heaven and after He had breathed on them, He said to his disciples—this is recorded in **Acts 1**, "Go to Jerusalem and wait for the promise you have heard me speak about." "John indeed baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." (Inserted-Actual Verse—"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. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'" – **Acts 1:4,5**)

Clearly, while Jesus was on the earth he did not baptize his disciples with the Holy Spirit, nor did he baptize anyone else. He had breathed on his disciples to receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit—the gift of the Holy Spirit—but to these same disciples upon whom He had breathed, who had received the indwelling Holy Spirit as a gift from Jesus—a seal guaranteeing that they were children of God—to these very ones He had given now the instruction to go to Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the baptism of the Spirit. So from the time that Jesus breathed on his disciples to receive the indwelling Spirit, to the time they *received*

the baptism of the Spirit was quite a distance of time... at least 10 days, it may have been longer than that. So the baptism of the Spirit and the indwelling of the Spirit are two separate things. The indwelling confirms that you are a child of God; the baptism is for empowerment. And the indwelling may occur *prior* to the baptism.

Now in **Acts 10** we come across another incident of the Holy Spirit baptizing people. There it's the house of Cornelius and what we observed was that before they received the indwelling they received the baptism, because Peter had not even gotten the invitation yet. In fact, Peter was there in the house of Cornelius pretty much by duress. When he showed up at Cornelius' house he said basically, "Look Cornelius, ordinarily a man like me would not come into your house because we Jews consider you Gentiles, dogs." (Inserted-Actual Verse—"He said to them: 'You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean.'" – **Acts 10:28,29**)

Now, how would you like someone to approach you with the gospel that way? That was just how prejudiced Peter was. Yet he related to Cornelius the episode in which he was in the house of Simon the tanner in Joppa, when he saw the sheet come down out of heaven containing all manner of unclean things, and when he objected to the voice that said, "Rise Peter, kill and eat", the Holy Spirit said to him, "What I have cleansed, do not call common or unclean". (Inserted-actual verse—**“About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles of the earth and birds of the air. Then a voice told him, ‘Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.’ ‘Surely not, Lord!’ Peter replied. ‘I have never eaten anything impure or unclean.’ The voice spoke to him a second time, ‘Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.’” – Acts 10:9-15**) And he understood, after three times—this appearing, this thing that happened—after three times, Peter understood that this was a vision from God.

Immediately after the vision ceased, some men had arrived from Caesarea where Cornelius was, to Joppa, where Peter was, to invite him to come to the house of Cornelius. And Peter made the connection that the thing described as common and unclean and presented through the metaphor of the sheet from heaven containing all manner of unclean things, and Peter's reaction was meant to prepare Peter for the advent of the Gentiles into the Kingdom. But even then Peter was not a “happy camper”, so to speak. He was not a willing convert. He went reluctantly and he went under duress. He even took some Jewish brethren with him just in case. When he comes to the house of Cornelius, he says to Cornelius, “Ordinarily, a Jew like me would not come in to the house of a Gentile like you, because we think you are dogs.” (Inserted- actual verse—**“Talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. He said to them: ‘You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean.’” – Acts 10:27,28**)

But the Word says, Peter began to speak to Cornelius, and while Peter yet spoke these words, the Holy Spirit fell on the household of Cornelius, and Peter observed, “Of a truth, I perceive, that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he who fears God and works righteousness is accepted with Him”. (Inserted – actual verse—**“While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, ‘Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit**

just as we have.” – Acts 10:44-47)

So when Peter goes back to Jerusalem to explain himself to the Jewish brethren in Jerusalem, this is what he said. He said, "When I saw that the Holy Spirit had fallen on them as on us in the beginning", so he refers back to the day of Pentecost. In **Acts 11**, when Peter is justifying his actions in Caesarea at Cornelius' house—justifying his actions among the Gentiles to the Jewish brethren in Jerusalem who were just as prejudiced as he was and confused about whether or not they should admit Gentiles into the Kingdom—when he gave his explanation he said "When I saw that the Holy Spirit had fallen on them as on us in the beginning, who was I to resist God." (Inserted – actual verse—“ **‘As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning.’**” – **Acts 11:15**)—still admitting that he was not happy with the fact that Gentiles had come in, but he saw the hand of God. So, my point is: there are times when the indwelling of the Holy Spirit comes first. It happened that way with the house of Cornelius. It happened that way with the Jews on the day of Pentecost, and it happened that way also with the Jewish believers on the day of Pentecost. Happened among the 12 disciples first—first the indwelling and then the baptism. It happened to the first Jewish converts—not the 12 apostles and the others, the 160—but on the day of Pentecost when the multitude came together. First they also received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but also at the same time they received the baptism of the Spirit because they were properly taught. In the house of Cornelius, however, the order is reversed. Because Peter did not intend to admit the Gentiles into the Kingdom, so the Holy Spirit had to convince him in a manner that was so obvious that even Peter could not miss the point. The Holy Spirit fell on the household of Cornelius in the same manner in which he fell upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. When Peter saw that, he said, "Who was I to resist God?"

So, there is a distinction between the indwelling of the Spirit and the baptism of the Spirit. For the majority of people—and the reason I went through this distinction again, now putting in the Scriptural references—for the majority of the people in churches, and therefore the majority of the people who will be listening to this program, you may have received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and because of that, as a gift, because of that, you are a child of God. But if you have no power in your life then you need the baptism of the Spirit. They are two distinct things. They may happen spontaneously at the same time—the baptism and the indwelling—but sometimes, and what is more normal because of the doctrines of churches, what is normally the case is you are first introduced to salvation, taught about the indwelling, and many churches go no further and do not teach about the baptism of the Spirit. The baptism of the Spirit may be orderly administrated through the laying on of hands. And this brings us now to the full circle of what we've been saying.

In the city of Samaria, there were a number of brethren who had believed and were

baptized in water. Because they did, they received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. But the brethren in Jerusalem knew that they had not yet received the baptism of the Spirit, so they sent Peter and John to them to baptize them in the Spirit. When Peter and John arrived there, they proceeded to lay hands on them that they might receive the baptism of the Spirit. So what is the conclusion relative to how you might receive the baptism of the Spirit? First, if you are already a believer in Jesus Christ, you have the indwelling Holy Spirit—you are saved, you are going to heaven, you're a child of God, because the Holy Spirit is the seal guaranteeing your salvation and your status as a child of God. If you lack power, it is because you do not have the baptism of the Holy Spirit because the baptism of the Spirit, according to Jesus, is meant to result in power. He said in **Acts 1**, "For you shall receive power from on high when the Holy Spirit is come upon you" (Inserted – actual verse—**“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”** – **Acts 1:8**) And just a verse or two before that he spoke about not many days from then they would be baptized in the Spirit. (Inserted – actual verse—**“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. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’”** – **Acts 1:4,5**) So the coming of the Holy Spirit upon you is a reference to the baptism of the Spirit from the earlier verse.

So that being so, you may receive the baptism of the Spirit in one of two ways: first, by a spontaneous event. I received the baptism of the Spirit by a spontaneous event. The reason for that was because my heart was so opposed to anything of the Spirit at the time that I was not available in my condition for an orderly administration of the baptism of the Spirit through the laying on of hands, which is the other way that it occurs. As a result, the Holy Spirit chose to visit me supernaturally and I received a supernatural baptism of the Holy Spirit. But, when you come to the ordinary conclusion that you need to be baptized in the Spirit, there is a regular way in which it might be administered. And that is what **Acts 8** teaches us. The apostles in Jerusalem, knowing the need for the brethren in Samaria to be baptized in the Spirit sent Peter and John up. And when they came they were faithful to their mandate and they laid hands on them and they received the baptism of the Spirit, followed of course in the chapter by signs and wonders. (Inserted – actual verse—**“When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.”** – **Acts 8:14-17**)

What about the baptism “by” the Spirit, where the Holy Spirit places you into the body? Well, that is automatic. There is nothing you have to do about that. The Holy Spirit

automatically puts you into the body of Christ once you are saved as that part of the body that you are. Now, if you don't know what part of the body you are—if you don't know who you are in the Lord—then ask the Holy Spirit and He will show you. Typically, He will show you what your gifts are and he will show you what your callings are. If He delays showing that to you then do not be upset or do not feel passed over. Do not feel frustrated by it because all that that means is that you are not ready yet to receive it because you might well be one of those kinds of people who—that if you know that God has made you to be something—you will run out and try to do it before he has prepared you to be able to sustain what it takes, to have what it takes to sustain what he has made you to be. So, if he doesn't show you yet who you are, then wait. He will show it to you, I promise you He will because I know that He is faithful. He is more interested in you being who you are—whom he has made you to be—than you could possibly be interested in knowing that. In other words, He has a greater interest in this being made known to you than you have an interest in having it made known to you.

So, baptism “by” the Spirit is simply an automatic operation of the Holy Spirit, fitting you into the body in the way that he made you to be. Similarly, baptism by fire is not something that you should run out and ask for. Trust me, the one who has arranged for you to be changed and transformed knows exactly what circumstances to arrange for you in order for that transformation to come about. Self-induced turmoil has no known redemptive value, so don't ask for the baptism of fire. It will visit you soon enough.

And finally, baptism in water. The word for baptism implies or means immersion because “baptizo” is to put something into another. When you put one thing in another then the thing that is immersed, is filled with the thing in which it is immersed and the changed nature results in that. So water baptism is baptism by immersion. Who may baptize you? Anyone who is strong enough to put you under the water and raise you up. The key is not the condition of the one who is baptizing you; the key is what's in your heart. What is your desire? Do you understand the need to be baptized in water? If you are baptized in water then immersion is the proper format of that, and the result will be that you declare to the heavenlies that the old creature, your old self that used to live, has died and a new creation has come up in it's place. And the enemy then is not able to oppress you by accusing you with the things that you used to be. So you should be baptized in water. And it's a simple matter of finding someone who believes in water baptism and understands that it should be done by immersion.

One quick question is what if you were sprinkled as an infant? Usually that is to confirm your membership in the particular church of your family's membership. That doesn't count. At some point, you ought to decide for yourself. Again, this is not about being saved. This is about your declaring to the heavenlies that you are a new creation. You are still saved, even if you are not baptized in water. The benefit of baptism in water is that it makes this declaration to the heavenlies that the old creature has died and the new one is

alive. This is the matter of baptisms. I'm Sam Soleyn. We will continue our studies in the elementary doctrines. God bless you. I'll see you again.

Scripture References:

Acts 8: 9-13

Acts 8:18,19

Acts 8:17

Acts 2:38

John 20:22

Acts 1:4,5

Acts 10:28,29

Acts 10:9-15

Acts 10:27,28

Acts 10:44-47

Acts 11:15

Acts 1:8

Acts 8:14-17