

Romans 12:6-8 "What Is the Baptism Of The Holy Spirit As It Relates To Him Gifting Us?"

Rom 12:4-8 "Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. 6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. 7 If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; 8 if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

This section of Romans is instructive because it gives us a glimpse into the kinds of gifts God gives His people with the express purpose of serving others inside and outside of the Body of Christ.

Salvation by faith in Christ is an all-encompassing relationship with the living God and it includes much more than a promise that we will never perish, being separated from God forever.

This relationship is designed to magnify the One who has brought us to Himself. And so our salvation includes forgiveness from the penalty of our sins, thereby reconciling us to God through Christ, but it also includes our sanctification which is the process whereby the Holy Spirit enables us, as we submit to and love our God, to be conformed into the image of Christ.

We also have certain gifts promised to us so that we may fulfill His will in our lives and in the lives of others as we exercise these gifts by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Every member of the Body of Christ is knit and joined together by Jesus so that we may function as a Body which is healthy and able to be used by God. This is what Paul meant when writing to the Ephesian church.

Eph 4:16 "From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

Every member of the Body has a function. And when each member is functioning properly then the Body of Christ is growing

in the love of the Lord and is building itself up in love to the honor and glory of God.

For the next few weeks we are going to delve into what these gifts are in our text, which are given to us by the Holy Spirit, and how they are to be used according to the word of God.

We will be going to different parts of the N.T. which give us insights into what types of gifts there are and how these gifts were misused then, how they are misused today, how they were properly used then and how they must be properly used today.

But before we can begin using these gifts properly it's very important that we understand that any spiritual gift must be used according to the Spirit, in the power of the Spirit, not according to the flesh, which unfortunately happens all too often.

If we are going to use these gifts in the power of the Spirit we must look at and understand how the Spirit works in and through us, as the Body of Christ is equipped to further the Kingdom of God. And so I am going to look at a work of the Spirit which is often seen as controversial and yet is clearly taught in the word of God. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

To understand what the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is, in the context of Him gifting His people, we must go to the teachings of Jesus Himself as He instructed His disciples.

ACTS 1:4-5 "And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, which, He said, "you heard of from Me." For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

Remember where else we hear this same command?.....Luke 24:49....."I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

This PROMISE is what we're talking about this morning.

But first, notice that Jesus gathers them together. Some translations read, "He was eating with them", or "lodging with them." He gets close to them and gets serious about the business at hand. He gives them a command. This is not a request. It's a command for them to follow. The command has to do with their geographic location. Stay in Jerusalem. Do not leave there.

I don't think it's a matter of convenience that Jesus tells them not to leave Jerusalem. Jerusalem, all through the scriptures, has a very special significance because its very name tells us of what God desires for His people. It means Foundation of Peace.

God desires peace with His people, and He accomplished the only means for peace through Himself at the cross of Jesus Christ where the wrath of God was poured out on our Lord for the penalty of our sins. That's what Paul meant in Ephesians 2:13-14 "But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace....."

Jesus Christ is known as the Prince of Peace, the One who came to the city called the Foundation of Peace, to establish reconciliation and peace for His people. And so, God, in His plan, purposed to start His post resurrection work in Jerusalem. His Kingdom would go forth; after all, Jerusalem is also known as the City of the Great King. (Ps.48:2)

From this city both Jew and Gentile alike would become brothers and sisters in Christ. Now Jesus, back in Acts, commands the disciples to stay in Jerusalem to wait for the promise which He describes as the Baptism of the Holy Spirit in verse 5.

Before we go much further let's define our terms. Often when we think of Baptism we infer that it must mean immersion in water. Though it may mean that it certainly isn't limited to that. For example, in one verse we have two uses of the word Baptism which address two different types of events.

Luk 3:16 "John answered them all, "I *baptize* you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will *baptize* you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."

There are four Greek words which are used to describe the act of Baptism in the N.T. We have *Baptizo*; *Baptisma*; *Baptismos*; and *Bapto*. All of these words are identified with the act of water Baptism.

The Greek word used in Luk.3:16 is *Baptizo*, and it's used for both words in that sentence which describes a water Baptism and a Holy Spirit baptism. Obviously, the Holy Spirit is not transferred through water, though someone could certainly be Baptized in the Holy Spirit at a water Baptism, as we see in Christ's case.

But we go to Luke chapter 12, much time after Christ's water Baptism, and Jesus states: "I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed!" (12:49-50)

If He was already Baptized with water and was even Baptized with the Holy Spirit at that water Baptism, as the Holy Spirit descended upon Him at that water Baptism, then what kind of Baptism are we looking at in Luke 12?

The Greek word used for baptism in Luke 12 is *Baptisma* and it obviously can't refer to a water baptism since Christ has already experienced that in chapter 3. This Baptism refers to His death, but more than that it refers to His acceptance of our sin, though He was sinless.

The word Baptism means essentially 3 things which are all related: UNION, FELLOWSHIP, AND IDENTIFICATION.

Water Baptism identifies us with Christ and His atoning work. It is His atoning work which brings us into fellowship with Himself and brings about an eternal union.

Christ's Baptism into death brings Him into union with sin though He had no sin. It is a fellowship with sin which we actually experience, but which Christ can only be identified with since He did not sin.

To be baptized, therefore, with the Holy Spirit, is to have union with, fellowship with, and identification with the power and working of the ministry of God the Holy Spirit, the 3rd person of the Godhead. He is the One who enables you to demonstrate Christ Jesus in your life so that you may be able to serve and glorify your heavenly Father in His power.

This area of scripture which addresses the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, has caused quite a lot of concern in different camps of the Christian church. It may be controversial, but it's no less the word of God and therefore we must address it and determine what God is teaching us.

The promise is mentioned in Acts 1:4. And just as I've mentioned before, when it comes to interpreting scripture, we begin by using the immediate context, together with the whole context of the work and start there, then move to other portions of scripture.

How does Luke define this promise? Well, in Acts 2:33 we read, "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear."

What did they see and hear? In Acts 2:1-11 we read that a variety of different people heard the apostles speaking in the tongues of these people declaring the mighty deeds of God.

Luke in his gospel in chapter 24:49 says, "...and behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power."

So, the promise mentioned in Acts 1:4 speaks of the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish the task at hand, which God gave them.

What's interesting about this power is that the Greek word used for power is *dunamis*, which is not just any power, but miraculous power, which cannot be mistaken for your own power. It's also where we get our word for dynamite.

Who needs this kind of power? Some would suggest that this power was only needed for the early church. After all, it was just getting started and they needed a jump start. But, today, some would say we don't need this kind of power because we have the Word of God and that's enough. No, we must worship and serve in Spirit and truth.

If we think we can live this Christian life in anything that resembles our own power, outside of the power of the Holy Spirit, then we just don't understand the dynamics of this spiritual life.

Paul says in Gal.5:16 "Walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh."

To walk by the Spirit is to walk in the Spirit's power. By the way, the converse of that statement is true as well; 'walk not by the Spirit, or if you will, the power of the Spirit, and you will carry out the desires of the flesh.....bank on it.'

Interesting too, is that this promise was promised many years before through the prophet Joel.

Joel 2:28-29 ²⁸ "It will come about after this That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions. ²⁹ "Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

Peter in Acts 2:17-21 makes a specific reference to Joel as a fulfillment to that prophecy which is seen in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Now, most bible believing Christians don't have a problem with any of this, until we go back to the first chapter of Acts which references this prophecy in Joel.

Acts 1:5 ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

Again, most bible believing Christians don't even have a problem with this. The problem arises with the time at which it happens. Some say the Baptism of the Holy Spirit takes place at conversion while others say, yes it may take place at conversion but it may also be subsequent to it.

Another distinction in some circles is that this Baptism comes in quietly and is not meant to manifest itself today like it did here in Acts, while others say it most certainly is to demonstrate itself in power just like the scriptures say.

What do we say? Well, we say, 'let the scriptures speak for themselves.'

What happened to the disciples? It would seem that the Spirit of God came upon them after they were already believers in Christ. One thing we must all agree on and that is that you cannot be a Christian, in the New Testament sense, unless the Holy Spirit has taken up residence in your life, (indwells you), as you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

You need only go to Rom.8:9 "However, you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him."

Now the question is, were the disciples indwelt with the Holy Spirit prior to Pentecost when they had received this promise of the power of the Spirit, which we're told in Acts 2:4 was synonymous with them being filled with the Holy Spirit?

Let's look at three separate passages. Jn.14:15-20; Jn.15:26 and Jn. 16:7

JOH 14:15-20 "If you love me, you will obey what I command. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever - 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot

accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20 On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you."

JOH 15:26 "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me."

JOH 16:7 "But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you."

The chronology goes like this. In John 14 Jesus speaks of a future encounter with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as He says, "But you know him, for he lives with you *and will be in you.*" (Verse 17b)

In John 15 and 16 it is still future oriented. "I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth..." (15:26); "I will send him to you." (16:7)

And then we come to the point in time after Christ's resurrection and we read in JOH 20:22 "And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

The risen Saviour breathed on them and they received the Holy Spirit. The word receive here in the Greek is *lambano* and does not denote something being offered that you may or may not accept. Rather, it denotes to get hold of.

No longer is the Spirit simply abiding with them and prompting them but now He has a hold on them. They have received the Holy Spirit through His indwelling.

And so, when Jesus talks with them in Acts 1:5 He's talking with people who are believers indwelt with the Holy Spirit. And yet, He says, "you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

It's interesting, after they received the Holy Spirit in Jn.20:22 what happens to the disciples? Do they go out and set the world on fire for Christ? No, they went fishing, and they didn't even catch anything until Christ comes onto the scene and causes a miraculous catch for them.

It isn't until after the promise is given to them; the promise of the power of the Holy Spirit, that we see the disciples going out in service to Christ with boldness.

But what about others? Do other Christians receive this baptism of the Holy Spirit after their conversion, or was this experience exclusive to the apostles and disciples who were following after Christ?

Let's turn to Acts 9:17-20. Remember, Saul had been threatening the church and now God calls him out. In verse 17 Ananias calls him brother. A brother in Christ, by definition is a Christian who must be indwelt with the Holy Spirit.

ACT 9:17-20 "Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord - Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here - has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." 18 Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, 19 and after taking some food, he regained his strength. Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. 20 At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God."

Why is Ananias there? Two reasons: to give Saul his sight back and to be used by God (probably through the laying on of hands) so that Paul could be filled or baptized with the Holy Spirit. Saul is identified as a brother, a fellow saint, indwelt by the Holy Spirit and yet he needed to be filled with the Spirit. And what do you think happened to Saul after the Spirit came upon Him?

Verse 20 - "immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, He is the Son of God."

Very bold of Paul, but the power of the Spirit was upon him.

Acts 19:1-7 gives us another instance of the Spirit coming upon believers after their conversion.

ACT 19:1-7 "While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples 2 and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." 3 So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?" "John's baptism," they replied. 4 Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus." 5 On hearing this,

they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. 7 There were about twelve men in all."

After the Spirit came upon them, they were empowered in a way they had never been before.

We read in ACT 8:14-17 "When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. 15 When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, 16 because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit."

Again, these were believers in the Lord Jesus Christ but the Spirit had not come upon them. By the way, there are three words used in the Greek which imply three different ways in which the Spirit works in a person's life. We read about two aspects of this earlier in Jn. 14:17, and we've seen it in a variety of other scriptures.

Jn.14:16-17 reads..."And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be WITH you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides WITH (*para*) you, and will be IN (*en*) you."

The idea of the Spirit being "with you" is the idea that He comes along side to prompt you as He did with the disciples as He drew them to Christ. But, the phrase "in you" designates a taking up of a permanent relational residence. This is distinguished from the word *eppi* in the Greek, which means to come upon or to overwhelm.

And so, at conversion the Spirit of God permanently takes up residence in our lives, but there is a time at which He comes upon us to empower us for service, to be bold for His honor and glory.

By that I don't mean that somehow God is going to jump on you and make you do something weird or embarrassing, but, like the disciples, He will give you what you need to serve Him effectively. And in the process, empower you with the gifts He has given you.

Some would say that this Baptism of the Holy Spirit is a second blessing or a second work of the Spirit; it's not. There are lots of

blessings and lots of workings of the Spirit in your life. What it is, is an appropriation, by faith, of the power of the Holy Spirit.

The power was always there, because He was the same Spirit Who is indwelling you. But, as we're told in Eph.5:15 "be filled with the Spirit." The idea here in the Greek is be continually filled with the Spirit.

Three things about that verse.

- 1) It was a command; something you sought after.
- 2) It wasn't meant just for the church at Ephesus, but for all of God's people
- 3) It was by faith. You don't have to emotionally work up the power of the Holy Spirit.

It's a gift we are to seek after. We know this because Jesus Himself tells us so in Luke 11:11-13 "Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? Or if he has asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? If you then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

In Christ, we are sons and daughters of our heavenly Father, and yet He says, 'ask Me for the Holy Spirit'; not the indwelling, you've already been sealed with the Spirit, but ask Him for the promise of the power of the Spirit so that you can go out into all the world and be bold in a Godly way to further His Kingdom. That's what it's all about.

At times there was a laying on of hands for this gift, at times there wasn't. You can pray for this today or you can go to the privacy of your own home and ask God to baptize you with His Spirit, to be filled with His power. It's as simple as asking your Father Who gives good gifts.

If you have been baptized with the Holy Spirit then continually ask Him to fill you with His Spirit. I know there are those who in practice think of the filling or Baptism of the Spirit as an opportunity to get a spiritual rush for the sake of just partaking of the power. This is not a Biblical reason for seeking the filling of the Spirit.

By the way, in my series on the gifts in a later teaching, I'm going to address this issue of whether or not the proof of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is speaking in tongues.

But the filling of the Spirit is always identified with the power of God for service. That's what happened on the day of Pentecost. The filling of the Spirit that day was not an excuse to create a circus, it was a day which brought many people to Christ.

And yet some time after Peter's initial Baptism in the Holy Spirit we read in Act 4:8 "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people!" And then he went on to boldly proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Paul's Baptism in the Holy Spirit took place in Damascus in Acts 9:17 and yet some time later in Act 13:9-11 we read, "Then Saul, who was also called Paul, *filled with the Holy Spirit*, looked straight at Elymas and said, 10 "You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? 11 Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind, and for a time you will be unable to see the light of the sun." Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand."

Paul was just willing to be used by God and he submitted humbly before God for such service. It is such a humble and willingness to be used by God that we may be filled with God's power for service. That service may take on many, many different forms. But if we are to be continually filled with the Spirit we must be seeking the things of the Spirit.

Often times as a worship service ends the pastor will raise his hands over the congregation and give what is called a Benediction which is simply a blessing.

I have one for you this morning; the same one Paul had for the church in Rome. He meant what he said to them and I mean this with all of my heart for you. It's not a bunch of words that are simply used as a tag to a sermon. This is God's word for you.

Rom.15:13 "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

If you lack the power of God to serve Him, in the way He desires, we can pray this morning that you may be identified with the

Spirit's working and come into the kind of fellowship and union with the Spirit's work so that you may serve and love in His power.

If your service seems to be lacking then we can pray that you may continually be filled with the Spirit. Either way it's a total dependence on God, not in the flesh. And when we serve and love in His power, the gifts of the Spirit, which we'll be addressing in future teachings, will manifest themselves in our lives in such a way that only God could get the glory.