

ACTS Promise of the Father: Acts 1:4-11

The Promise: Acts 1:4-5

The promise of the Father is baptism in the Holy Spirit. What is water baptism and Spirit baptism? Do they happen simultaneously or are they separate and distinct experiences?

Jesus refers to John's water baptism. This was a baptism of repentance and renewal for Jews. Jesus received John's baptism, but not because he needed to repent. Jesus received it to affirm John as the final prophet who prepared the way for his ministry. Luke 3:21-22: *Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."* Jesus received Spirit baptism simultaneously with water baptism. The disciples had received John's water baptism, but not Spirit baptism. They could not receive Spirit baptism until Jesus completed his mission. The HS could not be given or received until Jesus died on the cross for our sins, was resurrected, and glorified in heaven.

The promise of the Father is that every person who repents of sin, confesses Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord (symbolized by water baptism), can also receive a 'baptism' in the HS. Every person should ask to be filled with the HS at the time of his/her water baptism. (Sometimes people get baptized without knowing anything about the HS.) Water and Spirit baptism should go together. The experiences do not need to be separate as in Pentecostal teaching (a baptism in the HS subsequent to conversion with the evidence of speaking in tongues). For example, the HS came upon Jesus at his water baptism (Luke 3:22) and then Jesus was full of the HS when he was tempted by Satan in the wilderness (Luke 4:1).

Three separate terms are used to describe the promise of the Father by Luke in Acts:

- Baptized with the Holy Spirit (1:5, 11:16) – immersion
- The Holy Spirit has come upon you (1:8) – external (primarily OT)
- Filled with the Holy Spirit (2:4, 4:8, 4:31, 9:17, 13:9) – internal

Baptism in the HS would be an absolute necessity for the apostles' mission (Acts 1:7-8). It is an absolute necessity for us to obey Christ's final command, the Great Commission.

"We need to receive the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit in our lives and our ministries to the *greatest extent possible* in order to serve God well in our world." What is the greatest extent possible? Acts will show us.

The Mission: Acts 1:6-8 - Luke presents the theme of the entire book.

It also reflects E-1, E-2, E-3 evangelism. Jerusalem, Judea (E1), Samaria (E2), ends of the earth (E3).

E = Evangelism. The numbers stand for barriers that must be crossed in order to do it. E 1 is monocultural evangelism. The only barrier is to move outside the church. For many this "stained glass barrier" is a formidable one, and all too many Christian fail to cross it. You don't have to learn a new language, eat different food, or adapt new behavior and customs. This is communicating the good news to people who are like you. Most people are won to Christ through E1. E2 & E3 are cross-cultural evangelism and the difference between the two is one of degree. E2 implies crossing the same "church-walls barrier" as E1, but also one degree of cultural barrier. This would be Anglo-Americans evangelizing Mexican-Americans or Asian-Americans (or Black-Americans) because the two cultures have comparatively minor differences.

The same Anglo-Americans evangelizing Tahitians in French Polynesia would find themselves in an E3 situation because the language and culture is very different. This is the situation I faced when I was a missionary in French Polynesia. I didn't speak French or Tahitian. I lived with a Tahitian family. I learned to eat *poisson cru* (raw fish) and taro. Because nobody on the mission team spoke French, we performed a drama about the life of Christ and I got to play Jesus. I got to preach in Tahitian churches with interpreters.

In multicultural urban America opportunities for E1, E2 and E3 can be found in the same neighborhood. The International Farmer's Market on Germantown has all three. (I would like to take a group over to pass out *TrueLife* cards on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon. We can get coffee at Cool Beans with Brisa & Brandon.)

I admire Francis Chan and his wife. They want to evangelize “to the ends of the earth.” Francis had fame and fortune in the evangelical world. He left his CA church in 2010. Now he wants to move to Asia - Myanmar - to share the gospel with people who have never heard about Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul wanted to go where Jesus was unknown. Romans 15:20: *My ambition has always been to preach the Good News where the name of Christ has never been heard, rather than where a church has already been started by someone else.* (NLT)

Someday, I want to do the same, if it's the Lord's will.

The Ascension: Acts 1:9-11 - The significance of Christ's ascension!

First, Christ sent the HS. Read Luke 24:44-49 (John 7:37-39).

⁴⁴ *Then Jesus said to them, “It is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷ and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ **And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.**”* - It's better to have the HS with us than Christ on earth in a physical body.

Read JOHN 7:37-39: ³⁷ On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” ³⁹ **Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.**

Second, Christ received all authority in heaven and on earth. World mission would be impossible without Jesus Christ possessing all authority. It would be like a policeman with no authority to arrest anyone for committing a crime! Whatever authority Satan had over the kingdoms of this world, Christ took it from him. Luke 4:5-8: ⁵ *And the devil took Jesus up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, ⁶ and said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. ⁷ If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” ⁸ And*

Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.'"

Matthew 28:16-20: ¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Third, Christ knows, reveals, and enacts the times and seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. Acts 1:7: *Jesus said to the disciples, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority."* Revelation is all about the ascended Christ and what he has done, is doing, and will do in the future as he enacts the Father's plans.

Fourth, Christ will return in the same way as he went into heaven. Acts 1:11: *Two white-robed men said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come again in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."* What does "same way" mean here? In the same manner; that is a visible and physical descent on a cloud. Luke 21:25-:27: ²⁵ *"There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. ²⁶ People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. ²⁷ At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."*

Application: Welcome the promise of the Father. Pray every morning for the HS to come upon you and baptize you and fill you and empower you to be a witness in your Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and even to the ends of the earth.