

Captive's Corner



"Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ"

2 Corinthians 10:5

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The Spirit's Baptism, Filling, and Anointing

The baptism with the Spirit and the filling with the Spirit are two distinct works. The baptism with the Spirit that is referred to by Christ as yet future and which occurred in the New Testament is distinctly a New Testament experience. You can read what John the Baptist said in Matthew 3:11-12, Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16-17, and John 1:33. You should notice that the baptism with the Spirit which he spoke of was yet future, "He will baptize you "

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Jesus also spoke concerning the gift of the Spirit in John 7:37-39 where He said that "the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." Herein

lies the key to the teachings we are considering. Jesus said just before He ascended that they would be "baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." - Acts 1:4-5. This baptism could not take place until Jesus was glorified! Why? Because this baptism was to join all believers in one body to Christ their Head in heaven (1 Corinthians 12:12-14;1:30; Romans 6:3) and also to empower all believers so that they could witness to the crucified/risen Christ throughout the world (Acts 1:8). This baptism awaited the first coming of Jesus Christ and His departure back to the Father in the body as recorded in Acts 1:9-11.

The filling with the Spirit as mentioned in Ephesians 5:18 as well as other passages in Luke refers to a person being controlled by the Spirit in his thoughts, words, and behavior. See also Romans

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8:4-14; Galatians 5:16, 18, 25. In all but one case where the filling is mentioned in the New Testament, the person so filled speaks of God and His Works. This filling can also be seen in the Old Testament as in the case of Bezaleel and the

other gifted artisans who built the tabernacle - Exodus 31:1-11. Thus, to be filled with the Spirit is not a New Testament only teaching.

To have the Spirit of God dwelling within is also not a New Testament only teaching, as Old Testament saints who knew God were obviously born of God just as we are. No man understands God or seeks God in himself - Romans 3:10-12. He must be given life from above to do so. However, the Old Testament gives a greater stress on God's Spirit coming upon

people than on God's Spirit dwelling in people. You can take a concordance and look up the word "Spirit" to see that this is the case. There are simply too many references to list here. In contrast to this, the New Testament develops extensively the teaching of the Spirit and His work for, in, and through the believer. But this is true of the teaching on the Father and the Son also. In the Old Testament, the emphasis was on the unity of the Godhead; in the New Testament, the emphasis is on the three Persons in the Godhead. Check it out.

The anointing of the Spirit is yet another truth that may need some explanation. "Anointing" means "to rub or pour on." The Spirit is seen to come upon people with express purposes or goals to accomplish. In the Old Testament, kings, prophets, and priests were all anointed with oil as a picture of

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the reality of God's Spirit coming upon them to enable them to fulfill their God appointed task. In the New Testament, all believers are said to be anointed by God so that we can know the truth - 1 John 2:20, 27. Jesus' name "the Christ" means "the Anointed One." Isaiah 11:1-5 and 61:1-3 are beautiful prophecies concerning Him as the Christ. His baptism on earth was accompanied by the Spirit coming out of heaven and resting upon Him - Matthew 3:16. I believe that this concept of anointing is different from the concept of the baptism

with the Spirit or the filling with the Spirit although there are some similarities in all of them due to the Spirit's presence and work through the people involved. Further, a person who is anointed with the Spirit today can obviously be one who is baptized with and filled with the Spirit also. In fact, this is the way it should be.

Note also that some confusion exists in the church today regarding the difference between the ordinance of baptism (which men administer) and the baptism which the Holy Spirit administers. The Spirit's baptism places the believer

into union with Christ where all the blessings of God are found. It is in union with Christ that we partake of or share in His resurrection life (eternal life which is our new life from above, Christ is our life) - Ephesians 1:3-14; 2:5; Colossians 2:13; 3:1-4; Titus 3:5. The Spirit's baptism also places the believer into the body of Christ, where this true life from above is shared by all members of His body - 1 Corinthians 12:12-14. The moment a person repents and puts his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit administers this baptism and begins to dwell within the believer to make the Lord's salvation real in his life. The Spirit's baptism could not occur until Christ was glorified - John 7:37-39. Only then could God's Spirit put believers in Him in union with

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one another and join them to their Head in Heaven, Jesus Christ. Only then could His chosen ones go into the entire world and preach the finished work of God's Son on the cross for salvation. Jesus Christ had to die, rise from the dead, and be glorified to the Father's right hand before His people could act on earth as His body and proclaim Him throughout the world - Acts 1:8. The Spirit's ministry within the believer enables the believer to

serve God with His divine power - Philippians 2:13; Ephesians 1:19-20. Water baptism is an act of obedience (Matthew 28:18-20 with Acts 10:47-48), an act of identification with Christ in His death (Romans 6:1-6), an act of renunciation of our old habits (Acts 22:16), and the answer of a good conscience before God in the face of suffering for the faith (1 Peter 3:13 - 4:6). I hope these few remarks will help clarify the distinct works of the Holy Spirit's baptism, filling, and anointing.

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