

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit – Part 1

We are continuing to study through the Book of Luke and are again today considering these wonderful, but mysterious, words spoken by the Prophet, John the Baptist in Luke chapter 3, verses 16 and 17. Recall that John's message was so powerful and so persuasive that the people had begun to question him as to whether He might be more than just a Prophet, questioning whether He might actually be the promised Messiah, the "Anointed One", that they had expected for so long.

And here, in these words of Luke chapter 3, John told them that no, he was not the Messiah, saying in verse 16,

¹⁶ . . . "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Luke 3:16

May I remind us that John the Baptist was born for this very purpose, to be a forerunner, a herald, announcing the soon coming of the Kingdom of God, and especially to prepare the way for the coming of the Lord Jesus.

And so then, with these simple, but mysterious words, John the Baptist was giving his first introduction of the Lord Jesus, his first announcement of the arrival of our Blessed Savior, Jesus Christ, the true "Messiah". Listen again! John said . . .

¹⁶ . . . "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire." (Luke 3:16-17)

This One who was "Mightier than him" that John was speaking about and would soon stand before these people and be baptized, was the Lord Jesus. And as John was declaring, Jesus would do far greater things than John could ever do.

But folks, in this astounding announcement about the Lord Jesus, we must not miss out on the other announcement that is taking place within these words . . .

¹⁶ . . . "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Luke 3:16)

In these words, John the Baptist is not only announcing the arrival of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity, he is also announcing the arrival of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity.

Yes, the Holy Spirit had been on the earth for all the millennia since creation, working within the hearts and minds of many people, especially the prophets. But now, with the coming to earth of the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit would begin to take on a whole other, more active, role.

And as Jesus began to preach and to teach and to minister to the people, we find within His words the unfolding of a blessed and glorious plan, a plan to not only save people from their sins, but a plan that would also change every part of each person's personality and life.

Folks, it was never God's plan for just one of the members of the Trinity to be involved in the salvation of mankind. It was ever and always going to be the ministry of all three, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

And we can see in the crowds that would gather to John each day, that God's broader plan was taking place already, even on this day that we are reading about here in these words of our scripture text. Later on, Jesus would say the words, "no one comes to Me except my Father draws them", (John 6:44).

And though the people were not yet able to perceive His presence within all that was taking place in their hearts, we, from our vantage point of looking back at the gathering of the crowds coming out to be baptized, know that God the Father was already at work within all that was taking place, that through the Holy Spirit, God the Father was drawing these people out to see John the Baptist, and then subsequently, also to see the Lord Jesus, that day.

Folks, this is a truth that you and I must recognize. Yes, each of us has a free and active will, and we use our "free will" to do the things we do. But over-arching all that takes place within our "free will" is the "Sovereign Will of God". And here, as these people gathered to hear and to see John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus, they were being drawn to be there by God the Father. Those words again from Jesus in John 6:44, "no one comes to Me except my Father draw them".

And much the same takes place in people's hearts today as they are drawn to attend a crusade or a conference where they will then hear the gospel and go forward to give their hearts to Christ. God's Holy Spirit had probably been working within their hearts days, or weeks or even months before to prepare

them to finally go to this one event and to then surrender their hearts to Christ. It is the way that God works to draw men and women to Him. And may I add, though you may have come here today for reasons of your own, the sovereign hand of God was first at work, drawing you here so that you could hear His truth and respond to it.

We know also that in John chapter 16, Jesus would later declare that when the Holy Spirit comes, He will convict men and women of sin and righteousness and judgment. And that was exactly what was taking place in these very moments as John the Baptist baptized these people. These people were being convicted that they were sinners in need of cleansing from their sins. And while John's baptism was the first step, there was surely far more to come. Those words again.

¹⁶ . . . "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Luke 3:16)

This One that John was introducing within these words, the Lord Jesus, would bring the people salvation, and then the other One, that John was introducing, the Holy Spirit, would carry that salvation on further and deeper and throughout each person's life and on into eternity. Praise be to God!

Folks, don't you just love it when God reveals His plans to us. He loves us so much that He gave His Only Begotten Son to die and to save us from our sins. Then he gave us His Holy Spirit to secure our souls on into the future of eternity. What a wonderful and precious plan.

And you and I, after having received the Lord Jesus into our souls as our Savior and Lord, are right now, enjoying the benefits of these words that John spoke about the Holy Spirit. Listen again!

¹⁶ John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

I said to us in an earlier message that while many of our charismatic friends envision mostly only special euphoric feelings of worship and praise as they are "baptized with the Holy Spirit", we know from these truths I have been sharing

about the Holy Spirit, that there is far more in store for our souls as the Holy Spirit's baptism takes place.

And I'd like for us to spend our remaining time this morning carefully examining exactly who the Holy Spirit is and the great blessings He accomplishes within our lives. And especially, to consider the response that you and I are required to have to Him as He lives and works within our souls

We have just said that the Holy Spirit really begins His work long before we are ever aware of His presence, drawing us towards the Lord Jesus, time after time making us to know that we are sinners and are desperately in need of a Savior. For some of us, that may take place over a long period of time.

But then, when He is ready for us to surrender our hearts to the Lord Jesus, we do. And that is when our lives begin to take on a whole new beginning. It is then, at that very first moment that we receive Christ into our heart as our Savior, that the Holy Spirit also comes to live within us, to indwell our spirit. And know also, with a certainty, that as He comes to indwell within our spirit, that it is permanent. He will never leave us. He is then part of our eternal existence.

And folks, all of this is done by God's own choice, by His blessed grace. Listen to these words that I have shared often with us from Ezekiel chapter 36. There God tells us,

²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

Folks, God does not just want to save us from our sins. He wants to change us into a whole new person, one transformed into the image of His dear Son.

Consider these words carefully that I just read here in Ezekiel 36. We are told here that at that first moment of our salvation when God gave us a new heart, His Holy Spirit also came to live within us. That means that He not only knows all those private things that we think and say and do, He is also experiencing them, just as we are. He walks with us through every conversation, whether good or bad, through every behavior, whether good or bad.

And everything we watch on the television, or on our computer or our iPad or our cellphone, is filtered through His Holy Presence. As we watch all those lewd and lascivious programs and listen to all of that profane language being

spouted by those actors, the dear Holy Spirit is also having to watch and listen to those things. And that is an awful thing that we are doing to Him.

Consider . . . that the next time you get on a rant, “cussing out” that politician on the television, or as you “cuss out” that tailgater who is riding your bumper, your words and your behaviors are being filtered through the blessed Presence of God’s Holy Spirit. Wow!

With all that being said, you and I really do need to get to know as much as we can know about God’s Blessed Holy Spirit who now lives every moment within us. And how can we do that? How can we learn of Him?

We can learn first from the things that Jesus told us about Him during His ministry here on earth. And Jesus spoke often about the Holy Spirit and about the role that He would have in our daily lives. In John chapter 14, Jesus said of the Holy Spirit,

25 “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. **26** But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. (John 14:25-26)

And then in John 15, He said,

26 “. . . when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. (John 15:26)

Note carefully here in these two passages that, though the Holy Spirit is an equal member of the Holy Trinity, having the same power and position and authority as God the Father and God the Son, He is “sent” to us by both God the Father and God the Son.

And note also in those words that the Holy Spirit does not come to reveal Himself, to make Himself known, but that He instead “bears witness to the Lord Jesus”, revealing the Lord Jesus and making Him known to us.

That, folks, is an essential understanding that we must have about the Holy Spirit. He does not desire to bring glory to Himself. He instead magnifies and glorifies God the Father and especially, God the Son.

And then also, in John chapter 16, Jesus said,

⁸ And when he (the Holy Spirit) comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment. (John 16:8)

That was what the Holy Spirit was doing in the hearts of those people who were coming out to John to repent and to be baptized. And that is what He does in your and my heart to bring us to our knees before Christ.

And then also, in John 16, Jesus said,

¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. (John 16:13-14)

Here again, the Holy Spirit will take the precious truths of God the Father and God the Son and make them known to us, not glorifying Himself, but glorifying God the Father and God the Son.

And then, as Jesus went back to reign with His Father in heaven, the Apostles took up the role of reminding us about how the Holy Spirit ministers to us. In Romans 8, the Apostle Paul tells us that,

¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ. (Romans 8:16)

Folks, these words are wonderful and so very meaningful to us personally. Think about them for a moment. Here, and also in John chapter 1, we are told that we actually become children of God, His adopted sons, much the same as the Lord Jesus is God's Son.

No, we don't become little gods. There is only one God. But we do become God's adopted sons and daughters. And yes, we will inherit all the benefits of His kingdom. And whether we can fathom it or not, our adoption actually gives us great blessings while we are still here in this life, blessings beyond our comprehension. Why else do you suppose you are living such a blessed existence each day, while the rest of the world is floundering around in daily chaos and turmoil. Wow!

And listen also to these words in Romans 8. Here we are told that, in the weakness of our flesh, we barely know how to pray, but that there also, the Holy Spirit will help us.

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. (Romans 8:26-27)

But also, and sadly so, as we said a moment ago, we can become careless with our behaviors and habits. And when we do, we can disappoint, even “grieve” and “quench” the Holy Spirit who lives within us. Listen to these words, first in Ephesians 4,

And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. (Ephesians 4:30)

And also, in 1 Thessalonians 5, we are told,

¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. (1 Thessalonians 5:19)

Again sadly, you and I, by our behaviors and conduct, can somehow “quench” that fire of the Holy Spirit that is spoken about here. And we must carefully guard our souls against such behaviors.

And these words about the Holy Spirit go on and on and on throughout these scriptures, God admonishing us to surrender our hearts, our souls, our minds and our spirits to Christ and to allow His Holy Spirit to come and live and abide within us.

I know that, with these words, we have only barely touched on the many blessings that being baptized with the Holy Spirit brings to us. But our time is limited, and we must close for now.

But before we go, remembering that I mentioned a moment ago that one of the reasons that you are here today is because the Holy Spirit has drawn you to be here, may then I ask . . . what are you going to do with the things you have heard today? Will you just file them away in your memory and do nothing with them. Or will you add them to the many things that God has already spoken to you and then begin to know that you really are a sinner, desperately in need of a Savior. You must! I must! We each must!

If you have not received Jesus into your heart and soul, I beg you to do that today. And allow Him to “baptize you with His Holy Spirit and fire”.

May we pray!