

The Baptism

*in*

*The Holy Spirit*

Mark W. Fenison, Ph.D.



*PNEUMATOLOGY*

**The Baptism  
in  
The Holy Spirit**

By  
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# The Baptism in the Spirit

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## Dedication

*Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.* – 1 Cor. 4:2

This book is dedicated to Brother Gerard Greisen, whom we affectionately call “Jake.” For over 20 years Jake has been *faithful* to our services and held various duties *faithfully*. He is presently the church song leader and treasurer. Jake has also proofed nearly every book I have written in the last 20 years. He is a *faithful* witness on his job and a *faithful* defender of truth. He is not only a *faithful* member of Victory Baptist Church but regarded affectionately as part of our own family.

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## Introduction

The baptism in the Spirit is a very important subject. How you view the baptism in the Spirit will greatly affect how you understand the doctrines of salvation (soteriology) and the church (ecclesiology), as well as, your practical view of the scriptures, as final authority.

For example, the vast majority embrace some kind of church salvation due to their view of the baptism in the Spirit. Landmark Baptists are among the few churches on earth who do not believe the nature of the church has anything to do with our spiritual union “*in Christ*” or salvation experience. The Roman Catholic Church, the Reformed Roman Catholic denominations (Protestants) and sub-class denominations that broke off from them (Methodists, Nazarenes, Reformed Baptists, etc.), as well as the denominations originating in the Restoration movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century (LDS, SDA, JW’s, Pentecostals, etc.), all believe that salvation is inseparable from their concept of the church.

For the vast majority of those who embrace the universal invisible church theory, the baptism in the Spirit is the mechanism by which believers are brought into spiritual union with Christ, or what actually places them into the universal invisible body of Christ or position of salvation. Others believe it is inseparable from initial salvation.

For most Holiness and Pentecostal type denominations, they regard the baptism in the Spirit as a second work of grace subsequent to initial salvation manifested by speaking in tongues, and a means to live on a higher level of sanctification.

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In contrast to the above groups, Landmark Baptists believe the baptism in the Spirit is an *institutional* rather than an *individual* immersion. Moreover, instead of an age long *repetitive* act, Landmark Baptists believe it was a completed *historical* act at the beginning of the church dispensation. Furthermore, instead of an act related to individual *salvation*, Landmark Baptists believe it is an authenticating act related to the “*house of God*” publicly accrediting it as the proper place for public *service* and worship.

Interestingly, with the sole exception of the Landmark view, all other views of the baptism in the Spirit, repudiate the very audible and visible characteristics listed in Acts 2:1-3, as evidences of the authenticity of this work of the Spirit. Perhaps they deny these Biblical characteristics because their own interpretation and application of this work are not evidenced by these Biblical characteristics??

Another issue that may aide in understanding the baptism in the Spirit is its proper relationship with the covenant under which it is administered. Prior to Pentecost, there was such an immersion of “*the house of God*” in direct connection with establishing a *public* visible covenant administration (Ex. 40:34-35) on earth.

For example, when God ushered in the “*old*” covenant at Mount Sinai it occurred simultaneously with the building of “*the house of God*” and its immersion in the Shekinah glory. However, the immersion of the “*house of God*” was but one aspect of the preliminary work of the Spirit under this covenant. The Spirit of God also began to provide a new body of scriptures (The Law and the prophets) confirmed by miracles signs and wonders. In addition to these things, the Spirit of God chose a covenant people to primarily administer the work of redemption among (Israel). Therefore, the immersion of the “*house of God*” in the Shekinah

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glory was but one facet of a greater covenant administrative dispensation.

Likewise, when Christ established the “*new*” covenant it was simultaneous with building a new “*house of God*” that was immersed on the day of Pentecost. However, this immersion of the “*house of God*” was also just one facet of a greater application of “*the promise of the Spirit*” under the “*new*” covenant administration. The Spirit of God also began to provide a new body of scriptures (The New Testament) which were confirmed by miracles, signs and wonders. In addition to these things, the Spirit of God chose a covenant people to primarily administer the work of redemption (Gentiles – Rom. 11). Therefore, the immersion of the “*house of God*” in the Spirit of God was but one facet, or the initial preliminary work of the Spirit under the “*new*” public and visible covenant administration.

Therefore, the issues that divide us from other Christians in regard to the baptism in the Spirit are: (1) Is it an *individual* or *institutional* work of the Spirit? (2) Is it a *repetitive* or a *onetime historical act* of the Spirit? (3) Is it related to *salvation* or to *service*? (4) Is it the *entire* “*promise of the Spirit*” or is it only one facet of the *preliminary* “*promise of the Spirit*” under the new covenant administration, but not to be confused with other facets of this promise?

We believe it is a preliminary, institutional, and non-repetitive historical confirmation of the new “*house of God*” as keeper of the “*keys of the kingdom*” or the authorized administrator of the ordinances within the visible professing kingdom of God under the “*new*” covenant visible administration on earth.

Mark W. Fenison  
April 5, 2015

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## The Various Theories

This study begins with providing the various theories of the baptism in the Spirit which are embraced by various aspects of Christendom.

There are four major views concerning the baptism in the Spirit; (1) The Evangelical Protestant view; (2) The Pentecostal view; (3) The Roman Catholic view; (4) The Historical view.

**1. THE EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT VIEW:** This view makes the baptism in the Spirit inseparable from initial salvation at the point of regeneration or new birth. This theory claims that the baptism in the Spirit is actually the Spirit baptizing believers into Christ or placing them into spiritual union with Christ, which they interpret as inseparable from being placed into the universal invisible mystical body of Christ. Therefore, instead of Christ being the administrator as promised by John The Baptist (Mt. 3:11) and the Spirit being the element into which one is immersed; they reverse this order and have the Holy Spirit as the administrator and Christ as the element into which one is immersed.

This act by the Holy Spirit, according to this position, is bringing the believer into actual spiritual union with Christ, by which all aspects of salvation are obtained. Hence, to be outside this union/body is to be lost and to be inside is to be saved.

Earlier advocates of this view did not distinguish regeneration from this baptism in the Spirit. However, most present day advocates claim that the baptism in the Spirit is distinct but inseparable from regeneration.

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There are two different camps within this view. There are the non-dispensationalists who believe all the elect from Genesis to Revelation are baptized into spiritual union/mystical body of Christ, and there are the dispensationalists, who believe the same thing but starting with Pentecost and concluding with the Rapture prior to the tribulation.

They contend that this is what the prepositional phrase “in Christ” has reference to. Some representatives of this view are as follows:

- **Dr. John L. Walvoord** - *“Salvation and [Spirit] baptism are therefore coextensive, and it is impossible to be saved without this work of the Holy Spirit (p. 139). A New Position: Intimately connected with the fact that baptism by the Spirit brings the believer into the body of Christ is the inseparable truth that baptism also places the believer in Christ Himself...Before salvation, the individual was in Adam, partaking of Adam’s nature, sin, and destiny. In salvation, the believer is removed from his position in Adam, and he is placed in Christ. All the details of his salvation spring from this new position. His justification, and glorification, deliverance, access to God, inheritance, and glorification are actual and possible because of the believers position in Christ.”* – John Walvoord, **The Holy Spirit**. pp. 139,141
- **Dr. Wayne Grudem** - *“‘Baptism in the Holy Spirit,’ therefore, must refer to the activity of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the Christian life when he gives new spiritual life (in regeneration) and cleanses us and gives a clear break with the power and love of sin (the initial stage of sanctification).”* – Wayne Grudem, **Systematic**

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**Theology**, (“Baptism in and filling with the Holy Spirit”)  
p. 768 - Emphasis mine

- **Dr. John MacArthur** - *“If you take away the baptizing by Christ by the agency of the Holy Spirit, you destroy the doctrine of unity of the body of Christ because we then have some people who aren’t yet part of the body. Then where are they? How can you be saved but not be part of the body of Christ? How can you be a Christian but not be in Christ? That makes no sense. It is clear – we are all baptized.”* – John MacArthur, **The Baptism by the Spirit**

As you can see, MacArthur attempts to make both Christ and the Holy Spirit the administrator, as he says the Holy Spirit acts as Christ’s “agency” to administer this baptism, but the element into which the person is baptized is not the Spirit, but the mystical body of Christ. However, one thing is clear, which is this baptism is inseparable from initial salvation.

Also, as you can see, both the dispensational and non-dispensational universal invisible church advocates maintain the same view in regard to the universal invisible body of Christ.

**2. THE PENTECOSTAL VIEW:** The Pentecostal/Charismatic view is that the baptism in the Spirit is a second work of grace separate from initial salvation. According to this view, it is evidenced by speaking in tongues. What is its purpose according to this view? Some believe it is “power” to live the Christian life, while others believe it is power to live above sin.

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**Dr. J. Rodman Williams**, the author of *Renewal Theology* says:

*At the time of salvation, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within. For example, the risen Christ breathed on the disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22). At Pentecost, there came about a later experience of the disciples being baptized in the Holy Spirit, primarily for ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5-8 and 2:4). Two separate experiences: one for enlivening by the Holy Spirit for salvation; the other for empowering by the Holy Spirit. We need both! – J. Rodman Williams, Theology Q&A - [http://www.cbn.com/spirituallife/BibleStudyAndTheology/DrWilliams/OA10\\_Spirit.aspx](http://www.cbn.com/spirituallife/BibleStudyAndTheology/DrWilliams/OA10_Spirit.aspx)*

*We have now to consider the significance of baptism in the Holy Spirit. Primarily it is a matter of being immersed in the presence and power of God. Even as baptism in water means immersion in water- -the whole person being submerged in and surrounded by water- -so does baptism in the Holy Spirit mean immersion in the reality of God's dynamic presence? The language of the Spirit's being "poured out," "falling upon," "coming upon" are various descriptions of the Spirit's external coming; "filled" points to the internal dimension- -a being filled within; "baptism in the Holy Spirit" highlights the central fact of being enveloped by, surrounded with, immersed in the presence and power of God. The immediate consequence of this spiritual baptism in several biblical instances was speaking in tongues. – J. Rodman Williams, **Renewal Theology**, (The Baptism in the Spirit) - [http://renewaltheology.net/A\\_Theological\\_Pilgrimage/t\\_p05.htm](http://renewaltheology.net/A_Theological_Pilgrimage/t_p05.htm)*

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**3. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC VIEW:** The Roman Catholic Catechism identifies the baptism in the Spirit to be accomplished in the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation:

*1302 It is evident from its celebration that the effect of the sacrament of Confirmation is the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost.*

*1303 From this fact, Confirmation brings an increase and deepening of baptismal grace:*

- it roots us more deeply in the divine filiations which makes us cry “Abba Father!”
- it unites us more firmly to Christ;
- it increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us;
- it renders our bond with the Church more perfect;
- it gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross; - **Catechism of the Catholic Church**, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. p. 330

The Charismatic Roman Catholics provide much of the same answer consistent with the Catholic Catechism quoted above:

***Baptism in the Spirit and the Sacrament of Baptism**  
The Baptism in the Spirit is not a sacrament, but it is related to a sacrament, to several sacraments in fact -- to the sacraments of Christian initiation. The Baptism in the Spirit makes real and in a way renews Christian initiation. The primary relationship is with the Sacrament of Baptism. In fact, this experience is called the Baptism in the Spirit by English-speaking people. We believe that*

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*the Baptism in the Spirit makes real and revitalizes our baptism. To understand how a sacrament which was received so many years ago, usually immediately after our birth, could suddenly come back to life and emanate so much energy, as often happens through the Baptism in the Spirit, it is important to look at our understanding of sacramental theology. Catholic theology recognizes the concept of a valid but "tied" sacrament. A sacrament is called tied if the fruit that should accompany it remains bound because of certain blocks that prevent its effectiveness.* – **Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Archdiocese of Miami**

(<http://www.miamiccr.com/baptism-in-the-holy-spirit.html>) quoted on July 25, 2014

**4. THE HISTORICAL VIEW:** This view is called “historical” because it asserts this baptism was completed as an historical *institutional* church event in the first century rather than an ongoing repetitive *individual* event during this age. This view asserts that the baptism in the Spirit is not an *individual* immersion, but an *institutional* immersion of the public house of God. It is synonymous with the Old Testament immersion of Tabernacle and Temple in the shekinah glory that took place once upon their completion or the day of dedication.

1. The immersion of the Tabernacle institution – Exodus 40:35-37
2. The immersion of the Temple institution – 2 Chron. 7:1-3
3. The immersion of the Congregational institution – Acts 2:1-3

The purpose of this immersion was to provide public confirmation that such a house was built and operates according to the divine pattern revealed by God to its builder. As such, it is the authorized and designated place for public worship and

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administration of the ordinances (Deut. 12:5-14). Therefore this public immersion signified:

1. It had been built by a designated builder
2. It had been built according to a specific pattern
3. Its public ordinances and ministry conform to that pattern.
4. It is the visible administrator of “*the keys of the kingdom.*”

This immersion in the shekinah glory was the manifest approval that it conformed to the divine pattern and as a consequence, it qualified as the public house of worship where God’s special presence occupied it, thus making it “*the house of God and pillar and ground of the truth.*”

This immersion of each new institutional house of God was accompanied by temporal manifest miraculous signs (fire from heaven, etc.). However, the continuing Divine presence within this institutional public house of worship is manifested by its operational conformation to the divine pattern for which the immersion in shekinah glory was first designed to signify.

Among those who believe the baptism in the Spirit was an historical event fulfilled upon the institutional house of God are:

## 1. Dr. T.P. Simmons:

*“There is absolutely nothing to justify the belief that Pentecost is to be repeated in the experience of each believer. It came in fulfillment of definite and particular prophecy and promise.”* T.P. Simmons, **A Systemic Study of Bible Doctrine**, Memorial Edition, p. 95)

*“3. He came on the Day of Pentecost in Special Capacity.*

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*This explains the meaning of Christ's promise to send the Spirit. This special capacity was:*

*(1) Perhaps as the antitype of the Shekinah.*

*Num. 9:15-22, 2 Chron. 7:1-3. The Shekinah, in the case of the tabernacle, was for leadership, and in the case of the temple it was a symbol of ownership and possession. The coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost meant both of these to the church.” – T.P. Simons, **Ibid.** p. 93*

## **2. Dr. J.E. Cobb:**

*“2. Baptized in the Spirit.*

*(Read Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5; the promise fulfilled, Acts, chapter 2; Acts 10:44, 45.) This work of the Spirit has been fulfilled, and we do not have Holy Spirit baptism now. The church composed of Jews was baptized in the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost; and at the house of Cornelius when the Gentiles were admitted into the church they were baptized in the Holy Spirit to manifest that the Gentiles were accepted into covenant relationship with Christ.” – J.E. Cobb, **Brief Studies in Christian Doctrine**, p. 128*

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## The Historical View

The *historical* view is called *historical* because it has an Old Testament historical basis, as well as a completed historical completion in the book of Acts, so that it is neither an ongoing or repeatable action.

The *historical* basis found in the Old Testament provides the historical background to properly understand it. With each new “*house of God*” built in the Old Testament, there is a onetime immersion (Ex. 40:35; 2 Chron. 7:1-3; Ezek. 43:2-5) immediately upon the completion of each house certifying that it has been built according to a revealed divine pattern and therefore acceptable to God, as a special manifestation of His presence on earth.

Each house not only had to be built according to a specific pattern, but its ministry and ordinances also had to conform to a specific pattern.

In the Old Testament Scriptures there are three instances where God chose a builder and gave that builder a divine pattern to build “*the house of God.*” (1) Moses and the Tabernacle; (2) Solomon and the Temple; (3) Ezekiel and the Millennial Temple;

### 1. Moses and the Pattern for the Tabernacle:

*Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. – Heb. 8:5*

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*According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.* – Ex.25:9

*And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount.* – Ex. 25:40

*And this work of the candlestick was of beaten gold, unto the shaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, was beaten work: according unto the pattern which the LORD had shewed Moses, so he made the candlestick.* – Numb. 8:4

*Therefore said we, that it shall be, when they should so say to us or to our generations in time to come, that we may say again, Behold the pattern of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifices; but it is a witness between us and you.*  
– Josh. 22:28

Once this house of God was completed by its chosen builder it was immersed in the shekinah glory of God as a divine authentication that the pattern was followed and it was an acceptable dwelling place for God:

*So Moses finished the work. Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.* – Ex. 40:33,34

## 2. Solomon and the Pattern of the Temple

*Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the*

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*inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, And the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things:.....And for the altar of incense refined gold by weight; and gold for the pattern of the chariot of the cherubims, that spread out their wings, and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD. All this, said David, the LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.* – 1 Chron. 28:11-12, 18-19

Once this house of God was completed it was immersed in the shekinah glory of God as a divine authentication that the pattern was followed:

*Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house. And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.* – 2 Chron. 7:1-3

### 3. Ezekiel and the Pattern for the Millennial House of God

*Thou son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern.* – Ezek. 43:10

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Ezekiel is the builder in the sense that he is given the pattern in a vision and told to measure every aspect of it according to the pattern given. After every aspect is “*measured*” and the whole is completed then we read:

*And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east. So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house. – Ezek. 43:4-5*

The first house of God was made of skins. The second house of God was made of stones. The third house does not state what kind of material was used to build it. The New Testament house of God is made of people in their own skins (1 Cor. 12:27) assembled together as metaphorical “*lively stones*” (1 Pet. 2:5).

In each case the manifest glory of God came first upon the new house and then filled it. This is the historical backdrop behind the baptism in the Spirit from a Biblical perspective.

This is precisely what happened to the New Testament “*house of God*” in Acts 2:1-3. The room in which they were all sitting was filled with the glory of the Lord, thus immersing them in the shekinah glory and then each were filled with the Spirit.

*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.... – Acts 2:1-4a*

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## The New Pattern for Public Worship

The New Testament identifies the church institution as the new “*house of God*.”

*But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in **the house of God**, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.* – 1 Tim. 3:15

Prior to 1 Timothy 3:15 the words “*the house of God*” are found 84 out of the total of 88 times it is found in the entire Bible. 1 Timothy 3:15 is the 85<sup>th</sup> occurrence in the King James Bible. In every case previous to 1 Timothy 3:15, the words “*the house of God*” refer only to the designated institutional house for **public** worship, where a qualified public ministry administers qualified public ordinances. This phrase brought to the Jewish mind the designated place where Israel would assemble for public worship.

*But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks: And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee. Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes.* – Deut. 12:5-8

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Therefore, when the Jewish Paul described the church institution as “*the house of God*” to Timothy who had been taught the Old Testament Scriptures it conveyed only one thing to the Jewish mind – a designated place of public worship, with a qualified public ministry (1 Tim. 3:1-13) and ordinances all built according to a divine pattern that provided a system of faith and practice (1 Tim. 3:16-4:1).

Indeed, the church institution had been built by a designated builder:

*And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock **I will build my church**; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. – Mt. 16:18*

This “*church*” or regular assembly had been in existence from the baptism of John until the ascension of Christ to heaven:

*Wherefore of these men which **have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us**, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. – Acts 1:21-22*

Furthermore, the New Testament “*house of God*” as an institution had been immersed in the Shekinah glory signifying not only acceptance by God, but that it had been built according to a divine pattern:

*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord **in one place**. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it **filled all the house where they were sitting**. And*

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*there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.* – Acts 2:1-3

Indeed, a qualified ministry, which is a necessary part of that pattern is found in the very preceding context where the church institution is first identified as “*the house of God*” (1 Tim. 3:1-13). The New Testament provides a detailed pattern for the New Testament House of God.

## A. Matthew 16:15-18 – The Pattern Characterized

*15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?*

*16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*

*17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.*

*18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

*19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

Here is the very first mention in the New Testament of the new “*house of God*” as the congregational body of Christ. The geographical context is near Caesarea Philippi where a temple was built to honor Caesar. Outside of Caesarea Philippi was a huge rock upon which the fortress *Bani* or *Pani* stood guarding the city at the entrance of the valley. It is in this sight of this huge rock, that Christ said “*upon this rock I will build my church.*”

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*Temple of Pan at foot of Mount Hermon*

Moreover, this conversation occurred in sight of Mount Hermon at the foot of which, there was a cave which a spring flowed that formed the headwaters for the Jordan River. At the mouth of that cave was written over it “*the gates of Hades*” and protruding out of that mouth was the temple of Pan. The cave was called “*the gates of Hades*” because they believed that the god Pan used this cave to enter and exit Hades. Pan is the Greek version of the Old Testament “*Baal*” who originated with the myths surrounding Nimrod, the builder of Babel – where the first organized civil and *religious* resistance against God occurred in history. Babel represents the organized institutional state religion in rebellion against God, or the first *state* church – mystery Babylon. It is this organized state religion that Satan has used to persecute, pervert and destroy God’s people and His House. Thus, the “*gates of*

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*Hades*” is directly associated with the builder of organized state religion. It is in the sight of this symbol of organized religious rebellion against God that Jesus said, “*upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*”

It is in this geographical and historical context, that Jesus introduces the new House of God for the first time. It is in this context he provides a building pattern for this new house of God.

## 1. The Building Context

It should be easy to see Matthew 16:18 is a building context:

There is a builder “*I will build*”.

There is something to build “*my church*” and

There is something to build on “*upon this rock*”.

These points clearly demonstrate a *building* context. The builder is named. The building is named. The foundation to build upon is named. However, apart from the name given to Simon, there is an obvious missing ingredient in this building context. The missing ingredient is the kind of material out of which Jesus builds His church. This missing aspect is supplied in the intentional word play by Christ “*Thou art Peter.*” Prior to this, Jesus had addressed him only as “*Simon bar Jona*” (Mt. 16:17). However, when it came to this building context, Jesus changes from “*Simon bar Jona*” to “*thou art Peter.*” Why? He changes to calling him “*Peter*” because Jesus had given him that name for this specific point in time in order to characterize the nature of the materials that Christ would use to build His church, the new house of God. The kind of material out of which Christ builds his church is found in what the name “*Peter*” or the Greek term *petros* characterized, as defined by

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its historical and contextual background. How does the noun *petros* supply this missing ingredient?

## 2. The Characterization

Significantly, the noun *petros* (translated “*Peter*”) is found without the definite article (“the”) in the Greek text.<sup>1</sup> This often indicates that the speaker or writer is intentionally trying to emphasize the character or quality of the term. What would be the impact of such a characterization in this building context? Such a characterization would define the nature of the building material.

For example, the characterization would amplify the contrasting word play by distinguishing the kind of rock out of which Jesus builds the church from the kind of rock He builds the church upon. What contextual evidence is there for such an interpretation?

- a. The preposition “*upon*” clearly demonstrates that *petra* (translated “*rock*”) is the larger kind of rock used for foundations.
- b. The 3<sup>rd</sup> person demonstrative pronoun “*this*” demonstrates that the foundation rock (*petra*) is not the same rock as *petros* because *petros* is modified by a 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronoun rather than a 3<sup>rd</sup> person. Therefore, *petros* (Peter) must refer to another type of building rock such as the kind used for the construction of the edifice built upon that foundation.

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<sup>1</sup> It cannot be denied that Jesus gave Simon the name *petros* for intentional characterization in John 1:42 and this is the only context that provides any reason for that characterization.

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- c. The noun *petros* (Peter) is masculine gender, while the noun *petra* (rock) is feminine gender. The feminine provides the source from which the masculine is derived.
- d. The historical distinction in meaning between *petra* (“*rock*”) and *petros* (“*Peter*”) is that *petra* is used for a massive rock whereas *petros* was used for smaller rocks. Indeed, *petros* is used by the writer of Second Maccabees in the period between Malachi and the ministry of Christ for a smaller rock.<sup>2</sup>

Both *Petros* (Peter) and *Petra* (rock) refer to a “*rock*” but the building context and grammar distinguish one from the other. In such a building context, both are essential. The church must be built **upon** a more massive rock, but the church edifice itself must also be built out of rock. Only when the two terms are understood in contrast can the building line of thought be completed.

### 3. The building “rock” characterized?

When the historical and grammatical context is carefully considered there is a clear picture of what kind of building rock *petros* (Peter) is intended to characterize.

**a. A Derived Kind:** Grammatically the masculine *petros* is a derivative from the feminine *petra*. The feminine is the *source* of origin whereas the masculine is the *derived product*. Another way to illustrate the difference is by comparing a gold nugget being derived from a larger source such as a *mother load*. As Catholic

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<sup>2</sup> 2 Macc. 1:16; 4:41 – the significance of this is the fact that in the Septuagint the masculine “petros” occurs only here. Nearly 100 times the feminine “petra” is found in the Septuagint consistently for large rocks and in particular is a description for God

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theologians admit, the noun *petros* (Peter) has a history for meaning a smaller rock derived from a larger rock - *petra*. In a building context, it would suggest the historical concept where a master builder had a rock cut out of the massive quarry to be used in his building. Contextually, this idea of a derived product from a larger source is clearly spelled out in the verse that immediately precedes Matthew 16:18:

*“Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”* – Mt. 16:17

Spiritually, Simon was a derived product from a greater heavenly source. In essence he was a chip off the old rock.

**b. A Prepared Kind:** The builder would not only have the rock cut at the quarry, but he would have it cut to the precise measurement to fit the exact place intended for it in the structure. This was the job of the master cutter or rock mason. The rock mason was responsible to make ready such a stone prepared for the use of the Master builder. John the Baptist had been sent ahead of Christ to *“make ready a people prepared for the Lord”* (Lk. 1:17). John the Baptist prepared the material from which Christ used to build His church. Peter was such prepared material, and his name characterized such prepared material. He had received the gospel of Christ and then submitted to John’s baptism (Acts 1:21-22; Lk. 7:29-30). Peter’s name aptly characterizes the only kind of material that the Master Builder would use to build His churches – baptized believers.

**c. A Representative Kind:** In the immediate context it is clear that Jesus was not directing his questions to Peter. He was addressing all his disciples. Impetuous Peter simply responded in

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behalf of all the rest.<sup>3</sup> Peter's response represents the view of all the disciples of Christ. They were all believers in Christ as the Son of God. It is from such professing believers in Christ that Jesus builds His church (Acts 1:21-22; 2:41-42; 16:30-31; etc.).

It is in this *representative* capacity that Peter is addressed in verse 19 as “*thee*” in conjunction with the keys (as the plural “*you*” in Matthew 18:18 proves). He represents the only kind of material from which the church is built.

Here is where the Roman Catholic interpretation begins to break down. The keys are not given uniquely to Peter as some kind of Pope, but rather are given to him as a representative of the kind of members or building material used to build his churches. Hence, the singular pronoun “*thee*” in verse 19 does not support the Catholic position at all.

## 4. Christ's Testimony:

Positive proof that Christ never intended to give the keys to Peter as an individual or as an apostle is that only two chapters later the authority of the keys is said to be given to a plural “*ye*” and “*you*” which has for its antecedent “*the church.*” (Mt. 18:17-18).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> All the apostles had already made this profession earlier – Mt. 15:33

<sup>4</sup> The term “church” or Greek *ekklesia* is a term that is inclusive of a plurality. It is common to address a church in the New Testament and then use the plural pronoun to continuing addressing it (e.g. Acts 11:22; 1 Cor. 14:23; 1 Thes. 1:1; etc.). Also, the subject is church discipline in Matthew 18:15-17 and it is the church not its officers that administer discipline (e.g. 1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Cor. 2; 6 “the many”).

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Neither Peter nor the apostles are said to be the final court of appeal on earth but “*tell it to the church and if they hear not the church*” there is no other final court of appeal on earth or any other final authority for discipleship matters on earth.

## 5. Peter’s Testimony:

Who could better determine whether this interpretation or the Roman Catholic interpretation is correct other than Peter himself? How did Peter understand Christ’s words in Matthew 16:18-19?

It is clear from Peter’s own epistle that the Holy Spirit anticipated Rome’s interpretation and repudiated it. How so? Within five verses in 1 Peter 2:4-8, Peter provides this whole analogy to his readers concerning the material used to build the church and the proper identity of *Petra*.

“*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house...*” – 2 Pet. 2:5

The words “*built up*” represent the exact same Greek term translated “*build*” in Matthew 16:18.

Here is a spiritual “*house*”<sup>5</sup> that is built out of living “*stones*.” Where did Peter get such an analogy for the church of Christ, if it wasn’t from Christ’s own use of Peter’s own name in Matthew 16:18?

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<sup>5</sup> This is the “*house of God*” Paul refers to – 1 Tim. 3:15 built according to this divine pattern.

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Furthermore, Peter identifies Christ not only as the “*rock*” (*petra*) that unbelieving Jews stumbled over, but the foundation stone upon which the church is built:

*To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men.....Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone.....the stone.....a stone of stumbling...a rock (petra) of offense.* – 1 Pet. 2:4, 6, 8

The intent of this context is that this “*rock*” is the object of faith and therefore correlates perfectly with the profession of faith metaphorically described as a “*rock*” in Matthew 16:16-18. Here Peter speaks directly of building the church as a holy temple out of “*lively stones*”<sup>6</sup> combined with identifying Jesus Christ as the *petra* and “*living stone*” all within five verses. This is too clear and decisive to be viewed simply as a coincidence. However, if this is not enough, The Holy Spirit anticipates and denies the Catholic view of the primacy of Peter.

*...whom am also an elder...Neither be lord's over God's heritage...* – 2 Pet. 5:1, 3

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<sup>6</sup> It is interesting to note the use of Greek term *lithos* by Peter in 2 Peter 2:4-8. Peter uses the term *lithos* to represent the very same relationship of church members to Christ that Christ used “*petros*” and “*petra*” to characterize Peter’s relationship with Christ. Just as Peter was characteristically a “*rock*” or the proper building material built upon the “*rock*” or profession of Jesus Christ, so each member was a “*lively stone*” built up into a holy temple upon the foundation of Christ (*lithos*). However, the disputed term *petra* in Matthew 16:18 is also used here but reversed solely for the person of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2:9).

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Here would be the optimal point to assert his Papal office of primacy if that was intended by Christ in Matthew 16:18-19, and yet Peter condemns such an idea.

Peter categorically denies every claim that Rome makes in Matthew 16:18-19. Peter categorically affirms this Baptist interpretation of Matthew 16:18-19.

Furthermore, it is James rather than Peter that presides over the church in Jerusalem in Acts 15. If Peter was the first Pope as Rome demands, then why is James in the preeminent position of leadership? In addition, the church at Rome was under the apostolic authority of Paul rather than Peter (Rom. 15:15-16). Neither Peter nor Paul constituted the churches<sup>7</sup> (Rom. 16:10-11, 14-15) at Rome. Peter was instrumental in its foundation on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:11) and Paul was instrumental in its growth by his writings and presence during his imprisonment.

Therefore, Matthew 16:18 provide a clear building context with a clear building pattern that defines the nature of the building materials used to build the church institution. Christ is the builder. Profession of Christ is the foundation rock upon which the church is built. Prepared materials, water baptized professed believers in Christ, like Peter, are the only proper materials used to build this house. Hence, infants and non-believers (unconfirmed older children and adults) have no part in this building pattern.

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<sup>7</sup> Romans 16 demonstrate there were several congregations at Rome unto which Paul wrote.

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## B. Matthew 28:19-20 – The Pattern Commissioned

*And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. – Mt. 28:18-20*

Matthew 28:19-20 expands the original building pattern found in Matthew 16:13-19. It is a blue print to be followed and the church at Jerusalem followed this pattern (Acts 2:41-42).

What is the pattern provided in Matthew 28:18-20? First, it begins with a command in Matthew 28:19 “*teach all nations.*” Literally the Greek text says “*make disciples of all nations.*” This verb is found in the imperative mode. It is followed by three adverbial participles (“*go....baptizing.....teaching*”) that provide a clear pattern and process for accomplishing that command.

It is this primary verb with its three participles that spell out the age long building pattern for building New Testament congregations, each being “*the house of God.*”

### ***1. The Process of the Pattern:***

a. “*Go*” represents the first participle. In Mark 16:15 what they go with is the preaching of the gospel. However, this participle is found in the Aorist tense in the Greek text. What does that mean? It means that the action of this participle and all that it includes has been completed prior to the action of the verb “make disciples.” In other words, the command to *make disciples* assumes they have

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already gone and evangelized some from among “*all nations*” or what Jesus goes on to identify as “*them*.” Jesus assumes they have already preached the gospel and some have believed it, and it is believers that they are now to *make disciples* by baptizing and teaching “*them*.” So the only proper subjects for baptism and assembling together to be taught how to observe all things are gospel believers. Hence, one must first be saved by faith before being baptized. This is part of the divine building pattern.

**b.** “*Baptizing*” – This is water baptism as it is administered by people (“*ye*”) to other people “*them*.” It is *immersion* not sprinkling or pouring as the Greek has terms for sprinkling (*rantizo*) and pouring (*epicheo*) and immersion (*baptizo*), but it is the term *baptizo* used here. That is part of the divine pattern for baptism.<sup>8</sup>

**c.** “*Teaching*” – Another Greek word is translated “*teaching*” in verse 20 (*didasko*) rather than *mathetuo* [translated “*teach*”] in verse 19, as *mathetuo* means “*make disciples*” in verse 19. However, this is not mere verbal instruction but teaching them “*how to observe*” all things commanded. This requires actual assembling together with the teacher in the form of a New Testament congregation, as many things commanded by Christ cannot be observed outside the membership of the congregational body of Christ (Mt. 18:15-17; 26:26-30; etc.).

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<sup>8</sup> The pattern for baptism has four distinct criterions; (1) The right candidate – a believer; (2) The right purpose – symbolic identification with Christ – His gospel, His doctrine – His church; (3) The right mode – immersion; (4) The right administrator – church authorized administrator. The pattern for the Lord’s Supper is also supplied in detail by the scriptures (Mt. 26:12-30; 1 Cor. 5, 10, 11).

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The process in this pattern is to first evangelize people, second, baptize them and lastly bring them into an existing congregation for instruction is illustrated in Acts 2:41-42:

*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.* – Acts 2:41-42

- a. **Evangelize** – “*as many as received the word*”
- b. **Baptize** – “*were baptized*”
- c. **Assemble for instruction** – “*and were added unto them. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and.....*”

## **2. The Pattern of like faith and order** – “*whatsoever I have commanded*”

They were commanded to *make disciples*. The term “*disciple*” means a *follower*. A disciple is not one who invents his own doctrines and practices.

He did not command them to go preach “*another gospel*” than what he preached (Jn. 3:16; 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:28-30) as “*another gospel*” is accursed (Gal. 1:8-9). Hence, they were to go with the same gospel Jesus preached. This is the pattern of sameness in regard to the gospel.

He did not command them to administer another baptism than what he himself submitted unto and administered through his disciples (Mt. 3:14-15; Jn. 4:1-2), as to reject the baptism of John was to reject the counsel of God (Lk. 7:29-30). Jesus was never

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rebaptized. The apostles were never rebaptized. The only possible baptism existent that Christ could have said “*I have commanded*” and commissioned unto the end of the age was the baptism of John. There is no rebaptism of the 120 on the day of Pentecost. Those in Acts 19:1-6 were not baptized by John as they did not even know anything about the Spirit (Acts 19:2) which John preached (Mt. 3:11) nor did they know that Jesus was the Christ which John preached (Acts 19:5). The “*baptism of repentance*” is Christian baptism, because just like John we demand repentance and its fruits prior to administering baptism (Mt. 3:6-8; Lk. 24:49). He did not administer baptism to infants, nor was baptism by sprinkling or pouring. This is the pattern of sameness in regard to baptism.

He did not commission them to teach another faith and practice, but he restricted their teaching within the boundaries of “*whatsoever I have commanded.*” Throughout the New Testament that restricted boundary is called “*the faith*” (Jude 3) or “*the apostles doctrine*” (Acts 2:42) and those who depart from it are to be disfellowshipped from the churches (Rom. 16:17; 2 Thes. 3:6) and regarded as heretics.

Therefore, this is a pattern of like faith and order. All the churches in the New Testament shared the same faith and order. When they departed from it, they were rebuked by the Apostles and that is why we have many of the epistles that make up the New Testament scriptures. They were all reminded of the common faith they had been provided by the Apostles.

### ***3. The Pattern of Reproduction after their own kind***

They are commissioned to *make disciples* and a disciple by its very meaning is one who *follows* the teaching and practices of the

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# The Baptism in the Spirit

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Master. Only by embracing the same gospel, same baptism and same teachings can a “*disciple*” be made – one who is like **faith and order**. Hence, this is a pattern of reproduction after its own kind. Furthermore, the very logical order of this commission is a pattern for reproduction after its own kind. The last command is to teach them to “*observe all things I have commanded*” which demands those saved, baptized and taught repeat this very commission. It is a natural cycle of reproduction. All the churches found in the New Testament Scriptures were products of a previous church and its members obeying this commission.

Moreover, it is an organic (hands on, person to person) pattern of reproduction. This commission is a *hands on* commission. There must be organic contact made between the one making disciples and the one being made a disciple. No TV, internet, telephone communications were existent, hence, they must actually travel and make organic (physical) contact with those they preached the gospel unto. Baptism could not possibly be administered without actual organic (physical) contact between the administrator and the subject of baptism. Teaching them requires actual assembling together with them. Hence, this was an organic (physical) process of reproduction after their own kind that concluded with adding members to an already existent congregation or resulted in the constitution of a new congregation of like faith and order.

## ***4. The Pattern of an Authorized Administrator***

There are four different parties found in the Great Commission. (1) “*Jesus*” (2) “*ye*”; (3) “*all nations*” (4) “*them*.” Jesus is the one giving authority to carry out this commission. Those identified as “*ye*” are the ones being authorized. “*All nations*” are the target group of lost people. “*Them*” are those who have been evangelized and are proper subjects for baptizing and teaching.

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Who is being authorized? If one studies the preceding context from Matthew 28:6-16 they will find that the very same classification of people (“*brethren*” “*women*” “*disciples*”) who are listed in Acts 1:13-15 are **all of which had already been made disciples through this same process**. This was the congregation Jesus had built and had been assembling “*from the baptism of John*” until the day he had been taken up from them (Acts 1:21-22). It is the “*church*” that Jesus had given final administrative authority or the keys of the kingdom (Mt. 18:17-18).

This commission and pattern does not fit every child of God today nor every church and denomination today. It refers only to those who are united by like faith and order with Christ. It refers to only those who have already gone through this process.

So the “*ye*” are the authorized. In contrast to “*ye*” there are those identified as “*them*” who have not been baptized or taught how to observe all things commanded. Christ never commissioned “*them*” to do any of these things, as that would be like commissioning the blind to lead the blind.

This is a commission given to the first church at Jerusalem to reproduce churches of like faith and order, and that is precisely what we see in the New Testament.

The baptism in the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was divine authentication that this new “*house of God*” was built according to this pattern provided in Matthew 16:15-18 and 28:18-20.

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## C. Acts 2:41-42 – The Pattern Applied

*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.* – Acts 2:41-42

1. **Evangelize** – “*as many as received the word*”
2. **Baptize** – “*were baptized*”
3. **Assemble for instruction** – “*and were added unto them. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and.....*”

Right from the very start, Luke very clearly and very carefully spells out in no uncertain terms that the church at Jerusalem conformed to the Great Commission as set forth in Mathew 28:19-20. Moreover, Luke uses the grammatical periphrastic construct to clearly establish before the eyes of the reader that this was not a one-time thing but the continuing practice or *pattern* followed by the church at Jerusalem. The words “*continued steadfastly*” in our KJV represent a grammatical construction consisting of two verbs called a periphrastic construct. These verbs denote a continuous action in the past (imperfect tense verb) which continued (present tense verb) right up to the present time of writing. The natural implication of this grammatical construction shows that they had been practicing this prior to Pentecost (imperfect tense - Acts 1:21-22) and is what they continued to practice on Pentecost (28 A.D.) and thereafter right up to the time (62 A.D.) Luke penned this book (present tense verb). Hence, this was their ongoing pattern of practice with new converts from the baptism of John until the time Paul was imprisoned in Rome.

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Secondly, Instead of repeating the whole process in Acts 2:41-42 verbatim each time members were “*added*” to the church from this point forward, Luke summarizes this pattern of practice by simply repeating the term “*added*” as first used in Acts 2:41.

*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.* – Ac. 2:41 (emphasis mine)

*Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.* – Ac. 2:47 (emphasis mine)

*And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.* – Ac. 5:14 (emphasis mine)

Notice that “*added unto them*” is synonymous with the words “*added to the church*” as well as “*added to the Lord.*” When the numbers got too large to count, or to be “*added*” up, he changes from addition to multiplication (“*they were multiplied*”).

*And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.* – Ac. 6:1 (emphasis mine)

*And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to **the faith**.* – Ac.6:7 (emphasis mine)

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That such additions and multiplications were not to be thought of as something separate and distinct from church membership is clearly demonstrated when Luke brings both the mathematical terms and the church together in one passage:

*Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied. – Ac. 9:31 (emphasis mine)*

*For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord. Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. - Ac. 11:24-26 (emphasis mine)*

The summary terms “*added*” or “*multiplied*” contextually refer back to the procedure spelled out in Acts 2:41-42 which always concludes with church membership. This same pattern of obedience to the Commission can be seen clearly by the authorized missionary endeavors of the second great church found in the book of Acts – the church at Antioch in Acts 13-18:

1. The Church at Antioch ordains Paul and Silas as church missionaries – Acts 14:1-3 (“*sent*” – v. 2)
2. These ordained missionaries are sent out to preach the gospel – Acts 14:3-19
3. They baptize the converted – Acts 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5
4. They organize them into churches – Acts 14:20-23
5. The churches continue in the apostle’s doctrine – Acts 14:20-23; 16:1-4

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6. They return and report to their sending church – Acts 14:26-27; 18:22
7. They submit to the authority of the sending church – Acts 15:1-3<sup>9</sup>

The church at Antioch did not ordain Paul to be an apostle of Christ, but they did ordain him as a church apostle or authorized and “*sent*” missionary (v. 3). In this sense, both Barnabas and Paul are called “*apostles*” (Acts 14:4, 14). The Holy Spirit confirmed what the Church did and thus they were “*sent*” out by the Holy Spirit (v. 4) through the instrumentality of the church as church authorized representatives.<sup>10</sup>

Therefore, the Great Commission pattern is the ordinary and normal practice by the two great churches in the book of Acts. Should you expect any other rule of practice from the churches of Christ other than what Christ commissioned them to do and how Christ commissioned them to do it?

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<sup>9</sup> A.T. Robertson says of Acts 15:2-3 – “The brethren appointed (*etaxan*).” *The brethren*” can be supplied from verse 1 and means the church in Antioch. The church clearly saw that the way to remove this deadlock between the Judaizers and Paul and Barnabas was to consult the church in Jerusalem to which the Judaizers belonged. Paul and Barnabas had won in Antioch. If they can win in Jerusalem, that will settle the matter. The Judaizers will be answered in their own church for which they are presuming to speak. **The verb *etaxan* (*tassw*, to arrange) suggests a formal appointment by the church in regular assembly.**” – emphasis mine

<sup>10</sup> Those laying hands on Saul and Silas acted by approval of the whole church as Acts 15:40 distinctly declares that “*the brethren*” had “*recommended*” them unto this work and they reported back to “*the church*.” They were being ordained as authorized church missionaries or “*apostles*” of that church (Acts 14:4, 14).

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## *1. Are there departures from this pattern, and if so, are there clearly stated reasons given?*

Some object to such a standardized pattern because of certain things recorded in Acts 8-11. What about the Samaritans, the Ethiopian Eunuch, Ananias and those believers in Antioch in Acts 8-11? Do not these events prove that the churches did not always abide by the pattern of the Great Commission?

The book of Acts makes three things very clear. First, the normal and standard practice of the Jerusalem church, as well as the church at Antioch was to obey the Great Commission, as given by Christ which includes gospel conversion, baptism, and habitual assembling together of the baptized, as an observing church.

Second, the writer of Acts 8-11 indicates clearly that the departure from the normal observance of all the Great Commission particulars was due to a clearly spelled out disruption in the church at Jerusalem rather than to a change in understanding of their standard practice. The disruption was a particular persecution by Saul. Acts 8 introduces this persecution and Acts 11 closes with the mention of this particular cause of disruption.

*And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. – Ac. 8:1*

*Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. – Ac. 11:19*

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Thus, the entire section is encapsulated by this clearly stated problem. There can be no doubt that Luke spells out clearly that this was a disruption of the normal condition and practice at the church in Jerusalem. Some scholars contend that this persecution was sent by God for the purpose of motivating the Jewish Jerusalem church to obey the commission by going beyond the boundaries of Israel. They note that the term “*scattered*” is not the Greek term that denotes a disorganized scattering, as when someone throws a rock into a chicken pen and the chickens run in every direction. Rather, this is the Greek term that is used for intentional sowing of seed in a field. Furthermore, this idea gains support from the fact that the leadership of the church does not scatter, but remain in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1-5).

Thirdly, the consistent grammatical gender, used to describe those “*scattered*” (Acts 8:4) preaching the gospel, is masculine; and in particular, the term that excludes women and children is used (Gr. *anar* – Acts 11:19).

Fourthly, Luke provides an example of such preachers in the case of Philip (Acts 8) who is a church ordained man (Acts 6). Tradition holds that even Ananias in Damascus was the first ordained Pastor of the church in Damascus.<sup>11</sup> Ordained men were involved in the gathering of every church recorded in the New Testament. Silence should not be used to contradict what is commonly spelled out clearly in all other cases.

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<sup>11</sup> Ananias is explicitly described as a “*certain disciple*” (Acts 9:10) and therefore must have been a baptized church member as defined by Matthew 28:19-20. Acts 9:31 notes there were plural “*churches*” existing besides the one at Jerusalem at this time. He is separated from the rest of the “*disciples*” (Ac. 9:19) in Damascus of whom he assembled with (“*Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus*” - Ac. 9:19) and the inference is he is the ordained leader of those disciples.

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## 2. How did the Church Respond to Such Disruptions?

Luke makes it clear that the church at Jerusalem was monitoring its missionaries and responded to any needs. Whenever such cases came to the ears of the church at Jerusalem they dispatched authorized representatives to investigate and oversee the mission endeavors of its members:

*Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent [Gr. *apostello*] unto them Peter and John: - Ac. 8: 14 (emphasis mine)*

*Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent [Gr. *exapostello*] forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. - Ac. 11:22 (emphasis mine)*

The term “*sent*” translates a Greek term that means “an authorized representative.”<sup>12</sup> This is the verbal form of the noun translated “*apostle*” and an apostle was an ordained representative. This verb form was used for those “*sent*” out under the authority of the church. Notice that the church is the one sending Barnabas and limiting the extent of his mission (“*that he should go as far as....*”

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<sup>12</sup> This is a compound word that Moulton and Milligan say “*For the common Bibl. Meaning ‘commission’*”. In regard to the verb root they say that it “*.....may illustrate the frequent NT sense of ‘commissioning’*” -James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, **The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament**, (Erdmann’s Pub, Grand Rapids, MI, reprint 1980), pp.69, 222

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– Acts 11:22). Here is the clear implication of limited authority by the sending church.<sup>13</sup>

Luke clearly shows in the Book of Acts that departures from normal Great Commission procedures were not left undone, but that the Church at Jerusalem followed up such cases as they came to their attention.

Hence, the church at Jerusalem was committed to the Great Commission pattern and monitored any deviance from that pattern by sending out authorized representatives to ensure Christ's commission was obeyed in every particular.

Whenever questionable news came back to the ears of the church, they authorized and sent someone to investigate it; and what followed in each case is the mention of individual “*churches*” as the result.

*Then had **the churches** rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.* – Ac. 9:31 (emphasis mine)

*And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with **the church**, and taught much people. And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with **the church**, and taught much people. And*

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<sup>13</sup> This is why Barnabas and Paul are called “*apostles*” in Acts 14 as they were both sent out under the authority of the church at Antioch, just as Barnabas had been previously sent under the authority of the church at Jerusalem in Acts 11:22 (Gr. *exapostolle*).

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*the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.* – Ac. 11:23-26 (emphasis mine)<sup>14</sup>

Hence, the disruption from completing the Great Commission pattern is rectified and Acts 11-18 returns to the normal preaching, baptizing, and gathering into churches. What else should one expect other than attempted compliance with the Great Commission???. Therefore, Acts 1-8 and 13-18 demonstrate clearly that the rule of action was obedience to the Great Commission in all of its particulars as spelled out in Acts 2:41-42.

The question to those who would argue contrary to what Luke spells out in Acts 2:41-42 is *why would you think the early Christians would want to disobey any particular of the Great Commission?* Why take an obvious disruption, and thus an exception to the rule of practice in the book of Acts and attempt to make it the rule? Shouldn't it be expected that the early Christians would obey the Great Commission in all of its particulars? Shouldn't it be expected during a time of obvious disruption that the first church would attempt to follow up and bring the missionary endeavors of its preaching members into conformation to the Great Commission Pattern.

Silence does not prove that further instruction was not given to the Ethiopian Eunuch about the rest of the commission. For example, there is nothing recorded concerning Philip telling the Ethiopian Eunuch anything about baptism and yet we find him asking to be baptized. Does silence constitute a rule here? And

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<sup>14</sup> Male preaching members from the church at Jerusalem had evangelized them (vv. 21-22 "*turned unto the Lord*"). However, it was Barnabas that baptized them and assembled them as a church (v. 24 "*added unto the Lord*") in keeping with the pattern in Acts 2:41-42, 47 where the use of "*added*" originates in the book of Acts to denote compliance with the Great Commission pattern.

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why would Philip tell him about his need to obey baptism, but not the final aspect of the commission as well? You say the text does not say so! Neither does it say that Philip instructed him previously about baptism! Why wouldn't the church at Jerusalem follow up this case by sending someone to complete the commission work in Ethiopia, as they did in Samaria and all along the way up to Antioch? ***If one is going to make an assumption on silence, it is far better to assume a conclusion that is in keeping with what we are explicitly told is their commission and their practice, rather than something contrary to it.*** The fact that Luke records the case of the Ethiopian Eunuch is proof that his case was known to the church at Jerusalem, even as the church knew of the case at Samaria.

The book of Acts demonstrates clearly that under normal uninterrupted circumstances, membership into a church is the direct and immediate result of obedience to the Great Commission. The book of Acts demonstrates clearly that under abnormal and interrupted conditions it was the practice of the church to follow up any case of which they were uncertain or cases that did not seem to conform to all aspects of the commission. Whatever abnormalities came to their ears (Ac. 8:14; 11:20), they followed it up. And churches were always the result of such follow-ups (Ac. 9:31; 11:26).

There is connection of authority between the church at Jerusalem and the church at Antioch. Barnabas is “*sent*” by the church at Jerusalem with a limited commission “*as far as Antioch.*” Those who preached all along the way up to Antioch were baptized male members in the church at Jerusalem.<sup>15</sup> In Acts

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<sup>15</sup> The day of Pentecost was one of the three great annual feasts that required all Jewish men and proselytes (Eunuch) to be present in Jerusalem. It was these kind of Jews (the Jews of the dispersion) who were saved on Pentecost (Acts

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11:22-30 it is clear that when Barnabas came upon the scene in Antioch that there was no leader, no teacher among these believers, as he gathered them around himself and instructed them. They were not called “disciples” nor were they called a “church” until **after** Barnabas gathered them around himself and began to teach them and Barnabas acted under the specific authority of the church at Jerusalem (Acts 11:22). Saul had previously “joined” the church at Jerusalem (Ac. 9:26, 28) and had been “sent” by the church to Tarsus (Ac. 9:30). Take particular notice of the phrase “*with them coming in and going out*” in Acts 9:28 in comparison with the phrase “*went in and out among us*” in Acts 1:21. These phrases clearly indicate Saul was in church membership activity. Barnabas saw that the job of teaching these believers was too great for one man and went and obtained Saul to help him carry out the third aspect of the commission. Barnabas and Saul completed the unfinished work of the Great Commission among these believers by “*teaching them to observe all things whatsoever*” Christ had commanded.

In conclusion, Apostolic Christianity obeyed the Great Commission in all of its particulars. Church membership completes the discipleship process. Wherever obedience comes short of the whole commission, those exceptions are dealt with by New Testament churches, so that they eventually conform to that end, resulting in church membership.

Those who interpret cases in Acts 8-11 to be contrary to the explicit command of the commission, and contrary to church

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2:7-11) and trained (Acts 2:42). They continued in the church at Jerusalem all the way up to chapters 8-11. Of this kind were the seven deacons (Acts 6:5) and of this kind were Saul “of Tarsus” and those assemblies in Jerusalem at which Stephen entered into debate (Acts 6:9-8:1). It was these kinds of believers that Saul went after to persecute and it were these kind that were sent as preachers back to their home (Acts 11:19) of which kind Phillip is given as an example.

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authority, do so by assumption and silence alone. Conclusions based upon silence and assumption can never be valid when they are in direct contradiction to clear explicit precepts and consistent examples. Acts 2:41-42 clearly sets forth the pattern that Luke says this church practiced right up to the time of his writing. Hence, that would include Acts 8-11. Therefore, if silence is to be interpreted, it should be interpreted in harmony with what Luke explicitly states the church practiced in regard to these very things (Acts 2:41-42), rather than interpreted exactly opposite to that explicit statement.

Christ built the new “*house of God*” according to a clear pattern in regard to its constitution, ministry, ordinances and faith and practice. He commissioned the apostles to convey that pattern of faith and practice through their teaching and writings. That is precisely why the New Testament church is called “*the pillar and ground of the truth*” because it is established and operated according to a clear divine pattern laid down in the New Testament scriptures. It is this clear pattern that distinguishes it from predicted future apostate Christianity and all other world religions.

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## The Biblical Evidence for the Historical View

The various theories have been provided in the first chapter. In the second chapter, the historical backdrop of the baptism in the Spirit as divine authentication that a new house of God was built according to a divine pattern was established. In this chapter, the specifics of the baptism in the Spirit will be examined to see which of the views listed in the first chapter harmonize with the Biblical criterion for the baptism in the Spirit.

There are five basic truths that characterize the baptism in the Spirit in the New Testament. These five truths are that the baptism in the Spirit (1) was still future during the ministry of Christ on earth, and (2) that it has a consistent due administrative order, and (3) that it is administered to specific qualified subjects, and (4) that it has a restricted time and location for its fulfillment and (5) that it has distinctive audible and visible characteristics.

### *1. The Gospel Anticipation:*

The four gospels and Acts are the historical books of the New Testament. All instances found in the gospel accounts still anticipate the baptism in the Spirit as a future fulfillment. In every case the future tense “*shall*” baptize is employed.

*I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: - Mt. 3:11*

*I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. - Mk. 1:8*

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*John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: - Lk. 3:16*

Even in the book of Acts prior to Acts 2 the anticipation is still yet future:

*For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. – Acts 1:5*

Therefore, from the gospels to Acts 1:5, the baptism in the Spirit is still anticipated as a future event “*not many days hence*”<sup>16</sup> (Acts 1:5) even after the ascension of Christ (Jn. 7:39; 14-17) until the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-3).

Why is this future anticipation of the four gospels *prior* to Pentecost significant? **It is significant because this one fact repudiates all other views of the baptism in the Spirit except the historical view.**

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<sup>16</sup> Acts 1:4 He arose on the 17<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, the day they offered first fruits unto God. The resurrection day was the first day after the first regular Sabbath. Pentecost was counted from the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nisan (regular Sabbath) numbering of 50 days until Pentecost. Therefore, forty days would be counted from the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, and make his ascension occur on Saturday, just ten days before the day of Pentecost. The first business meeting (Acts 1:15-26) would have occurred on that Sunday with the day of Pentecost arriving on the following Sunday, or the day following the seventh regular Sabbath.

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## a. *The Dispensational/Non-Dispensational Theory:*

For example, both the dispensational and non-dispensational Protestant views claim that the baptism in the Spirit is the spiritual mechanism that places the believer in a position of salvation blessings or spiritual union with Christ or “*in Christ*” (Eph. 1:3-4). Thus, according to their view, spiritual union “*in Christ*” is the direct and immediate consequence of the baptism in the Spirit, as they claim the baptism in the Spirit is the placement of believers into this mystical union or invisible body of Christ. The ultimate consequence of this interpretation is that without spiritual union or placement into the mystical body of Christ there can be no possible salvation, as the scriptures clearly state that all the blessings of salvation are “*in him*” (Eph. 1:3-4) as well as all of the promises of God (2 Cor. 1:20). Outside of this spiritual union with Christ, they assert there can be no salvation possible, as there is no such thing as salvation outside of Christ. Therefore, according to this interpretation, all truly saved persons must be baptized in the Spirit or they are spiritually outside of Christ and thus lost.

However, it is this very interpretation that exposes it as error. Since there was no baptism in the Spirit prior to Pentecost in regard to individual believers, then there was no possible mechanism to place anyone into this mystical spiritual union with Christ prior to Pentecost. Moreover, since, all the blessings of salvation are “*in him*” then either this Protestant theory is wrong or there could be no possible salvation for anyone prior to Pentecost, because there was no mechanism (baptism in the Spirit) to bring them into spiritual union with Christ.

So this theory forces them into the following dilemma. Either all humans living prior to Pentecost are **outside** of Christ and lost, or their interpretation of the baptism in the Spirit is false.

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Many attempt to avoid this dilemma by supposing there was some other way of salvation prior to Pentecost without Christ. They claim pre-Pentecost saints were justified by the works of the Law. However, not only do the New Testament writers claim that “*no flesh*” whether Jew or Gentile was ever justified under the Law (Rom. 3:19-20; Jn. 7:19; Acts 13:39), but the very model for justification by faith in the gospel is the pre-Law person of Abraham (Rom. 4:11-12, 16; Gal. 1:6-8). Moreover, the writer of Hebrews claims the same gospel preached unto us was preached unto them (Heb. 4:2).

In addition to all the above reasons, Jesus says **before** Pentecost that “*no man*” is able to come to the Father but “*by me*” (Jn. 14:6). Peter says that “*all the prophets*” gave witness to the same truth (Acts 10:43). Therefore, a salvation relationship with Christ before Pentecost was not conditioned or related to the baptism in the Spirit.<sup>17</sup>

However, there is a more serious objection to this Protestant view of the baptism in the Spirit. What about the spiritual condition of people living before Pentecost? Is it possible that any fallen son of Adam could be recognized by God as one of His own people and yet remain from the time of their birth unto their death without any spiritual transformation or spiritual union with God?

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<sup>17</sup> When this fact is presented to them, they respond that this union with Christ occurred before the foundation of the world. However, all things were purposed before the foundation of the world, but God distinguishes between what is purposed in eternity in contrast to its fulfillment in time (Isa. 46:10-11). Moreover, if it actually occurred prior to creation then Pentecost is both redundant and unnecessary as saints on Pentecost and forward are double baptized (in purpose and in time), while pre-Pentecost saints were never baptized in time/reality.

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Paul plainly teaches that man exists only in two possible spiritual conditions. They are either “*in the flesh*” or “*in the Spirit*.”

*So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* – Rom. 8:8-9

He explicitly states that all who are “*in the flesh*” are “*none of his*.” He also explicitly states that all who are “*in the flesh cannot please God*.” Why is that so? It is so, because he is speaking of their spiritual condition as described in Romans 8:7:

*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* – Rom. 8:7

This is not a condition or problem related to Pentecost, but a spiritual condition and problem related to the fall of man in Adam. To be “*in the flesh*” is descriptive of the fallen spiritual condition of man when he enters this world through natural birth. That condition is further described by Paul in Romans 3:9-17. No man in that condition can “*please God*” or can have a *spiritual* relationship with God as “*God is a spirit*.”

Moreover, worship is essential for any relationship with God and worship is only possible “*in spirit*” (Jn. 4:24) but fallen man is *spiritually dead* whether they live before or after Pentecost.

In addition to these problems, it is Abraham that is set forth to be the pattern or father “*of all who are of faith*” in regard to justification by faith (Rom. 4:11, 16, 22-25) and gospel faith (Gal. 3:6-8). Yet, Paul says that God’s covenant of salvation with

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Abraham was “*in Christ*” 430 years prior to the existence of the Old Covenant and over 2000 years before Pentecost:

*And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. – Gal. 3:17*

This means that the Protestant theory is wrong! There is no salvation of any kind for any person at any time outside of Christ. There can be no salvation if it does not reverse the spiritual condition of fallen man, regardless of when that man lives.

This single fact completely repudiates the whole Protestant system of soteriology and ecclesiology. Furthermore, the Protestant definition actually confuses regeneration with the baptism in the Spirit, as it is regeneration that brings the elect into actual spiritual union with God through Christ (See chapter entitled, “*Regeneration or the Baptism in the Spirit*”). Therefore, the Protestant view must be wrong.

## *b. The Pentecostal View:*

The Pentecostal view does not fare any better. The Pentecostal view is that the baptism in the Spirit is a second work of grace necessary to lift you up to a higher “*spiritual*” state, and necessary for the ability to pray “*in the Spirit*” (tongues). They argue that those without the baptism in the Spirit are not capable of obeying the Biblical command to pray “*in the Spirit*” (Eph. 6:18) which they demand is a more spiritual and mature form of prayer.

However, since the baptism in the Spirit did not occur until Pentecost, then according to the Pentecostal theory, none prior to

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Pentecost could be “*spiritual*” or pray in a more “*spiritual*” manner.

The problems with this view are many. First, Jesus lived before Pentecost and yet never prayed in tongues, nor did he teach his disciples to pray in tongues. Second, Paul told the Corinthians that they came behind in no spiritual gifts, but yet they were not “*spiritual*”, but “*carnal*” (1 Cor. 3:1-3). Hence, neither the baptism in the Spirit or spiritual gifts define or determine spirituality, but spiritually is determined by the “*fruit*” of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-25) and being “*filled*” with the Spirit. Old Testament saints were “*filled*” with the Spirit, and the “*fruit*” of the Spirit is manifested in their lives. For example, Elizabeth and Zacharias were both “*filled*” with the Spirit prior to Pentecost (Lk. 1:41, 67). The Psalms show David manifested all the fruit of the Spirit. Therefore, the baptism in the Spirit cannot be the filling of the Spirit, nor does it produce the “*fruit*” of the Spirit as both of these things predate Pentecost, but the baptism in the Spirit does not predate Pentecost.

Third, Paul told the Corinthian congregation that God does not give all His people the gift of tongues (1 Cor. 12:29-30). However, all His people have the Spirit (Rom. 8:8-9). Therefore, tongues cannot possibly be evidence of salvation, as many Pentecostals claim. Since Paul explicitly denies that God gives tongues to all of His people (1 Cor. 12:29-30), therefore, tongues cannot be necessary to pray “*in the Spirit*” as this is a command to all saints in all ages. Indeed, the only other alternative to praying “*in the Spirit*” is praying “*in the flesh*” which God does not accept. Therefore, tongues cannot be evidence of a greater spiritual state due to personal baptism in the Spirit, because all saints are to “*walk in the Spirit*” and be “*filled*” with the Spirit, as the only other alternative is to “*walk after the flesh*” and be filled with self.

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Fourth, such an interpretation demands that Christ was spiritually inferior to them, because there is no record that he prayed in tongues or taught his disciples to do so.

Hence, the Pentecostal theory is more akin to Gnosticism than it is to New Testament Christianity. Gnosticism divided men into three classes (1) carnal or fleshly; (2) soulish; (3) spiritual.<sup>18</sup>

## *c. The Roman Catholic View:*

The Roman Catholic view demands that the baptism in the Spirit is connected with their sacraments of baptism and confirmation, which they affirm are essential to salvation. Rome clearly teaches sacramental salvation and claims the baptism in the Spirit simply makes that sacramental salvation more meaningful and real. Therefore, the validity of their view rests wholly upon the validity of their sacramental salvation. If their sacramental salvation is false, so is their view of the baptism in the Spirit.

Since, neither baptism in water nor the baptism in the Spirit preceded the incarnation of Christ, therefore, at minimum, Rome is demanding “*another gospel*” prior to Pentecost than after Pentecost. The Bible flatly denies this (Acts 10:43; Heb. 4:2; Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12) and provides pre-Pentecost Abraham as the pattern for all believers (Rom. 4:1-5:2) regardless of when they lived.

Significantly, although the disciples and apostles living prior to Pentecost, were already born again (Jn. 3:3-11) water baptized believers (Lk. 7:29-30) with whom the Holy Spirit dwelt (“*he who*

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<sup>18</sup> Moreover, God is not the author of confusion (1 Cor. 14:33) and the entire Pentecostal movement is characterized by utter confusion.

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now dwells with you” – Jn. 14:17) and who already possessed eternal life (Jn. 3:36; 5:25) and whose names were already written in heaven ((Lk. 10:20; Heb. 12:23; Rev. 13:8), yet none had been baptized in the Spirit. This proves that the baptism in the Spirit has nothing to do with *individual* spirituality.

The very fact that the promise of the baptism in the Spirit was unfulfilled until Pentecost completely repudiates all views which make it inseparable from salvation. with the exception of the historical view. Why? Their position demands “*another gospel*” or another way of salvation which is **outside of any spiritual union with God** through Christ before Pentecost. The Bible clearly denies that is the case (Acts 10:43; Heb. 4:2) and that any other gospel is “*accursed*” (Gal. 1:8-9). Therefore, such theories must be wrong as the very doctrine of salvation is at stake and contradicted by such theories.

## *2. The Proper Administrative Order*

With the exception of **the historical view**, all other views confuse the administrative order of the baptism in the Spirit with that of baptism in water. In the administrative order in water baptism, the Holy Spirit can be the administrator and the congregational “*body of Christ*” can be the element (see later commentary on 1 Cor. 3:5-16 and 12:13). However, in regard to the baptism in the Spirit, it is Christ who is the administrator and the Holy Spirit who is the element.

In every single prophetic passage about the baptism in the Spirit, the administrator, the subject and the element or sphere of immersion are consistently and clearly stated to be the same:

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- The Administrator – “***he** shall baptize*” = Christ
- The Subject – “***I baptize you in water** but he shall baptize **you***” = plural water baptized believers
- The element – “*with* (Gr. *en* = in) *Spirit*”

However, the Protestant and Pentecostal views depart from this Biblical order.

- Their Administrator is the Spirit rather than Christ.
- Their Subject is the individual with or without water baptism, instead of a plural water baptized persons.
- Their element – “*in Christ*” = union with Christ = mystical body of Christ rather than in the Spirit.

Their departure from the Biblical order demonstrates their view is not the predicted baptism. Indeed, their reversal of the order is a result of confusing what the Bible says concerning the administration of water baptism with the administration of the baptism in the Spirit.

For example, in John 4:1 it says that Jesus baptized more disciples than John. However, John explains that Jesus himself did not administer water baptism, but baptized through his disciples. The point is that the disciples baptized under his direction and authority, but Jesus received the credit as the administrator of water baptism.

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Jesus promised that “*another comforter*” would replace him (The Holy Spirit) and therefore if Christ is attributed as being the administrator of water baptism simply because his disciples administered it under his leadership and authority, then would not the same be attributed to “*another comforter*” that took His place over the same disciples?

## 1 Corinthians 12:13

Long after Pentecost, the Corinthian congregation became divided over the human administrators of water baptism (1 Cor. 1:12-16). Paul resolves this issue by teaching that all human administrators work as “*one*” under the direction or leadership of the Holy Spirit:

*Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building. – 1 Cor. 3:8-9*

Carefully note the language used by Paul above to describe how this church was formed at Corinth. All the ministers who labored there, including Paul, worked “*together with God*” as “*one*” in preaching the gospel and administering baptism and building this congregation at Corinth.

However, it is the Holy Spirit that is to receive the credit, not merely for their salvation (1 Cor. 1:17-2:14); but also for their **water** baptism (1 Cor. 3:5-7) rather than the individual ministers:

*Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I*

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*have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.* – 1 Cor. 3:5-7

This is specifically applied to the particular congregational body of water baptized believers at Corinth (1 Cor. 3:10-16). Paul claims that the Holy Spirit used him as the “*master builder*” to lay the foundation of the congregational body at Corinth. However, Paul denied it was his church or the church of any other individual minister, but the congregational body of baptized believers at Corinth was “*God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building....ye are the temple of the Holy Spirit....ye are the body of Christ and members in particular*” (1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 12:27).

Therefore, just as Christ was credited with administering water baptism through his disciples in John 4:1, so also, the Holy Spirit is to be credited with administering water baptism through His ministers, as well as building the congregations of Christ.

Therefore, since the Holy Spirit is to receive the credit for their salvation, their baptism, the constitution and continual growth of their congregation, then this resolved all division over the individual instruments used by God.

Now, the very same problem of division existed in regard to spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12-14). They elevated some members over other members due to the significance they attached to that persons gifts, while despising others who did not have such showy gifts.

How did Paul deal with this division? He dealt with it by the very same way, using the very same principle that he applied to their division over administrators of baptism.

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*For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. – 1 Cor. 12:13*

He first introduces the physical human body in verse 12 as the basis for his analogy. Just as they all shared the same human body, in regard to one in kind; all members of all New Testament congregations shared the same kind of congregational body – a local visible kind. Remember, the contextual “*we*” of all Pauline epistles is addressed to churches of like faith and order, rather than to some post-apostolic period where Christians are found outside and inside of conflicting denominations. Thus, all of his readers (including himself “*we*”) share certain things in common in regard to water baptism and church membership in the one kind that existed in the apostolic period.

Under the leadership of the Holy Spirit<sup>19</sup> they had all been baptized in water into the membership of one body in number (the one where their membership resides) and one in kind (the same kind found at Ephesus, at Jerusalem or etc., v. 27; Acts 2:40).

In forming the New Testament congregational body, the Holy Spirit was not a respecter of persons but added them the very same way regardless if they were “*Jews or Gentiles...bond or free.*” Hence, there were no grounds for division concerning race or class.

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<sup>19</sup> “**By one Spirit**” – some choose to interpret this as “in one spirit” or the spirit of unity that existed at the initial point of salvation when they were added to this congregational body by water baptism (1 Cor. 1:10-11). However, the initial contrast is leadership under the previous demonic spirits versus leadership of the Holy Spirit (v. 2 “*ye were led*”). Thus the preposition “en” is defined at the beginning of the chapter to mean “by direction” or “under the leadership.”

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Furthermore, all were equally made to “*drink*” into the same Spirit. The term “*drink*” is a metaphor which means to “partake” of something. Paul is not referring to personal indwelling by the Spirit but rather the institutional indwelling of the Spirit with all of its blessings. The blessings of spiritual gifts divided among its membership. The blessings of truth conveyed through being built according to the divine pattern.

It was under the leadership of the same Holy Spirit each member was placed in the body (v. 18 and this included lost members - 1 Cor. 11:19) in order to fulfill different functions in that body with different gifts according to His will.

Each member was placed in the body (v. 18) to meet the needs of the other members. The body was so gifted by the Spirit that it met all the needs of its membership. Therefore, all the members were equally important and necessary for the fulfillment of the whole body (vv. 24-27).

However, the very benefits of the Spirit they initially were made to “*drink*” into, they now were unable to partake of because they were despising and rejecting some gifted members while elevating other gifted members. Therefore, disunity in the body prevented them from benefiting from the very blessings present in the body. In so doing, they were not able to “drink” or “partake” of the full benefits provided by the Spirit in this congregational “*temple of the Holy Spirit.*”

The solution to this division over spiritual gifts was resolved by acknowledging that all the members were placed in the body by the Holy Spirit (even unbelievers for a specific purpose – 1 Cor. 11:18), and therefore all the members were equally necessary for the benefit of the whole (vv. 25-27) and all the gifts were to be

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treated with equal respect. This is clearly reflected in the following verses:

*20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.*

*21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.*

*22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:*

*23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.*

*24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:*

*25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.*

*26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.*

*27 ¶ Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.*

This is impossible for a universal invisible congregation scattered all over the world within conflicting denominations. It is utterly impossible for such a monstrosity of a church to even remotely attain the command of verses 25-26 so that “*all*” the members rejoice or sorrow with “*one*” member who suffers or is honored, as that kind of church cannot even possibly know each of its members or even know the vast majority of its members in this way.

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However, that is the very function of a local congregational body of Christ. Therefore, the baptism in verse 13 cannot possibly refer to Spirit baptism in a universal invisible body of Christ characterized by great distances and doctrinal division.

Verses 12-26 is abstract instruction that is applicable to the institutional body of Christ (v. 28) in its concrete form (v. 27) and that is precisely how it is applied by Paul in verse 26 to “*ye*” (not “*we*”).

*27 ¶ Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.*

This kind of congregational body of Christ has members within it that act as the metaphorical “*head*” (“*the head*” – v. 21) or are in the position of authority over the congregation, yet under Jesus Christ.

Therefore, the baptism that brings such members into this kind of body under a positional “*head*” (Pastor and elders) other than Jesus Christ is a visible congregational body of Christ (Acts 20:28-29).

Therefore, the administrative order in the baptism in the Spirit should not be confused with the administrative order in water baptism. In the administrative order in water baptism, the Holy Spirit can be the administrator and the congregational “*body of Christ*” can be the element. Not so, with the baptism in the Spirit. Christ is the administrator of the baptism in the Spirit. Therefore, 1 Corinthians 12:13 refer to water baptism in relationship to the institutional body of Christ “*we*” as found in its concreted localized form “*ye*” (v. 27).

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## 3. *The Proper Subjects or Candidates*

Who are the subjects for this baptism in the Spirit? All other position except the historical position declare the subject is the individual believer. However, every single predictive passage demands it is a plural number of water baptized disciples that are the recipients of the baptism in the Spirit - “*I baptize **you with** [Gr. en “in”] **water unto repentance, but he shall baptize **you with** [Gr. en “in”] **the Holy Ghost*****” (Mt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5).

There are three distinct characteristics that identify the proper subject of the baptism in the Spirit:

1. A plural “*you*” – plural pronoun
2. Water baptized “*you*” – “*I baptize you in water*”
3. Repentant believers “*you*” – “*unto repentance*”

### *a. A Plural “You”*

Every reference prior to Pentecost describes the subjects for this baptism in the Spirit to be a specific **plural** “*you*” united as a people by common repentance and water baptism. This common people fits with God’s design for John’s ministry which is to “*make ready a people, prepared for the Lord*” (Lk. 1:17). It was from this prepared people made ready for Christ, that Christ selectively chose the materials to fitly frame an organized institutional congregation around him with officers (Mk. 3:12-15; 1 Cor. 12:28), ordinances (Jn. 4:1-2; Lk. 7:29-30; Mt. 26:12-30) and a congregational form of government (Mt. 18:15-20) under his immediate leadership. It is this specific plural “*you*” prepared by John that Jesus habitually assembled with from the time of John until His ascension:

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*Wherefore of these men which **have companied with us all the time** that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, **Beginning from the baptism of John unto that same day that he was taken up from us,....** – Acts 1:21-22*

It is this specific body of baptized believers that is instructed to “*wait*” in Jerusalem which during that waiting period, first convened in a formal business meeting with a membership role to select and install another apostle (Acts 1:15-27). It is this very same baptized body of believers that assembled in one place in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Acts 2:1) that 3000 new converts were “*added unto them*” by a profession of faith and water baptism (Acts 2:41-42) that is explicitly identified as the “church” (Acts 2:47).

This baptism in the Spirit was never promised to *individuals* as such, nor was it ever promised to mere unbaptized believers in Christ. It was only promised by Christ to the congregational body of water baptized believers who habitually assembled together with him.

Why is this significant? It is significant for several reasons. First, the materials used to build the new institutional house of God are distinctly different from the materials used for the previous institutional houses of God. The former houses of God were made up of inanimate materials. The New Covenant “*house of God*” is made up of plural water baptized believers. The only kind of congregation that fits this description is the kind referred to 97 times out of 115 times the term “*church*” is found in the New Testament. The remaining 18 times refers to the New Covenant “*house of God*” in the *institutional* sense, but is only found in the concrete case, as the church at Ephesus, Corinth, Antioch, etc. The “*church*” Jesus claimed to build in Matthew 16:18 is the same institution he goes on to speak of every single time he employs the

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next 22 uses of the same term. In every case, the next 22 uses of “*church*” by Christ refer contextually to a local visible body of water baptized believers covenanted together to carry out the Great Commission in a specific location (Mt. 18:17; Rev. 2-3; 22:16).

Even on Pentecost, the promise is directed only to water baptized repentant believers in Christ (Acts 2:38). Acts 10 is the necessary exception to this rule simply because the Jews refused to even enter the house of a Gentile (Acts 10:28) much less administer water baptism unto them without some kind of clear divine intervention (Acts 10:47-48). The Jews continued to enforce the “*middle wall of partition*” in the church of God at Jerusalem refusing to go to the gentiles or receive them as equal members in the same congregational body by water baptism. Therefore, the baptism in the Spirit as a divine authentication method was used to confirm the acceptability of Gentile believers as members in the new house of God.

## *b. Repentant Gospel believers*

These are the only kind of “*you*” John would baptize. John The Baptist refused to baptize those who were without “*fruits of repentance*” (Mt. 3:8) and therefore his baptism was called the “*baptism of repentance*” as he required repentance **prior to** baptism. However, his demand to repent prior to baptism was also joined with the demand to believe in Christ for eternal life:

*Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.* – Acts 19:5

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*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. –Jn. 3:36*

This is not only the very same gospel preached by Christ (Jn. 3:15-18), but is the very same gospel commissioned by Christ unto all nations:

*And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem – Lk. 24:49*

What John and Jesus preached and what Jesus commanded the church to preach to all nations is the same “*gospel of the kingdom*” preached by John and Jesus (Mk. 1:15). This same “*gospel of the kingdom*” was preached throughout the history of the early churches in the book of Acts:

*(1) The gospel preached to Samaritans:*

*But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. – Acts 8:12*

*(2) The gospel preached to Gentiles:*

*And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. - Acts 20:25*

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*Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him. – Acts 28:31*

Therefore, the plural “you” baptized in the Spirit were water baptized believing church members. Only the historic view harmonizes with such a baptism of this kind of “you” gathered together in one place in Jerusalem.

## *c. The element – immersion in the Spirit*

Only the historic view agrees with the specifics of these texts. The subjects of this baptism are water baptized believers. The administrator is Christ and the element into which they are immersed is the Spirit. All other views reverse the administrator and element. They make the administrator to be the Spirit rather than Christ, and they make the element to be Christ rather than the Spirit. They make unbaptized individuals the subject rather than a plural water baptized “you.”

No one can reasonably deny that the institution found throughout the New Testament manifested in plural “*churches*” is a new institution with new ordinances, new officers and a new commission identified explicitly as “*the house of God*” (1 Tim. 3:15). This kind of institutional “*house of God*” cannot be found previous to the earthly ministry of Christ. Neither can anyone reasonably deny that this institutional “*house of God*” was completely finished by Christ prior to his ascension, needing only the historic immersion in the shekinah glory, as its divine authentication.

Indeed, this same assembly had existed from John 1:35-52 where Christ first assembled around him water baptized believers.

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He had given this congregation its first officers (Mk. 3:12-15; Acts 1:15-21) and the ordinances (baptism – Jn. 4:1-2; the Lord’s Supper – Mt. 26:26-30); church discipline (Mt. 18:15-18), and a worldwide commission until the end of the age (Mt. 28:19-20) all prior to His ascension into heaven. Therefore, he had finished the new house of God, according to an established pattern, before he ascended into heaven. These baptized believers were an organized assembly prior to Pentecost with officers and ordinances and had been assembling as such since the baptism of John, as this is made clear when they selected Matthias to fill the vacated church office of Judas Iscariot:

*Wherefore of these men which **have companied with us all the time** that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, **Beginning from the baptism of John unto that same day that he was taken up from us,....*** – Acts 1:21-22

This new institution was completed and only needed to be divinely authenticated as “*the house of God*” by the historic immersion in the shekinah glory. This is the established authenticating method for all former houses of God:

(1) *The Tabernacle institution immersed* – Exodus 40:33b-35

*So Moses finished the work. Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.* – Exodus 40:33-34

*And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.* – Lev. 9:24

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## (2) *The Temple institution immersed* – 2 Chron. 7:1-3

*Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house. And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house.... – 2 Chron. 7:1-3*

## (3) *The Congregational institution immersed* – Acts 2:1-3

*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.*

Therefore, the baptism in the Spirit on Pentecost was in keeping with God's regular manner of authentication for all previous houses of God. All previous houses of God were immersed in the visible manifestation of God's Spirit. Likewise, the new "*church*" was actually assembled together in "*one place*" (Acts 2:1) where they were immersed in the Spirit, as the whole room in which they assembled was filled with the Spirit with audible and visible signs of that baptism:

*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, **they were all with one accord in one place**. And suddenly there came **a sound** from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it **filled all the house where they were sitting**. And*

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*there **appeared** unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.* – Acts 2:1

## 4. *The Restricted time and location*

*And, being assembled together with them, **commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait** for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost **not many days hence**.* – Acts 1:4-5

Although, “*more than five hundred **brethren***” at once saw the Lord at his ascension into heaven (1 Cor. 15:6), and although there must have been hundreds more existing in and outside of Jerusalem<sup>20</sup> on the day of Pentecost that had been baptized by John and the disciples of Christ (see Acts 9:31), however, this promised baptism was restricted geographically in “*one place*” (Acts 2:1) in the city of “*Jerusalem*” and upon a certain day (“*wait.....not many days hence*”) upon the specific assembly of water baptized believers that had been habitually assembling with Christ (Acts 1:21-22) and which actually assembled together in “*one place*” on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem.

Therefore, the baptism in the Spirit was not universal in application to all believers existing just anywhere inside or outside Jerusalem on Pentecost. It was restricted to only those water baptized believers that composed the first congregation Christ built who met in “*one place*” and in “*Jerusalem*” on Pentecost. This fact, completely repudiates the Protestant view that it is

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<sup>20</sup> These other brethren were later formed into separate congregations in Judea and Galilee – Gal. 1:22 with Acts 9:31

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contemporary with salvation or that it is the individual indwelling of all believers universally on Pentecost and from Pentecost onward.

Moreover, the restriction to Jerusalem harmonizes completely with the fact that the immediate former “*house of God*” is located in Jerusalem and was immersed in the shekinah glory in Jerusalem. Furthermore, this provided an obvious contrast with the former “*house of God*” and indisputable authentication of the church as the new “*house of God*” in the very presence of the former “*house of God*.”

All other views do not harmonize with these time and place restrictions, except for the historical view. As with all previous houses of God in the past, the baptism was a historically fulfilled event that occurred once at the beginning of each institution. The only known repetition was for the necessary authentication of gentile believers to be received within this new institution as equal members, thus removing “*the middle wall of partition*” (Eph. 2:14) that had been erected in the previous house of God to separate gentiles from Jews in public worship and service within the house of God. Once the church was authenticated as an institution, there was no need to repeat it each time with the constitution of each individual congregation.

## *5. The Audible and Visible Characteristics*

*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. – Acts 2:1-3*

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Notice the distinct audible and visible characteristics of the true Pentecostal baptism in the Spirit. The baptism in the Spirit came with a distinct audible sound – the sound of “*a rushing mighty wind.*” The house in which they were sitting was filled with this sound so all in that room heard it. Second, there was a distinct visible manifestation that characterized this baptism – “*cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.*”

Pentecostalism denies these precise audible and visible characteristics are essential for their view of the baptism in the Spirit. Instead they try to demand that speaking in tongues is the necessary manifestation of this baptism. However, that is simply not true. The text says that speaking in tongues was the consequence of being “*filled*” by the Spirit rather than being baptized in the Spirit:

*And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.* – Acts 2:4

Filling occurred before Pentecost and so filling cannot be a synonym for *baptism* in the Spirit.

Only the historic view of the baptism in the Spirit harmonizes with these Biblical characteristics. All other views repudiate the distinct audible and visible characteristics of this baptism, while picking and choosing what they want to characterize their own application of it.

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## Regeneration or Baptism in the Spirit?

The evangelical Protestant view is that the baptism in the Spirit is inseparable from initial salvation, and primarily the work of the Spirit placing the individual believer into *spiritual union* with Christ, which they further define to be placement within the universal invisible body of Christ. They assert that the prepositional phrase “*in Christ*” refers to this union within the so-called mystical body of Christ or *spiritual union* with Christ.

Dr. Wayne Grudem, Professor of Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School has written a popular systematic theology that has become the standard text book in most evangelical Protestant Bible colleges and Seminaries. In his comprehensive systematic theology, he asserts this baptism occurs at the beginning of the Christian life “*when*” they receive spiritual life in regeneration:

*“Baptism in the Holy Spirit,’ therefore, must refer to the activity of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the Christian life when he gives new spiritual life (in regeneration) and cleanses us and gives a clear break with the power and love of sin (the initial stage of sanctification).” – Wayne Grudem, **Systematic Theology**, (“Baptism in and filling with the Holy Spirit”) p. 768 - Emphasis mine*

However, Dr. Grudem admits that the disciples and apostles on the day of Pentecost already had been regenerated long before Pentecost:

*“It is true that the disciples were ‘born again’ long before Pentecost” – **Ibid**, p. 769*

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Grudem is no doubt correct on this point. The New Testament makes it very clear that pre-Pentecostal saints, especially the contemporary disciples with Christ were “*born again*” (Jn. 3:3-11),<sup>21</sup> justified by faith (Rom. 4:1-22), and in possession of eternal life (Jn. 3:36; 5:24 – present tense “hath”), as well as, had their names already written in heaven (Lk. 10:20; Heb. 12:23; Rev. 13:8) and the Holy Spirit dwelling with them (Jn.14:17). Yet, Grudem claims they were not in “*spiritual union*” with Christ because he associates that with the baptism in the Spirit! But is that true? Should spiritual life or spiritual union with Christ be associated with the baptism in the Spirit?

This admission by Grudem complicates his own view of the baptism in the Spirit. He realizes that the baptism in the Spirit did not occur until Pentecost, but he has admitted the disciples were regenerated prior to Pentecost, so regeneration and the baptism in the Spirit cannot possibly be concurrent with each other, as he first asserted, and so he is forced to explain:

*“It happened at Pentecost for the disciples, but it happened at conversion for the Corinthians and for us.” – Ibid., 773*

In other words, he admits that regeneration occurred before Pentecost without the baptism in the Spirit, but according to Grudem, from Pentecost forward it did not occur apart from the baptism in the Spirit. Therefore, the leading Protestant systematic theology establishes three contradictory views of salvation.

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<sup>21</sup> There are only two kinds of humans on earth, lost or saved, those “*in the flesh*” versus those “*in the Spirit*” (Rom. 8:8-9), children of Satan (Jn. 8:44) or children of God, those in the kingdom of God or in the kingdom of darkness.

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- Prior to the coming of Christ, Old Testament believers were regenerated **without** the baptism in the Spirit, and thus without the mechanism to place them into spiritual union with Christ, and thus, they were **outside** of Christ.
- Contemporary disciples with Christ were regenerated prior to being baptized in the Spirit. Thus baptism in the Spirit was **subsequent** to their regeneration. Thus, they were **outside** of Christ *until* Pentecost.
- Post-Pentecostal saints are baptized in the Spirit **simultaneously** with regeneration. Thus, now there is no salvation apart from both regeneration and the baptism in the Spirit that places the believer into spiritual union with Christ or into the position of all the blessings of salvation (Eph. 1:3-4).

As you can see Dr. Grudem's problem revolves around the fact that he admits regeneration occurred prior to Pentecost, but the baptism in the Spirit did not occur prior to Pentecost. Why is this a problem? It is a problem because he also admits that regeneration is the impartation of spiritual life, and yet his interpretation of the baptism in the Spirit demands that it is the mechanism for being placed in the position to obtain all spiritual blessings of salvation (Eph. 1:3-4). This is an oxymoronic position, as there can be no spiritual life existing outside of spiritual union with Christ because he is the only "*life*" (Jn. 1:4; 14:6) provision for all fallen sons of Adam. This theory fundamentally confuses the work of regeneration with the baptism in the Spirit.

Moreover, this position makes the church and salvation "*in Christ*" inseparable after Pentecost, thus demanding a fundamentally different kind of salvation after Pentecost than

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before Pentecost. If “*in Christ*” and being in the mystical church is one and the same, as this theory demands, then there can be no salvation outside of either. However, no such baptism in the Spirit existed prior to Pentecost, and therefore, either there was no salvation prior to Pentecost or there was some other kind of salvation before Pentecost.

**This interpretation not only necessarily demands a fundamentally different kind of salvation before Pentecost than after Pentecost, but it demands a completely different view of the fallen nature of man prior to Pentecost than after Pentecost.** How is that so? It is so, because salvation is designed to be the solution of the fallen condition of man. If salvation is fundamentally different after Pentecost than before Pentecost, and the Protestant interpretation of the baptism in the Spirit demands that, then the spiritual problem of man must also be different prior to Pentecost than after Pentecost or how else can the way of salvation be changed after Pentecost?

This is why many advocates of this view *deny* that regeneration and/or indwelling of the Spirit occurred before Pentecost. This is why many deny that anyone was really saved, or “*in Christ*” prior to Pentecost or openly assert they were saved by some other way outside of Christ (e.g. by obedience to the Law).

In the following pages, it will be demonstrated how this view perverts, confuses and repudiates the fundamentals of the Biblical teaching concerning the moral nature of God in relationship to the fall and salvation of man. In order to demonstrate this, one must understand some simple abc’s of Biblical doctrine about God, about the fall and about restoration from the fall.

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## 1. God is Light, Life and holy – Jn. 1:4; 1 Pet. 1:16

First, the Bible teaches that God **is** light, life and God **is** holy. As such, God **is** the *source* from which all **spiritual** light, life and holiness originates. He is not merely the origin of all spiritual life, light and holiness in His creation, but He is what sustains light, life and righteousness in his creation. If one accepts these basic premises, then it is easy to understand that the fundamental nature of the lost condition of man is **separation** from God, and thus separation from life, light and holiness. If one is spiritually separated from life, light and holiness, then, they exist in a spiritual state of death, darkness and unrighteousness.

## 2. Sin Separates from God – Isa. 59:2

Second, the Bible teaches that sin *spiritually separates* man from God. To be *separated from the source* of life, light and holiness is to exist in a condition of spiritual death, darkness and depravity which concludes in physical and eternal separation from God.

For example, Isaiah said long **before** Pentecost that “*your sins have separated you from your God*” (Isa. 59:2). Long **after** Pentecost, Paul told physically alive people at Ephesus that God had quickened them who “*were **dead** in trespasses and sins*” (Eph. 2:1). Hence, one can be physically or biologically alive and yet “*dead*” in some sense. The only other possible option to **physical** death is **spiritual** death or **spiritual separation** from God due to sin.

Physical and eternal death has their origin with spiritual separation from God as life, light and holiness. This is what occurred in the fall of man. For example, God told Adam that “*in the day he ate*” he would die (Gen. 2:17). Physical death did not

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occur on that day, as he did not die physically until 930 years later. What happened on that day is at the moment he sinned, he died spiritually. His spirit was separated from God by sin which is spiritual death (separation from God) and that is what brought on his physical death 930 years later.

By one man (Adam) and by this one act of disobedience “death” (spiritual separation) was passed upon all men through natural generation (Rom. 5:12, 15, 18-19).

This separation from God as light, life and holiness is the unregenerate condition of man. In the following verse notice how Paul characterizes the unregenerate condition of man as a condition without spiritual light, life and holiness:

*Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.*

– Eph. 4:18-19

- a. Separation from God who is light leaves one in “*darkness*” and in “*ignorance*” in a state of “*blindness*.”
- b. Separation from God who is life means they are “*alienated from the life of God*.”
- c. Separation from God who is holy leaves them in a condition of “*all uncleanness*.”

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This condition of separation from God as light, life and holiness is the unregenerate fallen condition. All humans come into this world already in spiritual darkness and depravity by nature:

*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.* – Jn. 3:19-20

This is not merely the condition of man since Pentecost, but since the fall of man in the garden. Therefore, the universal state of man since the fall is the same, and remains the same **before** and **after** Pentecost – spiritual separation from the source of life, light and holiness. Paul quotes **pre**-Pentecost scriptures to describe the **post**-Pentecost universal condition of man demonstrating there has been no change in the condition of man since the fall of Adam:

*As it is written, There is **none** righteous, no, not one: There is **none** that understandeth, there is **none** that seeketh after God. They are **all** gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; **there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*** – Rom. 3:10-12

Therefore, all human beings born into this world by natural generation come into this world in a spiritual separated condition. That is why **before** Pentecost, Jesus said to Nicodemus,

*Verily, verily I say unto you except **a man** be born of God he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*

Jesus rebuked Nicodemus for being a “*master*” teacher in Israel and yet being ignorant of this truth (Jn. 3:11). If such a truth was

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unknown or not applicable to anyone prior to Pentecost, then Christ could have no justification for rebuking him.

The important issue to understand at this point is that this condition is the **same** before and after Pentecost. Therefore, whatever solution there is for this condition must be applicable both **before** and **after** Pentecost or else there is no salvation from that condition. We believe this solution is called regeneration/new birth/quickenning.

### *3. Quickenning is reunion with the life, light and holiness of God*

The fallen state of man is a state of separation from life, light and holiness which has its source in God. Hence, the solution to such a state of spiritual **separation** is spiritual **union** with God or *re-generation*. That act of spiritual reunion with God is called by a variety of names, all of which deal with the restoration of fallen man to those three characteristics of God (life, light and holiness).

Take the illustration of an electric heater. If the heater is unplugged from the wall socket, it is electrically separated from the source of electricity and so it is electrically dead. Fallen man is separated spiritually from the source of life which is God and therefore he is spiritually dead. Sin has separated him from God (Isa. 59:2; Eph. 4:18).

However, plug the electric heater into the wall socket and it is placed in union with the electrical source and electricity flows through the wire and entire unit and it becomes electrically alive. Likewise, when man is brought into union with God, who is the source of life, he becomes spiritually alive.

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This act is called “*quicken*ing” which means to *make alive*, because spiritual reunion with the source of life makes one spiritually alive. This act is called “*regeneration and renewing*” (Tit. 3:5) because it returns to a previous condition and removes what caused the separation. It is described as a creative act of God (Eph. 2:10) whereby He calls spiritual light into the darkness of our heart (2 Cor. 4:6) revealing the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Spiritual reunion with God is metaphorical light that reveals the knowledge of God in our hearts (Jn. 17:3; Mt. 16:17; Gal. 1:16).

Therefore, quickening is the reversal from spiritual “*darkness*” to spiritual light, the reversal from spiritual death to spiritual “*life*” and the reversal from spiritual “*uncleanness*” to spiritual “*righteousness and true holiness*” (Col. 3:10).

Paul tells the Galatians that pre-Pentecost saints were born after the Spirit just as post-Pentecost saints are born after the Spirit:

*Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.* – Gal.4:28-29

Paul tells the Romans that only those Israelites born after the Spirit are the children of God, rather than those merely born after the flesh:

*That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.* – Rom. 9:7

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God told Ezekiel that “*circumcision in flesh*” was insufficient for entrance into the temple, but they additionally had to have “*circumcision in heart*”

*In that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, even my house, when ye offer my bread, the fat and the blood, and they have broken my covenant because of all your abominations. – Ezek. 44:7*

Paul says that this circumcision in heart is “*the circumcision of Christ*”

*In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: - Col. 2:11*

This is a universal truth **before** and **after** Pentecost, as Paul places all human beings into either one of two possible spiritual conditions regardless when they lived prior to or after Pentecost:

*So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. – Rom. 8:8-9*

To be “*in the flesh*” refers to all fallen human beings whose birth originates with the flesh and have never experienced spiritual birth. To be “*in the Spirit*” refers to all human beings who, in addition to having been born “*in the flesh*” have also been born “*in the Spirit*.” By natural generation you came into this world “*in the flesh*” but by supernatural generation you come into the spiritual kingdom of God by new birth or “*in the Spirit*.” Paul says that those who are

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“*in the flesh cannot please God*” (Rom. 8:8). Yet, Old Testament saints did please God (Heb. 11:6-40). Therefore, they had to be born “*in the Spirit*” to please God.

More importantly this reversal from a state of spiritual separation from God to a state of union with God is a creative act of God that places one “*in Christ Jesus*.”

*And you hath **he quickened**, who were dead in trespasses and sins;..... 5 Even when we were dead in sins, **hath quickened us** together with Christ, (**by grace ye are saved;**)..... 8 For by grace are ye saved through **faith**; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus** unto good works... - Eph. 2:1,5,8-10*

Jesus Christ is the Second Person of the Godhead and “*in him was life and the life was the light of the world*” – Jn. 1:4. Jesus Christ is “*the way, the truth and the life*” – Jn. 14:6. Jesus Christ is holy or righteous – Acts 2:27. Therefore, spiritual union with Christ is spiritual union with God.

There can be no spiritual restoration with God outside the Person and redemptive work of Jesus Christ before or after Pentecost, as there is no other mediator between God and man but Jesus Christ.

**Prior to Pentecost** Jesus emphatically declared

*I am the way, the truth and the life, **no man cometh to the Father but by me** (Jn. 14:6).*

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**After Pentecost**, Peter said;

*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.* – Acts 4:12

**Before Pentecost** all the Old Testament prophets from the first prophet Abel to the last prophet John the Baptist preached salvation only in Christ:

*To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.* – Acts 10:43

Abraham lived **before** Pentecost, but he is given as the pattern for “*all who are of faith*” (Rom. 4:11, 16; Gal. 3:6-8) both before and after Pentecost. He is also found “*in Christ*” prior to Pentecost:

*And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God **in Christ**, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.* – Gal. 3:17

## ***4. The Gospel of Christ is Old Testament in origin***

New Testament writers claim that the gospel of Christ has been preached by all the prophets from the first prophet Abel to the last prophet preceding Christ – John the Baptist, as Peter explicitly states:

*To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.* – Acts 10:43

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The writer of Hebrews claims the very same gospel preached to us was preached by Moses to Israel:

*For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them [those who fell in the wilderness in unbelief – Heb. 3], not being mixed with faith in them that heard – Heb. 4:2*

Paul explicitly states that his gospel preached “*none other things*” than that which all the prophets had preached (Acts 26:22-23).

In 1 Corinthians 15:4-5 Paul declares that his gospel was “*according to the scriptures*” and the only scriptures existent when he said this were the Old Testament Scriptures.

The New Testament writers insist that the very same gospel (Acts 10:43; Heb. 4:2; 1 Cor. 15:4-5), and very same way of salvation (Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12) that was preached before the first coming of Christ is also preached after his coming.<sup>22</sup>

## Conclusion:

The baptism in the Spirit is fixed at a certain point in time – the day of Pentecost, but the lost condition of man has remained the same before and after Pentecost. The solution to the lost or separated condition of man has remained the same before and after

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<sup>22</sup> The only difference was the pre-cross gospel was progressive in revelation and unfulfilled, while the post-cross gospel was fulfilled. Job believed in the coming Christ as “my redeemer” (Job 19:25) but Post-cross Christians realize the specific means (the cross) that redemption was obtained. Israel at the time of Christ’s coming was apostate and knew less of the gospel due to the perversions of the traditions of the elders than those between Genesis and Malachi.

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Pentecost, as the only possible solution for spiritual separation from God is spiritual reunion with God.

Therefore, the baptism in the Spirit cannot possibly have anything to do with salvation, especially spiritual union with God or else every human being living prior to Pentecost is utterly and forever lost. Therefore, the baptism in the Spirit has nothing to do with initial salvation. The baptism in the Spirit has nothing to do with regeneration. The baptism in the Spirit has nothing to do with spiritual union with God. The baptism in the Spirit has nothing to do with being spiritually “*in Christ*” as there is no salvation for any man at any time **outside** of Christ.

Restoration to spiritual union with God has always been “*in Christ*” as there is no other mediator or redemptive means (redemptive Person and work) to restore that union between God and man before or after Pentecost. There never has been and never will be any kind of salvation (spiritual restoration) **outside** of Christ before or after Pentecost.

If this were only a **post**-Pentecost act of God then all pre-Pentecostal human beings from Adam to the day of Pentecost lived and died in a state of spiritual separation from God, and thus in a spiritual state of death, darkness and depravity. All who continue in that condition populate hell not heaven.

By confusing the doctrine of the baptism in the Spirit with the doctrine of regeneration, the Protestant view assigns all human beings living prior to Pentecost to hell. It is quickening that restores spiritual union with God, not the baptism in the Spirit.

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## Church Salvation

**Dr. John L. Walvoord** - “*Salvation and [Spirit] baptism are therefore coextensive, and it is impossible to be saved without this work of the Holy Spirit* (p. 139). *A New Position: Intimately connected with the fact that baptism by the Spirit brings the believer into the body of Christ is the inseparable truth that baptism also places the believer in Christ Himself...Before salvation, the individual was in Adam, partaking of Adam’s nature, sin, and destiny. In salvation, the believer is removed from his position in Adam, and he is placed in Christ. All the details of his salvation spring from this new position. His justification, and glorification, deliverance, access to God, inheritance, and glorification are actual and possible because of the believers position in Christ.” – John Walvoord, **The Holy Spirit**. pp. 139,141*

The Protestant interpretation of the baptism in the Spirit demands that spiritual union with God “*in Christ*” is not only inseparable from Post-Pentecost regeneration but inseparable from the church.

However, in the previous chapter we saw there is no salvation possible for any fallen man either before or after Pentecost outside of Christ. God has no redemption for mankind outside of Christ? If the baptism in the Spirit is placement into spiritual union with Christ, or in the mystical body of Christ, then (1) the church originated prior to Pentecost with the first person saved or (2) there is no salvation provided for anyone prior to Pentecost, or (3) the universal invisible church theory is a false doctrine that confuses the family of God with the church of God.

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We believe the Protestant doctrine of the universal invisible church theory is inseparable from the Protestant doctrine of the baptism in the Spirit and both are false doctrines. Both are the product of confusing the church with salvation.

## *1. The Church originates in the New Testament:*

There is no dispute that the baptism in the Spirit occurred on Pentecost. Therefore, if a universal invisible church existed prior to Pentecost, and if the baptism in the Spirit is the mechanism to add members to this church, then such a pre-Pentecost church had no members, as it had no mechanism to add members unto it.

However, did the church originate before the first coming of Christ? Paul denies that the origin (“*foundation*”) of the church preceded the first coming of Christ:

*And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone – Eph. 2:20*

The “*prophets*” being described as part of this foundation are not Old Testament Prophets, but properly follow the apostles, as Paul gives them a numerical order:

*And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. – 1 Cor. 12:28*

Universal invisible church advocates claim both texts have reference to their “true” church theory. However, these texts

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present one of the greatest objections against their universal invisible church theory or their so-called mystical body of Christ.

In these two texts, Paul establishes that the “*foundation*” of this kind of church was laid and was first composed of New Testament materials. Therefore, the “*foundation*” or origin of the church is laid in the New Testament, not in the Old Testament. The metaphor is completely abused if the church existed before its foundation, or before its first members were added.<sup>23</sup>

However, the baptism in the Spirit is essential to the existence of the so-called universal invisible or “true” church since it is the mechanism that places believers into their church or “*in Christ*” relationship. If the mechanism that places persons in this church body never existed prior to Pentecost, then such a church could have never existed prior to Pentecost. Both stand or fall together.

Moreover, as previously shown in the previous chapter, such a doctrine radically conflicts with the very nature of God, the fall and salvation prior to and after Pentecost.

Therefore, neither the baptism in the Spirit or the church is Old Testament in origin. However, the gospel, and the Biblical doctrine of salvation are Old Testament in origin, thus proving that neither the church nor the baptism in the Spirit have anything to do with Biblical salvation. To claim otherwise, is to introduce another way of salvation after Pentecost – church salvation.

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<sup>23</sup> This is still the problem for the *non-dispensational* or Reformed universal invisible church view. No matter how loudly the non-dispensational advocate objects to our position, the fact remains that the baptism in the Spirit did not precede Pentecost, and therefore could not have acted as the mechanism to place pre-Pentecost believers into their mystical body.

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Moreover, these advocates recognize and admit that the vast majority of times the term “*church*” is found in the New Testament it applies only to a local visible body of baptized believers. In order to avoid the charge of teaching two different kinds of churches, when the scriptures say there is but “*one body*” (Eph. 4:6), they attempt to claim that the local visible church body is the visible representative of the one “true” church. However, if local visible churches are only visible representations of the “*one true church*” then explain how the local visible churches demand salvation must occur prior to being received into that kind of church, while the so-called **true** church demands no one can be saved prior to addition to its membership? Why are local visible churches commanded to separate themselves from the very brethren (1 Cor. 5; 2 Thes. 3:6; etc.) that the so-called “true” church necessarily must include at all times? Why must local visible churches require proper baptism for membership while the so-called “true” church is necessarily made up of non-baptized, sprinkled, poured or immersed members? How in the world is the local church designed to be a visible representation of this so-called “true” church when they are distinctly different in their very fundamental nature, membership and response to the very same people?

The truth is that the church has nothing to do with salvation and the “true” church has nothing to do with a “universal invisible” entity. The true Biblical church is the *institutional* church immersed in the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, in keeping with how all previous new houses of God were immersed in the shekinah glory after once being built. This *institution* is then found in concrete geographical locations throughout the New Testament.

The so-called *universal* church is due to confusing the Biblical doctrine of the kingdom of God with the church of God. This confusion first occurred with Augustine in his debate with the

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Donatists and his interpretation of the kingdom parable of the tares in Matthew 13. He inappropriately claimed the “*field*” was the church instead of the “*world*.” Such an interpretation is responsible for making the church *universal* and equal to the “*world*.” This same interpretational mistake was made by Martin Luther and Calvin where they reinterpreted the “*field*” to be the universal *invisible* instead of a visible universal church as Augustine interpreted.

The Protestant universal invisible church theory is nothing more than a revision of the Roman Catholic doctrine of church salvation, and therefore, it makes the church inseparable from salvation.

## 2. *There is but “one” baptism – Eph. 4:6*

Paul wrote the letter of Ephesians long after Pentecost. When he wrote this letter, he said there is but “*one baptism*.” The only baptism we are commanded to seek, and the only baptism that is promised to be administered to believers until the end of the age is water baptism (Mt. 28:19-20). The baptism in Matthew 28:19 is water baptism because it is administered by “*ye*” to “*them*.”

Nowhere in Scripture are we ever commanded to seek any other kind of baptism. The absence of such a command is the death blow to the Pentecostal view that the baptism in the Spirit is to be sought after as a second work of grace.

## 3. *There is but “one” body – Ephes. 4:6*

It is “*one*” in kind, as Paul explicitly used “*ye*” rather than “*we*” when he told the church at Corinth “***YE are the body of Christ***.” There is “*one*” in number in regard to individual membership. The

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reader of the Ephesian letter would understand it is the “one” in number where his/her own membership resides. Paul describes the church at Corinth as “*individual members thereof.*” Remember, Paul is not writing to post-apostolic Christianity divided into thousands of different denominations. He is writing to Christians who were like faith and order with himself, as he constituted these congregations. They all shared a common faith and order. They all shared membership in the same kind of congregation. They all shared the same kind of ordinances. When he spoke of the church in the context of “*ye*” he is referring to a specific located congregational body of Christ. When he spoke of the church in the context of “*we*” he is referring abstractly to the institutional congregational body of Christ of which they all shared in common.

## 4. *There are Seven different ways to be “in Christ”*

Advocates for the repetitive view of the baptism in the Spirit, view that baptism as being placed “*in Christ*” or in spiritual union with Christ. However, it is regeneration that brings a person into spiritual union with God through Christ.

Moreover, the scriptures provide seven different ways that a believer can be “*in Christ.*”

- By Eternal Purpose – “*chosen in him before the world began*” – Eph. 1:4. However, this purpose must be fulfilled in time – Isa. 46:10-11
- By Substitutionary representation – “*by one man’s obedience many were justified*” – Rom. 5:12-19
- By Imputation/Legally/justification – “*by faith*”

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- By Regenerative Creation – “*For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus*” – Eph. 2:1, 5, 10 – spiritual union
- By Figure in water baptism – “*the like figure*” (1 Pet. 3:21) – “*baptized into the likeness of his death.....*” pictorial of the gospel embraced by faith – Romans 6:4-6. The likeness of our freedom from sin by justification (Rom. 6:7 “freed” translates the Greek term consistently translated “justified” from Romans 3:24-5:22).
- By Metaphorical membership “*Ye are the body of Christ and members in particular*” – a local visible body of baptized believers.
- By Experiential faith – “*As ye have received the Lord Jesus Christ, so walk ye in him*” – Col. 2:6.

The first four are universally true of all saints regardless if they lived before or after Pentecost because these four are inseparable from true salvation. Moreover, the first of the four anchors them in the eternal purpose of God before the world began and therefore there can be no salvation for anyone outside of God’s purpose “in *Christ*” (Eph. 1:4). Hence, the first four must necessarily refer to all saved, regardless when they lived on earth. The Romans 8:28-30 golden chain provides for no salvation outside of “*God’s purpose*” before the world began, as that purpose is worked out providentially by predestination for all concerned to be conformed to the image of His Son. Are those before Pentecost not to be conformed to the image of His Son? Hence, to set forth a doctrine that teaches any kind of salvation outside of Christ is “*another gospel*” (Gal. 1:8-9) and different than that embraced by Abraham (Gal. 3:6-8) who was “*in Christ*” (Gal. 3:17). Abraham is set forth

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as the gold standard for “*all who are of faith.*” Therefore, there can be no salvation outside of Christ for anyone, at any time.

However, the last three cases are not universally true of all saints because they are characteristics of service. Not all saints are brought into figurative union with Christ through water baptism or metaphorical union with Christ as “*members*” of the congregational body, nor do all saints experientially “*walk...in him*” at all times.

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## Arguments for a Post-Pentecost Baptism

The most popular proof text for the post-Pentecost continuation of the baptism in the Spirit is 1 Corinthians 12:13. This text has been dealt with previously (see pages 61-66). However, two other prominent texts are also used to support that position.

### The House of Cornelius Occurrence

As previously shown, every scripture reference prior to Pentecost asserts it is yet future. Thus, whatever the baptism in the Spirit achieves, it could not achieve until Pentecost.

The only other reference, and last direct reference found in the book of Acts occurs in Acts 11:15-16:

*And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. – Acts 11:15-16*

Peter is speaking, and addressing the congregation at Jerusalem, especially the Jewish members (“*they that were of the circumcision*” – Acts 11:1-3) regarding the admission of Gentile believers into church membership by water baptism (Acts 10). Even though there was not a physical “wall of partition”(Eph. 2:14) in the new house of God, there was still a mental wall that refused to receive Gentile believers as equals in the new house of worship.

In recounting the events at the house of Cornelius to the congregation at Jerusalem, the nearest reference point Peter could

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provide to explain what occurred at the house of Cornelius was when the Holy Ghost fell “*on us at the beginning.*”

This statement is very significant for at least three reasons. **First**, although there were literally thousands saved and added to the congregation between Acts 2 and Acts 10, Peter could not point to any nearer reference point than Pentecost for the baptism in the Spirit, demonstrating this was not a repetitive individual experience, but had only occurred once before. **Second**, he says “*on us*” or what constituted a *Jewish* assembly. Although individually many of these Jews had been added between Pentecost and the house of Cornelius (Acts 3-9), yet the baptism in the Spirit “on us” or the Jews occurred only “*at the beginning*” rather than repeated individually. He did not say *since* the beginning but “*at*” the beginning proving it was not a repetitive individual baptism. **Third**, what happened at the house of Cornelius was an exception rather than the rule or else he would have said *since* rather than “*at the beginning.*”

Why did God repeat on Gentiles what happened “*at the beginning*” to a Jewish congregation on Pentecost? No other view can provide a reasonable answer except the historical view. The historical view defines the baptism in the Spirit as a public divine *authentication* that the institutional “*house of God*” was built and designed according to a divine pattern. Part of that divine pattern was to include gentile believers from “*all nations*” (Mt. 28:19; Acts 1:8), but the Jewish congregation had refused to do this between Acts 2-9. Indeed, Peter refused even after God repeated a vision three times unto him. The vision signified that God now accepts as “*clean*” both the foods and the gentiles that such foods typified as “*unclean*”

*13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.*

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*14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.*

*15 And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.*

*..... 28 And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.*

God made it clear that Gentiles are now acceptable as equal members in the new institutional “*house of God.*” Peter took Jewish believers with him as witnesses (Acts 10:23, 45) and only after God publicly provided divine authentication they were acceptable for membership in God’s house do we read:

*44 While Peter yet spake these words, **the Holy Ghost fell on all them** which heard the word.*

*45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

*46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,<sup>24</sup>*

*47 **Can any man forbid water,** that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?*

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<sup>24</sup> Not only did the exact same characteristics occur as occurred in Acts 2:1-3, but in addition the “gift” of the Spirit (subjective genitive – gift produced by the Spirit) or speaking in tongues was also given them, thus reproducing the whole event that occurred “at the beginning” on the Jewish members of the Jerusalem church.

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*48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.*

The members in the congregation at Jerusalem were complaining because baptizing them brought them into the congregation as equal members, when they viewed them exactly as Peter had in Acts 10:28:

*And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew **to keep company**, or come unto one of another nation;*

The former public house of God had a physical “*middle wall of partition*” (Eph. 2:14) that separated Gentile believers from Jewish believers in public worship. However, the new house of God had no such wall, because it was by nature composed of living stones assembling together as equal priests offering up spiritual sacrifices (1 Pet. 2:5). This equality in public worship was not something the all Jewish congregation at Jerusalem was willing to acknowledge without some kind of direct recognizable authentication by God. The baptism in the Spirit was the Old Testament recognizable authentication by God that signified God’s pattern for public worship.

Baptizing them brought them into the membership forcing the congregation to address this former law (“*unlawful thing*”) which they had been practicing and which kept them from carrying out the Great Commission to “*all nations*.” Hence, Acts 10-11 demonstrate the baptism in the Spirit had been historically fulfilled at Pentecost on the Jewish congregation, and this repetition was an exception to the rule for the sake of confirming Gentiles as equal members in the new “*house of God*.”

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## Romans 6:3-5

*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:*  
- Rom. 6:3-5

Romans 6:3-5 is considered as a proof text for those who advocate the baptism in the Spirit at regeneration.

Paul had just stated in the previous chapter “*where sin abounded, grace did much more abound*” (Rom. 5:20) and now in chapter six he is answering the objection that if this is so, would not that encourage a life of sin so that grace would much more abound?

His quick response is “*God forbid*” (Rom. 6:2). His extended response involves all of Romans 6-8. In Romans 6-8 Paul demands that justifying faith, based upon the death of Christ, as our legal substitute is inseparable from regenerative life in the Spirit based upon the resurrection of Christ. One cannot exist without the other. In other words, those who are justified by faith, also live by the Spirit and that life is manifested by “*fruits*” of good works (Rom. 7:6, just as James teaches in James 2:14-18).

Nothing illustrates the inseparability of the death and resurrected life of Christ with the believer more than water baptism (Rom. 6:3-4). One cannot be baptized in a scriptural manner without identifying with Christ “*in the likeness*” of both. In order to show that both justification and regenerative life are inseparable, Paul points them to their water baptism. His death provided the basis

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for their justification which “*freed*” them from **the penalty** of sin (Rom. 6:7).<sup>25</sup> However, his resurrection provided the basis for their regenerative life which transformed the inclination of their soul from love of sin to loathing sin (Rom. 7:15-20, 25). Justified people are regenerated people and regenerated people no longer love sin but loath sin (Rom. 7:21, 24). Water baptism identifies the believer with both truths.

Here is precisely where the interpretation that attempts to make Romans 6:3-4 apply to Spirit baptism breaks down. Advocates of Spirit baptism argue that this text teaches that when a person is baptized into spiritual union with Christ their own person is actually freed from the **power** of sin because when he died to sin they died to sin and when he was raised to life they were raised to life. However, regeneration does not actually free the believer from the power of sin as Romans 7:14-25 demonstrates.

Their interpretation of Romans 6:3-4 is wrong for several reasons:

1. It is not water or Spirit baptism that provides freedom from the power of indwelling sin. It is the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit **after** regeneration that frees them from the power of sin (Rom. 8:9-13).
2. The believer is not comprehensively and absolutely “*dead to sin*” in his own person because our whole person has not been regenerated or glorified. Thus, after providing the illustration of baptism, Paul exhorts true believers to

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<sup>25</sup> In Romans 6:7 the word “*freed*” is the very same word consistently translated “*justified*” in chapters 4-5. Hence, Paul is still speaking of their legal position in Christ rather than their spiritual union with Christ.

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“*reckon*” themselves as dead to sin and “*let not*” sin reign in their bodies and neither should they “*yield*” to sin:

*Likewise **reckon** ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Let not** sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither **yield** ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but **yield yourselves** unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.* – Rom. 6:11-13

These exhortations would be unnecessary if either water or spirit baptism actually freed their own person from the dominion or power of sin.

3. This theory confuses baptism in the Spirit with regeneration. Regeneration is what actually and literally brings the believer into spiritual union with God through Christ.

Hence, advocates of baptismal regeneration and Spirit baptism are both wrong in their interpretation of this text, as no kind of baptism obtains literal and actual freedom from sin. So that was not Paul’s point in introducing baptism. His point was to illustrate that justification and regeneration are inseparable truths and nothing better illustrates their inseparability than water baptism. Water baptism identifies the believer with both truths.

Baptism is not for unbelievers. The only candidate for water baptism is a person who has already professed faith in Christ, and is therefore already justified by regenerative faith. Justification and regeneration are distinct and separate acts of God but inseparable acts of God. Nothing illustrates the inseparability of these two

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distinct acts of God better than the act of water baptism. That is precisely why Paul appealed to their water baptism as proof why the justified cannot continue in sin, because where there is justification by the death of Christ there is also regeneration due to the resurrection power of Christ and water baptism declares and identifies the believer with both truths.

Unlike the lost man (Rom. 8:7-8) the true believer has a righteous position “*in Christ*” due to justification, as well as a righteous disposition “*in Christ*” due to regeneration (Rom. 7:15-21, 25). However, freedom from the power of indwelling sin does not originate from our position or disposition “*in Christ*” but the actual indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit in us (Rom. 8:9-13). Therefore, the desire to do “*good*” without dependency upon the indwelling power of the Spirit will result in the lack of power to do “*good*” (Rom. 7:14-25). The baptism in Romans 6:3-4 does not literally obtain literal freedom from the power of indwelling sin, as that is obtained progressively by dependence upon the power of the indwelling Spirit of God. Water baptism demands we identify publicly with both, and therefore, there is no such thing as a justified believer who is not also a regenerated believer. Justification is not a license to sin, because all who are justified are regenerated and therefore they cannot continue in sin because they no longer are in love with sin. Baptism identifies the believer publicly with both truths in “*likeness*.”

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## Indwelling before Pentecost

In order for anyone to be in spiritual union with God their human spirit must be **united** to the Spirit of God, as that is the meaning of **union**. Since your human spirit exists only within you, therefore, spiritual **union** between your spirit and the Spirit of God must take place and exist inside of you or else there is no **union** at all. That internal **union** between your spirit and the Spirit of God is the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9). If this internal **union** does not exist within a person, they are spiritually separated from God and thus spiritually dead.

*So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. – Rom. 8:8-9*

The Apostle Paul divides all mankind in all ages into two camps. They are either “*in the flesh*” (lost) or “*in the Spirit*” (saved). He clearly says that to be “*in the Spirit*” means “*that the Spirit of God dwell in you*” thus what theologians call the indwelling Spirit of God in believers. Notice that all who are “*in the flesh cannot please God*” simply because that is one and the same thing as being spiritually separated from God or spiritually dead.

What about those listed in Hebrews 11 or the saints prior to Pentecost? Were they without the indwelling Spirit of God, thus spiritually separated from God, thus spiritually dead?? Remember, Paul said those “*in the flesh*” without the indwelling Spirit of God or those who are not “*in the Spirit*” cannot please God (Rom. 8:8). However, the writer of Hebrews shows that all the saints between Genesis and Malachi were able to please God (Heb. 11:6-41). Hence, they had to be “*in the Spirit*” and if they are “*in the Spirit*”

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it requires that they are indwelt by the Spirit or else they are “*none of his*” but are “*in the flesh*.” Were those listed in Hebrews 11 “*none of his*”??<sup>26</sup>

Paul makes it clear that this has always been the only two possible conditions of mankind when he tells the Galatians:

*But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.* – Gal. 4:29

Indeed, the Old Testament clearly teaches that the saints were indwelt by the Spirit of God (Gen. 41:38; Ex. 31:3; Numb. 27:18; Dan. 5:11; Lk. 24:49; 1 Pet. 1:11). Not merely kings, priests and prophets, but common persons like Caleb:

*But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.* – Numb. 14:24

His ability to please God is attributed to the “*spirit*” that was with Him.

Some argue that the Holy Spirit only came “*upon*” men, indwelling them for a season and then leaving them. However, after Pentecost the Spirit is also said to have come “*upon*” men (Acts 8:14; 19:6) but it has nothing to do with indwelling them.

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<sup>26</sup> Hebrews 11:39-40 is often quoted to show that the Old Testament saints had an inferior or different kind of salvation or an incomplete one. However, the “*promise*” has to do with being “*made perfect*” or glorification of the body and entrance into the new Jerusalem upon the new earth (vv. 13-16). We too are “*strangers*” and “*pilgrims*” on earth and are still waiting with them for this promise to be realized.

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Instead it had to do with equipping them with gifts or empowering them to perform tasks.

Furthermore, the baptism in the Spirit is not being “*filled*” with the Spirit, as many were “*filled*” with the Spirit prior to Pentecost.

Certain passages are quoted to prove saints prior to Pentecost did not have the Spirit indwelling them:

## 1. John 14:17

*Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. –*  
Jn. 14:17

Jesus said the world cannot “*receive*” the Spirit because they are unable to see or know him. However, in direct contrast Jesus said that his disciples “*knoweth him*” proving they were enabled to see and **receive** the Spirit. Moreover, note that the Spirit is not said merely to be “*with you*”, but “*dwelleth*” with you. The present tense demands continual linear action. **Individually**, they were indwelt born again believers, but *corporately* as the new institutional house of God composed of “*lively stones built up together*” (1 Cor. 3:16; 1 Pet. 2:5) they were not indwelt until Pentecost. Only upon Pentecost will the Holy Spirit be “*in you*” as the new public house of God.

Moreover, they were already in spiritual union with the Spirit, as they already had spiritual life. Both Christ and John the Baptist said that whoever believeth in the Son “*hath*” everlasting life (Jn. 3:36; 5:25). Jesus said that their names were already written in

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heaven or in the lamb's book of life (Lk. 10:20; Heb. 12:23; Rev. 13:8). The spiritually dead are not in the Lamb's book "*of life*."

Paul makes a distinction between the congregation as a corporate "*temple of the Spirit*" (1 Cor. 3:16), and the individual, whose body is an individual "*temple of the Spirit*" (1 Cor. 6:19). In 1 Corinthians 3:16 he uses the plural pronoun "*ye*" to describe the congregation at Corinth ("*ye*" **not** "*we*"). However, in 1 Corinthians 6:19 he addresses the individual believer and describes their body as "*the temple of the Holy Spirit*."

Therefore, the Holy Spirit was "*with*" individuals in the sense of **individual indwelling** prior to Pentecost, as their individual physical bodies were temples of the Holy Spirit. However, on Pentecost the Holy Spirit took up residence within an institutional body composed of plural water baptized believers.

Those who deny individual indwelling prior to Pentecost fail to distinguish between individual (1 Cor. 6:19) and institutional indwelling (1 Cor. 3:16) by the Spirit of God. Both are true, but **institutional indwelling** did not exist in the sense of congregational indwelling until Pentecost, because the former institutional houses of God were not an assembly of human beings (1 Pet. 2:5; 1 Cor. 12:27) but an assembly of inanimate materials.

## 2. *John 7:37-39*

*In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him*

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*should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)* – Jn. 7:37-39

This is one of the proof texts used by those who advocate that pre-Pentecost saints were without the indwelling presence of the Spirit of God.

Let us examine it more closely. The immediate context is the Feast of Purim (v. 37). On the last day of this feast, a long line of people led by priests would carry candles and water, as they marched up to the temple. Once they had arrived, the priests would carry the water into the temple and pour it out in the “*house of God*” as an offering unto the Lord. It is clear from this context that “*water*” represents the Holy Spirit.

However, there are two different kinds of people being addressed within this text. In verse 37, Christ addresses those who have never believed in him or partaken of, or drunk into the Holy Spirit in regard to new birth and personal indwelling. Hence, verse 37 deals with initial reception of the Spirit **within** them.

*In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.* – Jn. 7:37

When you drink water does it go inside or outside of you? This initial drinking brings the indwelling Spirit inside of you just as drinking water brings water inside of you. This is personal individual indwelling.

However, verses 38-39 deals with believers only – “*he that believeth on me.*” Moreover, these verses do not deal with the **inflow**, but with the **outflow** of the already indwelling Spirit “*out of his belly shall flow...*” In other words, the Spirit they received,

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and that indwells them by new birth, would flow out of them unto others in regard to power for witnessing the gospel (Acts 1:8).

*Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. – 2 Cor. 3:6*

Just as those who were marching up to the “*house of God*” to pour out this water the day of Purim, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit would be poured out upon water baptized believing members of the new “*house of God*” to empower their witness (Acts 1:8). Again, notice this promise is for only those already saved, born again believers, who are already in spiritual union with God. Moreover, all of whom this promise was directed toward were already baptized in water (Lk. 7:29-30). Again, this is a promise to the first congregation at Jerusalem as the new institutional public “*house of God*” with regard to **power** in carrying out its commission (Mt. 28:20) as the indwelt **institutional** “*house of God*” thus making it the “*pillar and ground of the truth.*”

### 3. *Luke 16:16*

*The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. – Lk. 16:16*

Many suppose this verse proves that a different salvation was preached under the Law by the prophets other than what John preached (Mark 1:1).

However, this text only teaches that what the Law and the Prophets predicted would come; John announced had come and

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was present among them. The same gospel had always been preached before and after John (Acts 10:43; Heb. 4:2). The only difference prior to John was that it was a progressive revelation that anticipated the coming of Christ. With John the progressive revelation was terminated as His coming was fulfilled, and what had been anticipated had now arrived.

However, the multitudes mistook His coming as indicating that the promised earthly kingdom had also arrived and so they eagerly flocked to John willing to do whatever he said in order to take part in what they perceived to be the imminent overthrow of Rome and establishment of the world wide Messianic kingdom. Many of these professed disciples either left Christ later (Jn. 6:60-66) or cried out for his crucifixion after what they anticipated did not occur.

Israel needed to be reborn into the spiritual kingdom of God before they could participate in the earthly kingdom of God (Jn. 3:3-5). The regenerating indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit was a Pre-Pentecost reality. Jesus rebuked Nicodemus for being a “*master*” of Israel and yet ignorant of the Old Testament teaching of the new birth (Jn. 3:3-11).

God rebuked Israel through Ezekiel for allowing the “*uncircumcised in heart*” into the house of God (Ezek. 44:7).

*In that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart, AND uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, even my house... – Ezek. 44:7*

Yet Ezekiel did not respond like Nicodemus “*how can these things be?*” Right from the beginning God sorrowed over the uncircumcised heart condition of Israel (Deut. 10:16; 10:17). As a

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nation, Israel never properly responded to the gospel (Heb. 4:2) and won't respond to the gospel until Christ returns (Rom. 11:26-28).

Therefore, Luke 16:16 does not deny the same gospel preached before John (Acts 10:43; Heb. 4:2) is the same gospel preached by John (Jn. 3:36) and after Pentecost (Lk. 24:47). Luke 16:16 only teaches that what was formerly anticipated by the prophets is now realized by John and the populace under the ruthless power of Rome perceived this coming of Christ as the time to establish the physical kingdom of God upon earth.

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## The New Dispensation of the Spirit

*And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.* – Lk. 24:49

The “*promise of my Father*” refers to the special dispensation of the Spirit that would be ushered in on the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:4-5).

However, the Holy Spirit had already been upon earth from the time He moved upon the face of the deep in Genesis 1:2. The Holy Spirit had been regenerating, indwelling, sanctifying, filling, sealing and saving individuals from sin since the fall of man in the garden.

However, the Holy Spirit was sent by the Father and by the Son on Pentecost to accomplish three new things upon earth:

1. The New Salvation Mission – Acts 1:8
2. The New Covenant Administrative House of God – Heb. 9:1
3. The New Prophetic Mission – Jn. 14:16

### A. The New Salvation Mission

The coming of the Holy Spirit in regard to a new salvation mission was not about **how** the Holy Spirit would save anyone, but rather about **who** the Holy Spirit would now begin to save.

Prior to the day of Pentecost, the redemptive work of the Holy Spirit had *primarily* been restricted within the boundaries of

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Judaism. Even the ministry of Christ had been restricted within the boundaries of Judaism:

*These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: - Mt. 10:5*

However, the Old Testament Prophets had prophesied of a special dispensation of salvation that would occur among the Gentiles:

*Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles..... And in his name shall the Gentiles trust. – Mt. 12:18, 21*

*For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. – Acts 13:47*

Although previously predicted, this was now something new to the Jewish people that God was actually bringing to pass among the Gentile nations:

*And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God..... When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. – Acts 11:1, 18*

The very thought of the Holy Spirit working primarily among the Gentiles, rather than the Jewish people was so repugnant to the Jewish mind that it took divine intervention for the Jewish church at Jerusalem to even preach the gospel to gentiles (Acts 8-11). God had to move Peter to go to preach to the gentile house of Cornelius

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by repeating a vision three times (Acts 10:1-7). When Peter arrived at the house of the gentiles among his first words were these:

*And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. – Acts 10:28*

However, even the thrice repeated vision was still insufficient for the Jewish believers to receive these Gentiles into equal membership into the church at Jerusalem, as God had to repeat the baptism in the Spirit on the day of Pentecost upon the Gentiles thereby divinely accrediting them to be equal to Jewish believers:

*While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? – Acts 10:44-47*

When Peter returned to the congregation at Jerusalem, he was called to give an account for receiving them into the membership of the congregation through baptism:

*And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, Saying, Thou*

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*wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.*

– Acts 11:1-3

Peter started from the beginning with the vision he received from God at Joppa and the baptism in the Spirit performed upon the Gentiles:

*And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? – Acts 11:15-17*

This new dispensation of the Spirit among the Gentiles was in lieu of the fact that Israel had rejected their Messiah, and now God was going to temporarily turn His redemptive program from the nation of Israel unto the Gentile nations (which Paul called “*the world*” – Rom. 11:11-12) to call out a people unto himself, and then return to save Israel (Rom. 11).

Hence, the Holy Spirit did not come to save anyone differently than before, but rather to save a different kind of people than before. Prior to Pentecost, salvation was limited *primarily* to one ethnic group of people – the Jews. After Pentecost, salvation was expanded to all nations, classes and genders or to the whole world. When the Jewish New Testament writers spoke of “*all men*” and “*the whole world*”,<sup>27</sup> they were referring to all mankind without

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<sup>27</sup> “**World**” – In John 15 the Spirit would be sent to convict the “*world*” of sin – the gentile world (Rom. 11:12) as he had been convicting Israel of sin.

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distinction of race, class or gender, rather than all mankind without exception.

## B. The New Covenant Administrative House of God

*Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly<sup>28</sup> sanctuary.* – Heb. 9:1

Take note of the words “*also....and*” found in Hebrews 9:1. Paul’s point is that the New Covenant administration “*also*” has ordinances (baptism and the Lord’s Supper) “*and*” a “*worldly sanctuary*” or a designated “*house of God*” existing in this world (1 Tim. 3:15). In both covenants this institutional house of God was characterized by three specific attributes:

1. Qualified Ministry – 1 Tim. 3:1-13
2. Qualified ordinances – (Mt. 26:12-30; 28:19)
3. Qualified building pattern as the House of God – (Mt. 16:16-18; 18:15-20; 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42).

Moreover, with each new house of God (Tabernacle, Temple, Congregation) there was a designated builder, a divine pattern for building and a day of divine accreditation or baptism in the shekinah glory (Ex. 40:35; 2 Chron. 7:3; Acts 2:1-3) where the Holy Spirit took up residence within this *institutional* house of God (See Chapter entitled “**The Historical View**”).

There was also a progressive change in the nature of each new house of God from the previous house. The first (tabernacle) was made of *skins*. The second (temple) was made of *stone*. The third

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<sup>28</sup> “*Worldly*” in the sense it existed on earth in contrast to its antitype in heaven after which it was patterned.

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(congregation) was made of baptized believers in their own *skin*, but assembled together as metaphorical living spiritual *stones* as a “*building*” or “*house*” of God (1 Pet .2:5; 1 Tim. 3:15) which offered up “*acceptable*” sacrifices.

Once this divine pattern was fully authenticated by the baptism in the Spirit including both Jewish and Gentile members, the repetition of this pattern did not need further authentication. Administration of this pattern simply reproduced congregations of like faith and order throughout the New Testament period and since that time until Jesus comes again.

There has never been anything like this new house of God since creation. It’s nature is new – a body of water baptized believers. Its ordinances are new – water baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Its officers are new – Apostles, prophets, elders and deacons. Its commission is new – inclusive of all nations - until the end of the world.

## C. The New Prophetic Mission

*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into **all truth**: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you **things to come**. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. – Jn. 16:13-14*

*Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me **through their word**; - Jn. 17:20*

The New Testament scriptures were written under the supervision of the Apostles who were also prophets. The vast

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majority of the New Testament scriptures were written by apostles. The few remaining books were written by those under the ministry of an apostle. For example, Luke wrote under the ministry of Paul, while Mark wrote under the ministries of Peter and Paul.<sup>29</sup>

The completing of the Biblical canon was predicted by Isaiah to be completed under the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ:

*Bind up the testimony, seal the law **among my disciples.** And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me **are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.** – Isa. 8:16-18*

The apostolic office was established by Christ to be his authorized witness of his resurrection, but also they were given special sign gifts (2 Cor. 12:12) to impart revelatory and sign gifts to the churches by the laying on of their hands until they completed the Biblical Canon in writing the New Testament scriptures. This is another aspect of the promise of the Father distinct from the baptism in the Spirit.

## *1. Miracles, Signs and Wonders – 2 Cor. 12:12*

*Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. - 2 Cor. 12:12*

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<sup>29</sup> Many letters of Paul were co-authored (“Paul and Timothy” - Philip. 1:1). Paul used other men to actually write the letters. He no doubt formulated many of his letters around the campfire with the input of his ministerial companions.

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Something about “*signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds*” is unique to the apostolic office, otherwise, Paul could not appeal to such things as “*the signs of an apostle*” if they were not in some sense unique to the apostolic office.

The baptism in the Spirit was accompanied not merely by evangelistic power (Acts 1:8), but also miraculous power in visible signs and wonders that could be seen and heard:

*Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he has shed forth this, which you now see and hear.* – Acts 2:33

Significantly, the first six chapters of Acts restrict the power of miracles, signs and wonders to the hands of the apostles alone.

Acts 2:7 *And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?*<sup>30</sup>

Acts 2:43 *And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.*

Ac 5:12 *And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon’s porch.*

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<sup>30</sup> The apostles were all Galileans, but that cannot be said of the other 108 disciples which had been assembling with them in Acts 1. Jesus evangelized in Judea as well as in Galilee. The term “all” in Acts 2:1 refers to the 120 identified in Acts 1:15. It is the Galilean apostles which were speaking in tongues.

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If all the church members were doing “*signs and wonders*” there would be no point in mentioning just the apostles. It is these same apostolic hands that performed miracles, signs and wonders in Acts 1-6 that were laid upon seven men in Acts 6:5 resulting in those seven being able to do miracles, signs and wonders.

Ac 6:6 *Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them..... And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.*

It is only after the apostles laid hands on these seven men do we read for the first time in the book of Acts that anyone other than the apostles performed miracles, signs and wonders.

In Acts 8:14 when two apostles came to the baptized believers in Samaria, it was noted that the Holy Spirit had not yet come “*upon*” them. Notice they did not say **within** them but “*upon*” them. Only after the apostles laid their hands upon them did Simon the Sorcerer hear and see things that made him believe that such power came through the laying on of the apostolic hands, and thus he attempted to purchase that power.

Ac 8:17 *Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.*

Ac 8:18 *And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,*

What Simon saw was the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in miracles, signs and wonders received through apostolic laying on of hands. He coveted that *power* to bestow such gifts upon others, simply because it would make him a fortune to control such power.

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In Acts 19:6 only after the apostle Paul laid his hands upon twelve newly rebaptized disciples do we find them able to speak in tongues and prophesying.

Acts 19:6 *And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.*

Again, Luke does not say the Spirit came **within** them but “*on*” them.

In Romans 1:11 Paul writes the church at Rome telling them that he wishes to come to them in order to “*impart*” spiritual gifts to them.

Rom. 1:11 *For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;*

In 2 Tim. 1:6 Paul writes Timothy to urge him to stir up the spiritual gift he received through the apostolic laying on of hands.

2 Tim. 1:6 *Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.*

The uniqueness of “*miracles signs and wonders*” to the apostolic office (2 Cor. 12:12) was due to the fact that the apostles were also chosen to oversee and communicate the writing of a new body of scriptures – the New Testament as predicted by Isaiah (Isa. 8:16-20; Heb. 2:4,12). Christ also confirmed this prophetic promise would be accomplished through and under the oversight of the apostles (Jn. 14:36; 15:26; 16:13-14; 17:17-20). The apostles realized they were providing a new body of scriptures (2 Pet. 3:15-17; 1 Thes. 2:13; 1 Jn. 4:6; Rev. 1:2; 22:18-20). The early churches

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had no written final authority for New Testament church doctrine and practice during this period of production of the New Testament body of scriptures. Until this new body of scriptures was finished, it was through the laying on of hands by the apostles that the Holy Spirit imparted spiritual gifts to the early churches in order to provide revelatory gifts for guidance, which were confirmed by miracles signs and wonders to demonstrate the revelation was from God.

The apostolic age (“*now*” – 1 Cor. 13:12-13) was the prophetic period in which God would complete the Biblical canon of Scripture (Isa. 8:16-18), as the final authority for faith and practice (Isa. 8:20). Revelatory gifts were temporary (1 Cor. 13:8) and provided partial revelation (“*in part*” – v. 9) for the churches until the New Testament canon was completed (v. 10).<sup>31</sup> Therefore, these apostolic signs and wonders were temporary, incomplete and therefore immature methods of revelation until the more mature revelation arrived in the completion of the New Testament Scriptures (v. 11). “*Then*” the New Testament canon would be completed, and these immature, partial revelations would cease. In the mean time (“*now*”) these “*in part*” gifts provided an immature means of revelation unto the churches. Such imperfect revelatory gifts were characterized as looking into a glass (brass mirror) “*darkly*.” It is characterized as “*darkly*” for several reasons. First, it was looking “*darkly*” because not all Christians were privileged to possess revelatory gifts (1 Cor. 12:29-30) and so were

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<sup>31</sup> “*Perfect*” – v. 10 – This is a neuter gender and therefore cannot refer to Christ. The Greek term “*telios*” can be translated “*complete*” or “*mature*.” It is to be interpreted to refer to precisely what the former part of the text says is “*in part*.” Neither Christ nor the new coming world is “*in part*.” What is “*in part*” is described in verse 9 “*prophesy in part...know in part*” or the means of revelation. It is these incomplete methods or immature means of revelation (v. 11) that are stopped (v. 8) when the Biblical canon of scripture is completed or matured.

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dependent upon others who had such gifts. Second, such revelation methods are characterized as “*darkly*” because of the indirect method of revelation and problems of confirming the source of the revelations (1 Jn. 4:1). However, (“*then*”) when the Biblical canon is completed, each Christian would have the same confirmed source of authority and the completed scriptures would be profitable for all equally. So the analogy used by Paul to describe this finished completed better written revelation is the words “*face to face*.” Paul has in mind the Lord’s Words to Israel:

*And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a **vision**, and will speak unto him in a **dream**. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak **mouth to mouth**, even **apparently**, and not in **dark speeches**; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? – Numb. 12:6-8*

The methods of revelation (“*vision...dream*”) that characterized how God conveyed His will to prophets is described as “*dark speeches*” in contrast to the method of revelation used between God and Moses. The better method of revelation used between God and Moses is characterized as “*mouth to mouth*.” The phrase “*mouth to mouth*” is equivalent to the words “*face to face*” as the mouth is located on the front of the face. However, these words are not to be understood literally as God did not permit Moses to look directly “*face to face*” with God. Moses did see the “*hinder parts*” and thus the “*similitude of the Lord*” but he did not see God “*face to face*” as he was told that he would die if he attempted to look directly into God’s face. This phrase “*mouth to mouth*” is simply a metaphor to mean a more direct, apparent or clearer (“*even apparently*”) means of revelation. Moses provided the first written revelation to Israel from God (The Pentateuch). For example, the

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Ten Commandments were written out by the hand of God directly. Therefore, the phrases, “*mouth to mouth*” and “*face to face*” refer to the more direct and apparent written revelation of God.

The completion of the New Testament canon is a more direct and apparent revelation of the will of God to each and every believer than the former revelatory means (visions, dreams, revelatory gifts).

The prophetic written word is characterized as the “*perfect*” or more complete divine revelation from God because it reveals God’s will more clearly for all:

*For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into **the perfect** law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.- James 2: 23-25*

People don't like God's word because when you look into it, it is like a glass where you behold your face exactly as it looks or “*face to face*” or more direct revelation. Written revelation is a more direct personal revelation that shows you exactly how God and others really see you. It reveals all your faults and all the dirt on your face. Indeed, nothing is hid from it:

*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.- Heb. 4:12*

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At the very end of his ministry (67 A.D.), Paul anticipated the completion of the Biblical canon as the final authoritative revelation for faith and practice:

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.* – 2 Tim. 3:16-17

Significantly, as the Biblical canon of Scriptures progressed toward their completion, the apostolic signs and wonders began to decrease. At what point the scriptures were completed (1 Cor. 13:12-13)<sup>32</sup> at that same point such revelatory gifts with confirming signs and wonders ceased. For example, Paul had to leave Trophimus sick in Miletum (2 Tim. 4:20). By the time Paul wrote the Second Epistle of Timothy all the New Testament Scriptures had been written with the exception the writings of the last living apostle (John).

While all such gifts could be found among all the congregations due to the laying on of apostolic hands by Paul and other apostles, the congregations at Rome had no such “*sign*” gifts listed in Romans 12. This interesting fact confirms several things:

1. Believers did not receive these apostolic gifts directly from the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit directly imparted apostolic signs, miracles and wonders, then Paul would not have to “*impart unto you some spiritual gift to the end that ye may be established*” (Rom. 1:2) proving they lacked those gifts that

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<sup>32</sup> Love is inclusive of hope and faith (v. 7) right “*now*” (v. 13) and love never ceases (v. 8). Therefore, even “*then*” after the completion of the Biblical canon, love, faith and hope will continue.

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characterized the apostolic office.

2. They are imparted through the laying on of apostolic hands.
3. The congregations at Rome had **not** been constituted by any apostle. Peter had not been there because Paul claims that these gentile congregations are under his apostolic authority – Rom. 15:15-20, and he never mentions Peter in his letter.

*15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,*

*16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.*

*17 ¶ I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.*

*18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,*

*19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*

*20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:*

Therefore, a proper understanding of the purpose, power and mission of the apostolic office, as the foundational office set in the new house of God is important in understanding the promise of the Spirit's coming on Pentecost. That promise consisted of more than the baptism of the new house of God, but also included the wider

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work of the Holy Spirit in producing a new body of scriptures and authenticating its production through apostolic signs, miracles and wonders. Moreover, it included the empowerment of the gospel to a new type of people (Gentiles), as well as, a new covenant administration of the keys of the kingdom.

## *2. Realization of their Prophetic Mission:*

Did the Apostles realize they were furnishing and completing the Scriptures? Did they understand that the Holy Spirit was using them to write inspired scriptures with the ultimate aim of binding it up and sealing it among themselves?

Peter certainly viewed the writings of Paul as inspired scriptures as he explicitly compared Paul's writings to "*other scriptures*."

*And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation, even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also **other scriptures** unto their own destruction - 2 Pet. 3:15-16*

Paul certainly understood he was writing inspired scriptures as he told the church at Thessalonica:

*For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye **received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.** - 1 Thes. 2:13*

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In the conference at the Jerusalem church in which all the apostles participated, James said,

*For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things - Acts 15:28*

The Apostle John when speaking of all of the apostles who personally saw Jesus Christ (1 Jn. 1:1-3) said:

*We are of God, he that knoweth God heareth us, he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. - 1 Jn. 4; 6*

John as the last living apostle fully realized their predicted responsibility of finalizing a written testimony of Jesus Christ and sealing it:

*Who bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. - Rev. 1:2*

He then finished the last book of the scriptures and sealed it (Rev. 22:18-19) as predicted by Isaiah (Isa. 8:16).

Twenty two of the twenty seven books of the New Testament were written by apostles. Three of the five not written by apostles were written by those directly under the direction of apostles (Mark, Luke, and Acts). The remaining two were written by the Lord's brothers (James, Jude). All were written by "*my disciples*" (Isa. 8:16) or those alive during the Lord's own earthly ministry.

The whole New Testament canon was completed by the "*apostles and prophets*" and their finished work is the

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“*foundation*” (Eph. 2:20) upon which the institutional church is built and one more reason why it is “*the pillar and the ground of the truth*” (1 Tim. 3:15).

When the apostles died, so did the ability to convey these special revelatory sign gifts and when the last baptized believers died upon whom apostolic hands were laid to convey such sign gifts, then such gifts ceased.<sup>33</sup>

## D. The Contrast between the Old and New Covenants

The Old Covenant was established prior to the First Advent of Christ and was designed to anticipate His advent. The New Covenant was established by Christ in his earthly ministry and was designed to fulfill the symbolic types of the Old Covenant, and anticipate the Second Advent. The New Covenant was superior and replaced the Old Covenant Administration (Heb. 8-10). Its superiority was in that what the Old Covenant anticipated by type the New Covenant declared as fulfilled. However, both covenants were earthly visible administrative kingdom covenants (Heb. 9:1) that publicly declared the “*blood of the everlasting covenant*” (Heb. 13:20) among men. The “*everlasting covenant*” is the direct heavenly administration of salvation to all of God’s elect in all generations under the Triune God. This heavenly “*everlasting covenant*” consisted of the Triune Persons of the Godhead symbolized by the Old Testament fathers of Israel (Deut. 7:7-8) or the persons of Abraham (the Father) Isaac (the Son) and Jacob

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<sup>33</sup> Modern Pentecostalism fails the qualifications set forth for both apostles and prophets (Acts 1:21-22; Deut. 13:1-5; 18:20-22). They perform “*lying*” wonders or miracles that confirm false doctrines and practices (Mt. 24:24-25; 2 Thes. 2:9) and a gospel of justification by works (Gal. 1:8-9). See my book **Counterfeit Revival** for a more detailed exposure of the modern Pentecostal movement.

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(The Spirit). Therefore, God often presented himself as “*the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*” (Ex. 3:16; 4:5; 1 Kngs. 18:36; 1 Chron. 29:18; 2 Chron. 30:6; Mt. 22:32; etc.) The Old Covenant with Israel was established on the basis of the covenant made with these fathers of Israel (Deut. 9:5) which symbolized the everlasting covenant between the Triune Persons of the Godhead.

The Old Covenant administered the gospel of Christ symbolically through its sacrificial and ceremonial system. The Ten Commandments and their civil application administered the holiness of God. The tabernacle and Temple with their qualified ministry and ordinances were the earthly administrative center of this covenant administration of the gospel of Christ and holiness of God among the covenant people. The Law was never designed to save or convey life to anyone (Gal. 3:21) but served as a “*school master*” to instruct the covenant people in the nature of sin (Rom. 3:20) and lead them to Christ for personal and individual salvation by faith in the gospel as presented in the ceremonial system (Gal. 3:22-24; Acts 10:43).

The New Covenant administers the gospel of Christ and the holiness of God more directly than the Old Covenant. However, as with the Old Covenant, the New Covenant is provided with an earthly administrative “*house of God*” (Heb. 9:1 “*and...also*” 1 Tim. 3:15) with a qualified ministry (1 Tim. 3:1-13) and ordinances wherein the gospel is declared through preaching and teaching directly by its ministry and symbolically declared through its ordinances.

However, both the Old and New Covenants were temporal visible kingdom administrations that reflected the greater “*everlasting covenant*” which is yet to find its complete fulfillment in the everlasting kingdom of the new heavens and earth. God is the author of all three covenants, and God is not the author of

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confusion. This everlasting covenant is spelled out clearly in such passages as Ephesians 1:4-13 and Romans 8:27-39 and both Old and New Covenant saints will ultimately be made “*perfect*” under the everlasting covenant in the new heaven and earth (Heb. 11:13-16, 39-40). So the New Covenant does not preach any other Gospel than what was preached under the Old Covenant or since the foundation of the world (Acts 10:43; 26:22-23; Heb. 4:2) but both preach “*the blood of the everlasting covenant*” from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8). The current administration of the “*everlasting covenant*” is the “*new covenant*”<sup>34</sup> but it too will be replaced after the end of this age by the fulfillment of the everlasting covenant in a new heaven and earth.

The Spirit came “*upon*” both lost and saved people in the Old Testament to empower them to serve in a particular office or function just as He does in the New Testament for power (“*upon*” – Mt. 3:16; 12:18; Lk. 1:35; 2:25,40; Acts 1:8; 2:17; 8:16; 19:6).

The baptism in the Spirit was only promised to water baptized believers in Christ (Mt. 3:11) in a restricted location in Jerusalem (Acts 1:4-5) at a restricted time “*not many days hence*” as the new institutional “*house of God*” for public worship and administration of the keys of the kingdom until the end of this current age.

It was only repeated one other time at the house of Cornelius, and only then because the Jews would not administer baptism to Gentiles and/or accept them into the institutional house of God. God publicly provided the special authentication reserved for His

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<sup>34</sup> “**New**” in direct reference to the “*old*” or first covenant (Heb. 8:11-15). However, neither covenant proclaimed a “*new*” gospel (Heb. 4:2). The same gospel from Genesis 3:15 manifested in a progressive revelation until the coming of Jesus Christ, but it was the same gospel that was fulfilled in the birth, life and death of Christ in the gospels.

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“*house*” upon these Gentiles as he did upon the all Jewish “*house of God*” in Acts 2. Significantly, the nearest reference point that Peter could point to for the baptism in the Spirit at the house of Cornelius was not with the thousands of individuals saved between Pentecost and the house of Cornelius, but the nearest reference point for this event was “*at the beginning*” or Pentecost (Acts 11:15).

This proves it was neither a post-salvation individual experience as claimed by Pentecostals<sup>35</sup> or a salvation action concurrent with regeneration as claimed by Protestants. Peter demonstrated it was a unique historical event that occurred but once with each new institutional house of God, and therefore the case at the house of Cornelius was the exception to that rule. It was a necessary exception to that rule because without it, the all Jewish congregation would have never received them into membership of the church by baptism.

Long after Pentecost and the house of Cornelius, Paul wrote the Ephesian church and said there was now only “*one baptism*” (Eph. 4:6) and that is the baptism administered in the Great Commission by men (“*ye*”) to other men (“*them*”) until the end of the world (Mt. 28:19-20).

The baptism in the Spirit places no one “*in Christ*” or in spiritual union with Christ, as that is the work of regeneration by the Spirit. Indeed, the baptism in the Spirit is the immersion of the institutional house of God “*in the Spirit.*” Each congregational

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<sup>35</sup> God is not the author of confusion, and yet the whole Pentecostal movement is characterized by nothing but confusion and open disobedience to apostolic commands in 1 Corinthians 14:26-38. Moreover, the Pentecostal movement fails to pass the Biblical tests for prophets. This whole movement was begun by and is permeated by proven false prophets.

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body of baptized believers that has been founded upon the New Testament pattern of like faith and order is a “*temple of the Spirit*” (1 Cor. 3:16). It is the manifestation of that pattern in their constitution, ministry, ordinances, faith and practice that makes it “*the pillar and ground of the truth.*”

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## The Point of Confusion

What many believers do not recognize is the difference between the public house of God, as an **institutional** temple of the Spirit, and the physical body of the believer, as an **individual** temple of the Spirit:

*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? – 1 Cor. 3:16*

*What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? – 1 Cor. 6:19*

In context, 1 Cor. 3:5-16 is speaking about how the congregation at Corinth had been formed. It was formed through many ministers working together as “*one*” under the leadership of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:5-9). However, Paul had been the chief “*masterbuilder*” who initially laid the “*foundation*” of the congregation at Corinth (1 Cor. 3:10-11). He says “*ye*” (not “*we*”) are the temple of God and later says “*ye*” (not “*we*”) are the body of Christ at Corinth (1 Cor. 12:27). Why “*ye*” and not “*we*”? Paul was a member of the church at Antioch (Acts 13:1-3), but in context he is addressing the members of the church at Corinth and how that church was constituted and added unto. All the baptized believers at Corinth formed one singular “**temple**” as the **institutional** “*house of God*.”<sup>36</sup>

However, in 1 Corinthians 6:15-20 he addresses the **individual** believer and the problem of fornication. One of the reasons the

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<sup>36</sup> However, when he comes to passages where abstract instruction is provided in regard to the church or body of Christ as an institution he says “*we*” instead of “*ye*” (1 Cor. 10:15-16; 12:12-25).

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believer should not fornicate with a harlot is that his **individual** physical body is the “*temple*” of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, it is his **individual** physical body that is also a member of the congregation at Corinth. Therefore fornicating his physical body would not only pollute the temple of the Holy Spirit on an **individual** level, but it would also pollute the **institutional** body of Christ at Corinth as the **institutional** temple of the Holy Spirit was composed of individual physical members (1 Cor. 12:27).

In verse 15 he instructs the individual members of the church at Corinth that their PHYSICAL bodies are “*members of Christ*” or the metaphorical body of Christ at Corinth (1 Cor. 12:27). This is why Paul had instructed the “*body of Christ*” at Corinth to remove the fornicating “*brother*” from their membership because “*a little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump*” which lump “*ye are*” (1 Cor. 5:7). The unleavened bread in the Lord’s Supper not only symbolized the physical body of Christ offered up on the cross but it also symbolized the metaphorical body of Christ actually partaking the Supper at Corinth. That is why Paul commanded them to remove that fornicating “*brother*” from their membership before observing the Lord’s Supper because open and known sin in their midst violated the symbol of the unleavened bread.

*Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. – 1 Cor. 6:15*

It was the PHYSICAL body of this “*brother*” (1 Cor. 5:11) that had been made a member “*of an harlot*” (1 Cor. 5:1-3) and it is the PHYSICAL body of this “*brother*” that was a member of the metaphorical body of Christ at Corinth – “*ye are....individual members thereof*” (1 Cor. 12:27). Therefore, PHYSICAL fornication polluted the metaphorical “*body of Christ*” or “*temple of the Spirit*” at Corinth because the metaphorical body of Christ

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was a **PHYSICAL institution** made up of “*members*” with **PHYSICAL** bodies.

However, fornication also polluted the **individual** physical body of the believer, as the physical body of the believer was a metaphorical “*temple of the Holy Ghost*.”

*What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.* – 1 Cor. 6:19-20

Therefore, **institutionally**, each congregation is the “*temple*” and metaphorical “*body*” of the Spirit of Christ. But that is not to be confused with the fact that each believer is also the **individual** “*temple*” and “*body*” of the Spirit of Christ. The former temple/body deals with **institutional indwelling** for public service and worship while the latter temple/body deals with **individual indwelling**.

Confusing these two different types of metaphorical temples of the Spirit has led most of Christendom to the forced conclusion that individual salvation was different prior to Pentecost than after Pentecost because they confuse the promise to baptize the **institution** in the Spirit on Pentecost with the **individual** indwelling of the Spirit at regeneration.

As previously demonstrated in a former chapter, all the promises of the baptism in the Spirit previous to Pentecost were given to a designated plural group of water baptized believers identified as the **institutional** “*church*” who already had the indwelling presence of the Spirit of God in regard to their own **individual** persons.

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## Conclusion

The baptism in the Spirit is **not** an *individual* baptism but is an *institutional* baptism, and therefore it is **not** a repeatable work with each individual at regeneration or subsequent to regeneration as a second work of grace, but is an historical completed act. It is **not** how God brings believers into “spiritual union” with Christ or places individuals “*in Christ*”, as that is the work of regeneration not the baptism in the Spirit.

The initial historical evidence of this institutional baptism is miraculous manifestations (immersion in shekinah glory, fire, etc.). However, after “*the church*” had been fully accredited **as an institution**, the continuing evidence of God’s indwelling presence in any concrete or geographically located “*house of God*” is its conformation to the once authenticated divine pattern as revealed in scriptures with regard to its constitution, membership, ordinances and ministry.

Today New Testament churches can be identified by conformation to this same “*house of God*” pattern. They reproduced after their own kind throughout the New Testament period, and continued to do so throughout the post-New Testament period right up until today, and will continue to do so until Christ returns. Just find a church that conforms to the divine pattern and you have found a New Testament congregation. In this day of increasing apostasy they are difficult to find, but they are still here.

The New Testament church is the New Covenant administrator within the Kingdom of God on earth. It administers the keys of the kingdom on earth, as Christ’s authorized representative in administering the ordinances, ordaining its ministers, disciplining its membership, making disciples, and defending the faith once

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delivered, thus making it “*the pillar and ground of the truth.*” It is all of these “*truth*” characteristics that manifest the Spirit’s indwelling presence with regard to any specific congregation.

However, the baptism in the Spirit is but one aspect of the promise of the Spirit. The promise of the Spirit not only includes the public authentication of the church pattern as the new house of God, but it is inclusive of much more. It includes the expansion of redemptive activity from Israel to the Gentile “*world.*” It includes the special miracles, signs and wonders performed and imparted by the hands of the Apostles, as they established “*the faith*” through their oral teaching, and ultimately by completing the Biblical canon under their direct supervision as the completed New Testament scriptures. It included removal of the “*middle wall of division*” (Eph. 2:14) from within the public house of worship, so that the only qualification for equal membership in the worship body was not based upon whether they were Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, male or female, but based solely upon their public profession at water baptism that they were born of the Spirit – thus a “*spiritual*” race, gender and class of people.

The so-called universal invisible church is inferior in every way to the true churches of Jesus Christ. For example, invisible church theory includes the very brethren that New Testament churches are commanded to exclude (1 Cor. 5:11-13; 2 Thes. 3:6). It allows membership that pollutes and defies the gospel ordinances, whereas the true churches of Christ refuse the ordinances to those that pollute or defy gospel ordinances. It is full of division and confusion and impossible to unify its membership in regard to doctrine and practice, whereas the true churches of Christ can be unified in doctrine and practice and remove from their membership those who violate that unity (1 Cor. 1:10; 12:25-26).

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In reality the doctrine of the universal visible or universal invisible church theory is the doctrine of the Great Whore and her harlot daughters in Revelation 17-18 who have opposed and persecuted the true churches of Christ throughout history. Such a doctrine is not only consistent with the very character of the Great Whore and her harlot daughters, but is absolutely necessary to sustain and defend all churches and denominations that do not conform to the Biblical pattern in constitution, ordinances and ministry.

Look for churches that conform to the divine pattern provided by Christ and the apostles. Seek them out and don't settle for anything less. That is what makes the institutional church of Christ "*the pillar and ground of the truth.*"