



Google™ Custom Search

Back

Table of Contents for this issue.

Search



- Home
- Current Issue
- Archives
- Book Reviews
- Advertise
- Contact Us
- Store
- EJ International Editions
- Text-Only View



Order Printed Issues



View Revista de enriquecimiento (EJ Spanish site)



Join us on Facebook



Download Free App



SUBSCRIBE NOW!

Teaching on Spirit Baptism as a Separate Event After Salvation

By Tim Enloe

Her facial expressions became more intense the longer she spoke to me, and her voice quickly followed suit. Adamantly she said, "I received all of the Holy Spirit there is to get when I was saved; that is when I was baptized in the Holy Spirit. This whole speaking-in-tongues thing is just a gift for some people, not everyone."

Her concern had arisen because my Pentecostal-based teaching on Spirit baptism stood in contrast to that of a popular non-Pentecostal television personality's teaching. This TV personality had instructed her to appreciate the Holy Spirit's ministry as historical only — both in the biblical account and in personal interaction. There was no potential for further encounters with Him.

This scenario demonstrates the desperate need for consistent teaching on the ministry and power of the Holy Spirit. If we as Pentecostal leaders do not teach on the baptism in the Holy Spirit, anyone with a media platform can fill this vacuum. As ministers, we choose how our church views the Book of Acts: Is it a museum showcasing exceptional moments of days gone by or is it a blueprint for church life today? Is Spirit baptism separate from regeneration and worth teaching about — even if you know you may face some misunderstanding or opposition?

I desire to remind us of the biblical reasoning for Spirit baptism being a *separate event after salvation* and to offer a few ways to teach on Spirit baptism; ways that can stir passion for the Spirit's work in our people.

SEPARATE AND AFTERWARD

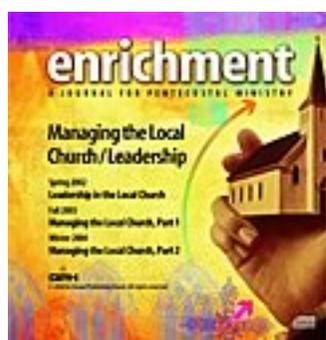
I seriously doubt that a sermon series, "Subsequence and Separability," would be an all-time favorite podcast download (though it does sound like a movie title). But there are truths buried in these loaded words that we still need to address. These truths can open doors of powerful spiritual experience for the people we lead. Since most churchgoers are not familiar with these terms, I prefer to use *afterward* and *separate* in place of *subsequence* and *separability*.

Like the lady I mentioned, many of our adherents do not expect a personal, postconversion anointing experience. In her case, she eliminated this expectation because of theological issues; but, in other cases, people do not expect this because of ignorance about the subject.

Enrichment International Editions



[Donate to this project.](#)



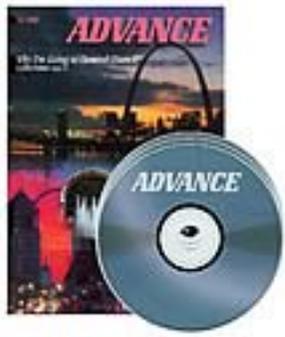
Order *Managing the Local Church/Leadership* CD.



Order Paraclete CD

All 29 years of the out-of-print Paraclete magazine. Excellent source of Pentecostal themes and issues, theological articles on the work and ministry of the

Holy Spirit, and sermon and Bible study material. Fully searchable subject/author index.



Order Advance CD

Long out of print but fondly remembered, Advance magazine blessed thousands of A/G ministers. Now the entire Advance archives — 30 years of information and inspiration, helps, and history — is available on CD.

Let us look at the concepts of *separate* and *afterward*; first at the biblical basis, then the logical basis, and finally the practical basis. Greater biblical understanding naturally brings greater spiritual hunger and expectation.

THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR SPIRIT BAPTISM BEING SEPARATE AND AFTERWARD

Scripture shows that Spirit baptism is a *separate* event from salvation and that it occurs *afterward*. When Paul addressed Apollo's Ephesian converts in Acts 19:2, he asked, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" Paul was not asking, "Did you get regenerated when you were regenerated?" The event of Spirit baptism and tongues-speaking that follows confirms the intent of Paul's question. He was asking if they had received the Spirit's power — which is the blatant theme of Acts — at an earlier time; or, as the text portrays, did he need to minister on the subject? His initial encounter with new believers was to ensure they had experienced the Spirit's empowering; and, if not, to enable them to experience it. In fact, the Ephesian narrative follows suit with every account of Spirit baptism in Acts: each time Scripture clearly speaks of the recipients as already being believers, Spirit baptism was a *separate* event from salvation/regeneration that occurred *afterward*.

In Acts 2 on the Day of Pentecost, Luke makes it clear that this gathering of 120 are all "brothers" (*adelphon*) or "disciples" (*matheton*). They had already put their trust in the resurrected Christ and were obeying His command to receive the Holy Spirit's power (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:5,8).

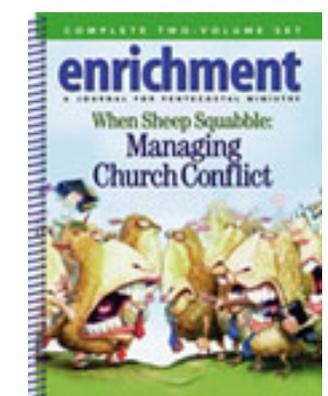
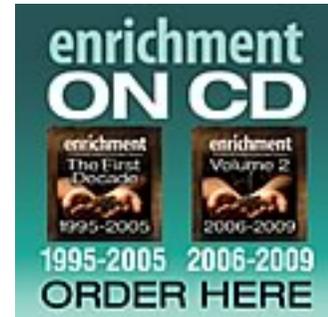
The Samaritan Pentecost in Acts 8:14–17 is equally clear that the recipients of Spirit baptism were already converted for they had "received the word of God" and had been baptized in water prior to Spirit baptism.

Though the account of Paul's conversion and Spirit baptism in Acts 9 is sparsely detailed, it does demonstrate that Paul has rapidly become a rather obedient — albeit blind — follower of the Jesus he once persecuted. Even Ananias, whose imposition of hands is instrumental in Paul's Spirit baptism, calls Paul "brother" at the beginning of this encounter.

In the Gentile Pentecost account of Acts 10, Luke portrays the Italian military officer Cornelius and his household as devout, God-fearing, almsgiving, and consistently prayerful. Peter affirms the salvation of Cornelius and his Gentile friends in the opening statement of his sermon (verses 34,35). In fact, Cornelius' Spirit baptism was an obvious indicator to Peter and his Joppa travelmates that this group had been saved previously (verses 47,48).

The earlier referenced Ephesian Pentecost of Acts 19 is full of indicators that Spirit baptism was *separate* from salvation/regeneration and occurring *afterward*. Do not forget about the previous chapter that describes Apollo's credentials: "mighty in the scriptures," "instructed in the way of the Lord," "fervent in spirit," "teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus." Even Priscilla and Aquila helped complete his theology. The final word mentioned about him is that he could demonstrate by the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ. No wonder Acts 19:2 calls his Ephesian converts "disciples." These are the very disciples to whom Paul ministers Spirit baptism.

The Acts accounts are unanimous. Even Peter reveals a *separate* and *afterward* theology in his Pentecost sermon (Acts 2:38,39). Yet, there is one more aspect I feel is conclusive: Jesus himself makes this promise only to believers/disciples in Luke 24 and Acts 1, not those who need to be regenerated.



Order
Conflict Management
Two Volume Set

Truly the biblical basis for Spirit baptism being *separate* from salvation/regeneration and occurring *afterward* is overwhelming.

THE LOGICAL BASIS FOR SPIRIT BAPTISM BEING SEPARATE AND AFTERWARD

Let us zoom out and get a broader vantage point than singular narratives alone; because, logically, Spirit baptism is different from salvation.

First, the summation of both regeneration and empowering texts makes it clear that the outcome of each is different. Salvation/regeneration enters and establishes us into God's kingdom family (Titus 3:5). Spirit baptism — as *the universally available anointing for ministry power for New Testament believers* (and certainly beyond) — has an obviously different purpose: power to minister to others (Acts 1:4-8).

Second, regeneration happens prior to Spirit baptism in the Scriptures; in fact, Spirit baptism typically follows regeneration and water baptism (see also Acts 2:38,39), with the exception of Acts 10.

Third, speaking in tongues and other signs associated with Pentecost are never associated with conversion, but only of the reception of the Spirit's power.

Finally, people receive regeneration and Spirit baptism in a different way. David Petts notes the often overlooked concept that, "The baptism in the Spirit is sometimes received through the laying on of hands (Acts 8:18; 19:6), but there is no suggestion anywhere in the New Testament that apostles laid hands on people in order that they might be born again."¹

Theorizing and theologizing is fine, but unless it translates into disciple building it could be rather fruitless. So let us look at the practical side and reflect upon some teaching angles that will stir up some spiritual desire in the people we lead.

PRACTICAL TEACHING ANGLES FOR SEPARATE AND AFTERWARD

Translating theology into practice is what ministry is about, but no one ever said it would be easy. But there is good news about this topic: Spirit baptism is a highly desirable event that has, since Acts 2, transformed literally millions of believers with supernatural power. Here are suggestions and springboards for using *separate and afterward* to create hunger and expectancy.

The approach

The whole idea behind *separate* and *afterward* is that there is something else available. I wrote a book on Spirit baptism and titled it, *Want More?* Approaching the subject with a question of spiritual need has strong biblical basis and causes the listener to make some assessment. "Do I need something more from God than I presently have? Is there potential for someone like me to receive more?"

The lady I mentioned in the introduction had shut herself down theologically from further spiritual experience and was trying to use the very Scriptures that prove Spirit baptism to refute it. Arguing yields very little fruit, so my response to her was simply to ask her if she was hungry for more of God's work in her life. I encouraged her to read through Acts and see if God indeed does more in people's lives than she had experienced.

Most believers desire more of God and are thrilled to have a deeper life experience with the Holy Spirit. Let your approach enable hunger that can eventually translate into expectancy.

Using testimony

Stirring spiritual hunger can also result from personal testimony. Hearing what God did for someone else can open you and me up for that same something. For example, tell your story of conversion and Spirit baptism on a Sunday morning and watch as your people open up to receive for themselves. Your transparency will stir their hunger and expectancy. Or film some conversion-followed-by-Spirit-baptism testimonies from your people, making sure to hit all the age demographics. Edit them as 2-minute segments, showing a different one at the opening of each service for a month. We release the power of testimony when we speak.

The factor responsible for starting my personal seeking was a friend of mine receiving Spirit baptism at church. Up to that point, I had assumed it was only for older people, but now I witnessed firsthand that it was available to me. I began to seek for the Baptism almost immediately after hearing the news.

Using biblical character studies

Biblical biographies also stir people for more. Who can resist the stories of the first deacons, Philip and Stephen, and their increasingly great exploits for the Lord? Or what about the less obscure Peter and Paul? What did the people in the Bible experience and on what kind of a timetable? Narrative preaches easily but also easily lends to practical application. A consistent teaching through the characters of Acts is a wonderful way of enabling people to see there is more for them. But testimony and teaching are not enough; there must be opportunity given to receive.

Giving opportunity

Most pastors rightly conclude each service with a salvation appeal. Why not tag on a 10-second appetizer for Spirit baptism? "While some need to experience God's forgiveness for sin, others may simply be hungry to experience the Spirit's power. If you would like to have someone pray with you about receiving this power, meet a prayer partner at the front."

I have a pastor-friend who frequently brings new converts immediately to the prayer room to pray for Spirit baptism. He has had success in leading people into this amazing gift.

Another pastor-friend leads an Assemblies of God megachurch and has recently added back one Sunday night service per month exclusively for seeking the Baptism. His step of faith is being richly rewarded.

FINAL WORDS

If it has been a while since you have taught on Spirit baptism or Acts, why not begin again and look for angles to engender Spirit hunger in your people? Allow your enabling approach, the Scriptures, and personal testimonies along with consistent opportunity to usher your ministry into a new season of experiencing the Holy Spirit's power. Create hunger first, then foster experience.



TIM ENLOE, Wichita, Kansas, is an evangelist who travels throughout the United States and overseas teaching and ministering on the Holy Spirit. For more information concerning his ministry, visit: www.enloeministries.org.

Note

1. David Petts, *The Holy Spirit: An Introduction*. (Mattersey, England: Mattersey Hall), 1998.

Enrichment Journal
1445 Boonville Ave., Springfield, MO 65802
Email: enrichmentjournal@ag.org
Phone: 417-862-2781, ext. 4095
To subscribe by phone: 1-800-641-4310

Copyright 2017 The General Council of the Assemblies of God

1445 North Boonville Ave., Springfield, MO 65802 • Telephone: 417-862-2781

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Policy](#)