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“Baptism of Water, Holy Spirit, and Fire”

Matthew 3:1-12

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In Matthew chapter three we are introduced to John the Baptist – the one the Old Testament prophets predicted would come to herald the arrival of the Messiah. In [Matthew 3:11](#), John the Baptist spoke of three types of baptisms: water, Holy Spirit, and fire. In this message, Pastor Gary teaches that all Believers either should or will experience all three of these baptisms, as well as what ‘baptism’ means, and how Believers can experience each baptism.

Historical Background

1. The time gap between Matthew 2 to Matthew 3 is about twenty-eight years, from the time Jesus was approximately two years old to the time Jesus was approximately thirty years old, which is when Jesus began his public ministry.
2. The four gospels are mostly silent about Jesus’ childhood and early adulthood.
 - a. [Luke 2:41-52](#) records the account of Jesus at the Temple.

John the Baptist

3. [Matthew 3:11](#) – *“I indeed baptize you with **water unto repentance**, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. **[Jesus] will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.**”* (Emphasis added)

Baptism Of Water

4. The Greek word for baptize is baptizo, which means to immerse, submerge, or overwhelm.¹

¹ <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G907&t=NKJV>

5. There are two kinds of water baptism.
 - a. Baptism of Repentance
 - i. John's baptism was of **repentance in anticipation of the Messiah.** (Emphasis added)
 - ii. John's ministry was to preach repentance, asking people to come to a place of surrender to God, as well as to share the news that the Messiah had come.
 - iii. This type of water baptism was a symbolic gesture which indicated a person's desire to be forgiven of sin and to identify with the Messiah.
 - iv. Jesus was not recognized publicly until John baptized him.
 - b. Jesus' Baptism
 - i. **Matthew 28:19** - "[Jesus said,] 'Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...'"
 - ii. Jesus' baptism was one of **regeneration in proclamation of the Messiah.** (Emphasis added)
 - iii. Jesus' baptism is not a requirement for salvation.
 - iv. Jesus' baptism is a symbolic way of identifying with Jesus concerning being cleansed of sin, renouncing the old life, and being identified with the risen Christ.
 - v. Jesus' baptism is an external act that tells of an internal work of the Lord.
 - vi. Pastor Gary said, "I would encourage you, if you have not been water baptized since coming to faith in Jesus, that you should consider [it]... in obedience to identify with the finished work of Christ."

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

6. There are quite a few people who believe that some of the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit are no longer available, having ended at the conclusion of the apostolic age, including the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
7. Pastor Gary and Cornerstone Chapel believe all of the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit are available today.
8. Three-fold Ministry of the Holy Spirit
 - a. The Spirit is **with** us to lead us to Christ. (Emphasis added)
 - i. **John 14:16-17** - "And I will pray the father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide **with you** forever - the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him;

*but you know Him, for He dwells **with you** and will be **in you.***
(Emphasis added)

- ii. Pastor Gary said, “The first thing the Holy Spirit does [is bring] us into relationship with Christ, and by the way, that’s exactly the ministry of the Holy Spirit. None of us has come to a relationship and a knowledge of Jesus except that the Holy Spirit has helped us, and the Holy Spirit helps us because he brings conviction to our hearts [about] sin, and he reveals to us the truth about who Jesus is, [so] we can exercise our will, receive him and invite him to be our Lord and Savior. This is the ministry of the Holy Spirit **with us.** ... [In these verses] the audience [Jesus was] speaking to were his disciples, so there is a specific context and there is a broader application. ...
(Emphasis added)

b. The Spirit comes **in us** when we accept Christ. (Emphasis added)

- i. [John 20:19-22](#) - *“Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.’ And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, ‘**Receive the Holy Spirit.**’ ”*
(Emphasis added)

- ii. Pastor Gary said, “When we come into personal relationship with Jesus and we, by faith, accept him as our Lord and Savior, we [say] that Jesus comes into our heart, but what we really mean is that the Holy Spirit, the very presence of God [resides] within our spirit. Man is made of three parts: body, soul, and spirit. Your soul and spirit are inextricably linked because your soul is the seat of your emotions, your will, [and] your conscience. Your spirit is what houses your soul, so [these] two are connected. What houses your spirit and your soul is your body and flesh. One day, when we die, our spirit and soul [will] vacate our body to go to be with the Lord, [only] if you know Christ as your Savior. ... Our spirit is within our bodies presently, and when you come into relationship with Jesus by faith, the Spirit of God then comes in you. Now, when did the Holy Spirit come [into] the disciples? [The Holy Spirit came in them when they were born again.] ... When did they put their faith and trust in him after he had died on the cross? The answer [is found in [John 20:19-22](#)] when Jesus [appeared] to them in his resurrected [body]. ... It was at [this] moment that they had in effect put their faith and trust in Jesus as the risen Lord who had died on the cross for their sins. And so, when they believed and received, they also

received the Holy Spirit.”

- c. The Spirit comes **upon us** when we are baptized by Christ. (Emphasis added)
 - i. **Acts 1:5-8** – “ *‘For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.’ Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, ‘Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’ And He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come **upon you**; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.’ ” (Emphasis added)*
 - ii. Pastor Gary said, “There is a difference between the indwelling of the Spirit and the overflowing power of the Spirit. ... People can get saved and have the Spirit indwell them and go to heaven. ... But, if you want to live a life of power that the Holy Spirit intends for us to have, that is the baptizing work of the Spirit of God which comes upon an individual subsequent to a salvation experience. ... The operative word in the book of Acts is power. ... God wants us to live a powerful life filled with the power of the Holy Spirit that we might be effective witnesses, that we might have the fruit of the Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, that we might be baptized and overwhelmed by the work of the Holy Spirit. [This] is separate and distinct from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.”
- d. How do we get the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit?
 - i. **Luke 11:11-13** – “*If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will **your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!**” (Emphasis added)*
 - ii. Pastor Gary said, “You ask. You just say, ‘Lord, baptize me, overflow your Spirit within my heart, [and] within my life that I might have boldness and power, and the fruit of the Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit.’ ”

Baptism Of Fire

- 9. Pastor Gary said, “It is usually a painful experience when the Lord baptizes us with fire. [This] is a refining work of God that brings about a better result in our lives because the baptism of fire [comes] either because God is burning something out of our lives to grow us up, or he’s burning something out of our lives to clean us up. The baptism of fire is either for maturity or purity. It’s one of those or both. There are things in our lives that God sees that we need to grow up [in], so the baptism of fire is to mature us. And then there are things in our lives that are sinful, and he

wants us to get rid of and deal with these things, so he turns up the heat to purify us. ... The bottom line is that he wants us to become more like him. [Sometimes] the Lord will take us through the fire. ... We can either resist it, which makes it more difficult for us, [or we can ask the Lord to show us what it is that he is trying to do in us, or cleanse from us, or teach us]. ... The baptism of fire is to make us more like Christ.”

- a. **1 Peter 1:6-7** - *“... for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith - of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire - may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.”* (NIV 1984)
- b. **Isaiah 48:10** - *“Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.”*
 - i. Pastor Gary said, “Sometimes we bring difficulty [into] our lives by our own sinful choices. Sometimes there’s difficulty in our lives [and] it has nothing to do with any of our choices; it’s just [because] we live in a fallen world, [or] maybe the enemy is up to no good trying to discourage us. There are other times when the Lord is accomplishing his purposes through [these] trials, and he’s allowing these things to expose [things] that need to be dealt with, that otherwise, would not have been noticed had everything been fine [in our life].”
- c. **Proverbs 17:3** - *“The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, but the LORD tests the hearts.”*

Discussion Questions

1. Read **Matthew 3:1-12** to provide a foundation for your Bible study time.
2. Spend time talking about each of the three points Pastor Gary made concerning the different baptisms mentioned in **Matthew 3:11**. (See #3 through #5 above)
3. Read and discuss the three-fold ministry of the Holy Spirit. (See #8 above)
4. Read and discuss Pastor Gary’s comments regarding the Holy Spirit is with us. (See #8a-ii above)
5. Read and discuss the important truth that the Holy Spirit comes in when we accept Christ. (See #8b above)
6. Read and discuss **John 20:19-22**. (See #8b-I above)

7. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary's comments about the Holy Spirit. (See #8b-ii above)
8. Read and discuss the Holy Spirit coming upon us. (See #8c above)
9. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's remarks concerning the Holy Spirit coming upon us. (See #8c-ii above)
10. Read and discuss [Luke 11:11-13](#). (See #8d above)
11. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's comments and the related Scriptures regarding what baptism of fire. (See #9 above)
12. Close your meeting by allowing the Holy Spirit to lead your time of prayer.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version (NKJV)