



*"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths... and walk therein"*  
(Jeremiah 6:16)

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# HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM, OR WATER BAPTISM?

## A STUDY OF FIRST CORINTHIANS 12:13

*Jason Patrick Hilburn*

**W**hen Paul wrote his first inspired epistle to the church at Corinth, he wrote these words: ***"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).

When reading this verse, those who are familiar with the Bible may automatically think of similar passages, such as Acts 2:38-47 when people were added to the church upon their baptism, or Galatians 3:26-28 where Paul said we are *"baptized into Christ"* and *"there is neither Jew nor Greek...neither bond nor free,"* etc. Those passages will be discussed, but the question that needs answering is, ***"What kind of baptism causes one to be added to the one body of the saved?"*** In First Corinthians 12:13, was Paul referring to Holy Spirit baptism, or water baptism?

### VERY FEW PEOPLE RECEIVED HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM

Whatever this baptism is in First Corinthians 12:13, it is something that ALL Christians have undergone in order to be saved and added to the body of Christ; therefore, it CANNOT be Holy Spirit baptism because that interpretation contradicts all inspired conversion accounts. For example, in Acts 8:12-18, the Samaritans believed and were baptized in water, but did

not "receive the Holy Ghost" until apostles were sent from another town to lay hands on them. The Samaritans had already been baptized "for the remission of sins" [Acts 2:38] and had been saved for a significant amount of time before they "received the Holy Ghost."

If First Corinthians 12:13 were referring to all Christians being baptized by (or with) the Holy Spirit at the same point they enter the one body of the saved, that would not harmonize with Acts 8. It would also not harmonize with the conversion of the Ephesians in Acts 19 in which Paul baptized twelve men in water, but they did not receive the Spirit until he (an apostle) laid hands on them. There is no reason to assume that what happened to the Corinthians in Acts 18 was any different than the Samaritans in Acts 8 or the Ephesians in Acts 19 regarding how they were saved or how they received miraculous gifts. They would have received miraculous gifts by the laying on of the apostle Paul's hands after water baptism, not by Holy Spirit baptism (8:12-18; 18:8; 19:5-6; Rom. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:6).

Claiming that all Christians receive Holy Spirit baptism would not harmonize with the book of Acts as a whole because the book of Acts is drenched with the water of baptism in conversion accounts, while Holy Spirit baptism is noticeably absent in the overwhelming majority of ac-

counts. A great example is when the Holy Spirit Himself told Philip to go to the Ethiopian (Acts 8:29). He did so and Philip "preached unto him Jesus." As they were passing by a body of water, the Ethiopian wanted to be baptized (v.36). They stopped their journey, went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, Philip baptized him, they came up out of the water and the Ethiopian rejoiced (8:35-39). Note that "preaching Jesus" includes emphasizing water baptism, not Holy Spirit baptism (Mark 16:15-16). Also, note that the Spirit did NOT say, "Philip, you stay here, and I will go baptize the Ethiopian into the one body!" The Holy Spirit sent a man to teach and administer water baptism in Acts 8 (Philip). Jesus sent a man to teach and administer water baptism in Acts 9 and Acts 22 (Ananias). The Holy Spirit sent a man to teach and administer water baptism in Acts 10 and 11 (Peter). More examples could be given. The duty to preach and baptize all nations was given to men, not to Jesus or the Holy Spirit! (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:47; cf. 1 Cor. 12:13).

What happened to Cornelius in Acts 10 made Peter think back to the beginning of the church on the day of Pentecost, although Peter had been present in the events of Acts 8 with

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**First Corinthians 12:13...**



Editorial...

## KING SOLOMON #3

Garland M. Robinson

***Solomon learned the lesson that all one gains in this life is worthless without the fellowship of God. Therefore, “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man”***

**T**he story of Solomon is a tale of great expectations but sad results. It's the story of a man who rises in splendor but sinks deep in darkness. While so often we hear of “Solomon in all his glory” (Matt. 6:29), many of the lessons derived from his life are really comprised from “Solomon in all his folly.” His great sin, like every human being, was forsaking God.

### LESSONS LEARNED

**1. Age and experience are no guarantee against apostasy.** *“For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father”* (1 Kings 11:4). The New Testament so ably warns against the ever present danger of forsaking God. In Hebrews 10:24-25 we read: *“Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”* Paul wrote: *“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall”* (1 Cor. 10:12). Paul was very much aware of this and said: *“But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway”* (1 Cor. 9:27).

**2. Increase in age does not necessarily mean an increase in wisdom.** Solomon's mistakes were committed at an unexpected time in

life, when he was old. Usually, as you grow older, you learn from mistakes and experience. Youth is generally considered the time of folly (2 Tim. 2:22). Older men in the church sometimes depart from the “old paths” and lead others into apostasy. They claim superior knowledge and wisdom due to increased age, which is not necessarily so. However, on the other hand, the rich young ruler of Mark 10 was foolish, not because he was young, but because he rejected Christ. It can happen at any age. Will you let it happen to you?

**3. The increase of riches and honor can turn one's heart away from God.** *“So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom”* (1 Kings 10:13-29). Many wise sayings of Proverbs bear this out. *“Riches profit not in the day; of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.”* *“How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!”* *“A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.”* *“For riches are not for ever”* (Prov. 11:4; 16:16; 22:1; 27:24; Luke 12:16-21; 18:18-25; 1 Tim. 6:6-11). *“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal”* (Matt. 6:19-20).

**4. A divided alliance causes one to fall.** *“And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David*

*his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places”* (1 Kings 3:3). *“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon”* (Matt. 6:24). *“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness”* (2 Cor. 6:14). *“Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth”* (Col. 3:1-2)?

**5. Oppression of our fellowman brings God's displeasure.** Solomon was a hard taskmaster and placed heavy yokes and burdens on the people, which they despised (1 Kings 12:4). *“The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor”* (Psalm 10:2). *“He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor”* (Prov. 14:31). See also James 1:27-2:26; Prov. 22:16; Amos 2:6-7; 5:11; 8:4-6; Zech. 7:10; Gal. 2:10.

**6. Far too much time and energy is spent seeking things of this life and too little time seeking things above.** Solomon sought pleasure, wine, houses, vineyards, servants, cattle, silver and gold. *“And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour...”* (Eccl. 2:1-10). The goal of our life is to be well pleasing unto God and set our affections on things above, not on things of the earth (Matt. 6:19-21,33; Col. 3:1-3; 1 John 2:15-17). In the end, Solomon looked on all he had accumulated and saw that it profited him nothing. *“Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun”* (Eccl. 2:11).

**7. We must sound out a warning to this present generation and all future ones to come.** *“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them”* (Eccl. 12:1). *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things*



done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men..." (2 Cor. 5:10-11).

**8. As Solomon was a great builder of the Lord's temple, even so must we be great builders of the Lord's Temple, the kingdom/ church.** "...The temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem" (1 Chron. 6:10; cf. 2 Chron. 3:1; 5:1). "Go ye the 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 alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matt. 28:19-20).

**9. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge** (Prov. 1:7). At the dedication ceremony of the temple Solomon prayed, "That they may fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers" (1 Kings 8:40,43). To fear God refers to the attitude one must maintain toward Him. We stand in awe and reverence. Such fear demands that we respect him for what he is, love him with all our heart (Luke 10:27) and obey his commands (1 John 5:2).

**10. We must seek God with a perfect heart and a willing mind.** "And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve

him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever" (1 Chron. 28:9). cf. Acts 17:27; 14:17; 15:17; Rom. 120; Jer. 23:24.

**11. Mixed marriages so often lead away from God.** "But king Solomon loved many strange women...For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father" (1 Kings 11:1, 4). God had given specific instructions not to intermarry with the heathen nations about them "For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods" (Deut. 7:3-4). This principle of scripture runs throughout the Bible. When a Christian marries one who is not a Christian, the probability is much more likely that, in the end, there will be two non-Christians than there will be two Christians.

## CONCLUSION

Solomon, the king of Israel in its "golden age of Hebrew history," was the richest and wisest of men. Yet, he threw the seeds of his life to the winds

of disobedience, disloyalty, compromise and idolatry. His harvest was a broken heart. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). Solomon himself summed up the burden and responsibility of all men on the face of the earth. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccl. 12:13-14).

Someday, all humanity will be called to "give an answer" of themselves to God. What will their answer, your answer, be? Remember what Paul said to his audience at Athens? "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31).

We have been given the stewardship of our life. We must answer for ourselves, no one else. Are YOU ready to meet your maker and give account of your life? If not, then NOW is the accepted time. Today is the day of salvation (2 Cor. 6:2).

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the Samaritans (Acts 11:15-16; cf. 2:1-4; 8:14). This indicates that what happened in Acts 2:1-4 and 10:44-46 was highly unusual. In fact, such events are recorded nowhere else in the Scriptures except in these two passages. Those were two unique days: (1) the first day Jews heard and obeyed the Gospel of Christ (Acts 2), and (2) the first day Gentiles heard and obeyed the Gospel of Christ (Acts 10).

Even when Holy Spirit baptism is recorded, it was not said to be for anyone's salvation, or for them to be added to the one body. Beyond Acts, the New Testament repeatedly emphasizes water being involved in man's salvation (Eph. 5:26; Heb. 10:22; 1 Peter 3:20-21; cf. John 3:5).

## WATER BAPTISM HAS ALWAYS COME BEFORE SALVATION

The baptism of Acts 2:38, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, was the water baptism that Jesus had commanded his disciples to administer throughout the world, beginning in Jerusalem (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:47). It was the baptism in water of the Great Commission that caused people to be added to the Lord's church/body (Eph. 1:22-23), not Holy Spirit baptism. There is no Scripture that teaches that anyone was saved as a result of being baptized with the Holy Spirit. When people obeyed the command to "repent and be baptized" in water "for the remission of sins," they were saved and added to the church, the one body of the saved (Acts 2:41,47; Eph. 5:23,26; 1 Peter 3:20-21).

The Great Commission baptism (Mark 16:15-16) was not just only for the apostles to teach and administer, because we read of other people like Philip the evangelist teaching and baptizing people in water (Acts 8). In fact, the very wording of the Great Commission implies that others would be taught to make more disciples and baptize (Matt. 28:18-20). Therefore, it was not the Holy Spirit baptizing all these people into the one body, nor was it Jesus baptizing people with the Holy Spirit so they could be added to His body. It was men baptizing people according to the instructions of the Spirit. That is what Paul has reference to in First Corinthians 12:13 (discussed further below).

Another way we know that the baptism of Acts 2:38 "in the name of Jesus Christ" was water baptism is because it was the same water baptism

in the name of Jesus that Peter would require again in Acts 10: *“Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized? ... And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord...”* (Acts 10:47-48). Yes, there were some unique events happening with Cornelius, such as them receiving miraculous gifts before they were baptized in water, but that was an exception, not the rule. Those special events were necessary to prove to Peter and the Jews that Gentiles could also be baptized in water to be added to Christ’s church (Acts 10:15; 11:18; cf. 2:38-41, 47; 1 Cor. 14:22). Remember, God could make a donkey talk miraculously if He wanted to, but that does not mean the donkey is a child of God on his way to Heaven (Numbers 22:28; cf. 1 Sam. 19:15, 23; John 11:49-53)! Even though Cornelius had received miraculous power, he was not saved and added to the church until he was baptized in water, just as every person is required to do per Jesus’ Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 10:6, 35, 47, 48; cf. 2:38-41; 8:35-39; 9:6, 18-19; 16:15, 32-33; 18:8; 19:5; 22:16). Miraculous gifts were separate from salvation in Acts 8 and 19, and they were separate from salvation in Acts 10 also.

God does not have one plan of salvation for the Jews and a different plan for the Gentiles. In fact, Peter said so to Cornelius: *“...God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him”* (Acts 10:34-35). Cornelius feared God, then worked righteousness to be accepted by God when he was baptized in water for the remission of his sins (Acts 10:48; cf. 2:38-41). It was at that instant, and not before, that he was added to the one body of the saved.

Peter said that one cannot be in God’s favor (accepted) until he works the righteous commands of God to be saved (cf. Psalm 119:172). These are not the same kinds of works under consideration in Ephesians 2:8-9, in which Paul is dealing with meritorious works, or, more specifically, works of the Law of Moses (see Eph. 2:10-19; Rom. 2:17; Gal. 2:15-19). **Nobody can earn salvation, but nobody receives salvation without obeying what God said to receive salvation.** God, by grace, saves when man, by faith, obeys (Matt. 7:21; Acts 2:38-41; Rom. 6:16-18; Heb. 5:9; 1 Peter 1:22).

The consistent form of baptism throughout the New Testament is water baptism, not Holy Spirit baptism. Remember, there is only “one baptism” (Eph. 4:5).

Paul’s language in First Corinthians 12:13 sounds like Galatians 3:26-28, so what kind of baptism is discussed in Galatians 3? Paul was discussing “how” and “when” people become children of God (by obedient faith through baptism into Christ). Which baptism causes one to become a child of God? To become a child of God, one must be born again, born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5). Being born of water and of the Spirit is water baptism, that is, according to the “instructions” of the Spirit, the Word of God (John 6:63; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:22-25). James said that God *“begat us with the Word of truth”* (James 1:18; cf. 1:21). Peter said we are born of the incorruptible seed, the Word of God (1 Peter 1:22-25). Jesus Himself, just three chapters after John 3:5 said, *“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life”* (John 6:63). So Jesus equated the word “spirit” with His Words, and He said His Words “quicken” (give new life, when one is born again). Being born of water and of the Spirit is being born of water baptism via the Word of Jesus (cf. John 3:5; 6:63; Mark 16:16; 1 Cor. 14:37; Eph. 5:26).

Being “born of water” to “enter the kingdom of God” (John 3:5) is also described as being “washed...in the name of Jesus” to “inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. 6:9-11). Both passages are referring to the same requirement to enter the kingdom. Therefore, the birth of water in John 3:5 is a washing, not a natural birth from a mother’s womb. It is the “washing of water” for sanctification and spiritual cleansing mentioned in Ephesians 5:26 and Hebrews 10:22. It is water baptism to *“wash away thy sins.”* It is in water baptism that one contacts the blood of Christ (Acts 22:16; cf. Matt. 26:28; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:11-13; Rev. 1:5).

The baptism “into Christ” of Galatians 3:27 is the same baptism “into Jesus Christ” that Paul referenced in Romans 6:3. He said it is a burial that causes one to be raised from the water to walk in *“newness of life”* (v.4). Who has new life? One who has been

born of water (through the Word) has new life (John 3:5; 6:63)! The one with new life is the one who has just entered “into Christ” by water baptism and is “a new creature.” *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature...”* (2 Cor. 5:17).

What Jesus called being “born of water and of the Spirit” is what Paul called the “washing of regeneration,” which literally means the “washing of rebirth” (per the teachings of the Spirit — Titus 3:5; cf. John 3:5). When one demonstrates obedient faith by being baptized (in water) “into Christ,” he has been reborn, becoming a new child of God. This is exactly what Paul was describing in Galatians 3:26-28. This must also be the type of baptism mentioned in First Corinthians 12:13, because the language is so similar to Galatians 3, and being “baptized into Christ” equals being “baptized into the one body” of Christ (Gal. 3:27; 1 Cor. 12:13; cf. Eph. 5:23; 2 Tim. 2:10).

Holy Spirit baptism was a “promise” for a select few, but water baptism in the name of Christ (Great Commission baptism) is a “command” for all humanity to obey. In water baptism one is saved (1 Peter 3:20-21), but one cannot be saved while being outside the one body of the saved (Eph. 5:23). One’s sins are washed away by water baptism (Acts 22:16), he is spiritually cleansed by “the washing of water,” and since his sins are remitted/forgiven, the Lord adds him to His church (Acts 2:38-41; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 5:26).

With that in mind, it can be logically proven that the baptism of First Corinthians 12:13 must be water baptism. Two things that are equal to the same thing, are equal to each other. Stated another way: If A = C, and B = C, then A = B. If water baptism equals salvation (1 Peter 3:20-21), and being added to Christ’s church equals salvation (Eph. 5:23), then being baptized in water equals being added to Christ’s church. Therefore, the phrase “baptized into one body” in First Corinthians 12:13 is referring to water baptism by the instructions of the Spirit, who guided men of the first century A.D. into all Truth (John 16:13).

## THERE IS ONLY ONE BAPTISM — NOT TWO

Paul mentioned “one Spirit” and



“one body” in First Corinthians 12:13. The epistle to the Ephesians lists “seven ones,” also telling us there is one Spirit and one body, but it says there is only “one baptism” (Eph. 4:5). It further explains that the one baptism is the washing of water for sanctification and spiritual cleansing, not Holy Spirit baptism! *“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word”* (Eph. 5:25-26). Most who are advocating Holy Spirit baptism from passages like First Corinthians 12:13 are also telling people that water baptism should still be performed today. In so doing, they are saying there are two baptisms today, when Paul said there is only “one baptism!” One of the easiest ways to detect false teachers is when they say there are two baptisms today, when the Bible plainly says there is only one!

There are several types of baptism found in the Bible, but by the time Paul wrote Ephesians, there was only one left for men on earth — *“the washing of water by the word”* (Eph. 5:26; cf. 4:5). This “one baptism” in water, which is for “every creature” until the end of the world, must be the type of baptism under consideration in First Corinthians 12:13 (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16).

If anyone today is so careless as to claim that the one baptism is Holy Spirit baptism, he has denied what Paul himself taught in Ephesians; he has (1) rejected the sanctification and cleansing that only comes through “the washing of water” (Eph. 5:26); (2) rejected the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20); (3) rejected forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38); (4) rejected the only entrance into the one body of the saved (Acts 2:38-41, 47); (5) rejected the Lord’s plan for saving man (1 Peter 3:20-21); and has thus (6) rejected the Lord Himself (Matt. 7:21-23; Luke 6:46; 1 John 2:3-6; 2 John 9-11).

If all Christians were baptized with the Spirit when saved/added to the body, we would know it! That is not the way it is recorded in the Scriptures, but that is the way some people are interpreting First Corinthians 12:13. If that were the case, as soon as people today became saved, they would do miraculous things like speak in foreign languages they had never studied! (Acts 2:1-11; 10:44-46). That

does not happen, and such a doctrine does not harmonize with the Scriptures. As already stated, even when people received miraculous gifts, they were not directly tied to salvation; nor were such gifts received at the exact same time as receiving salvation in the body of Christ, so that interpretation of First Corinthians 12:13 is erroneous.

Being baptized with the Spirit involved receiving miraculous power (Acts 1:4-8; 10:44-47; 11:15-16) that was only available for a temporary period of time during the first century A.D. (Zech. 13:1-3; 1 Cor. 13:8-12; Eph. 4:7-16). Since Holy Spirit baptism has ended, and there are no more apostles to lay hands on people, there is no way for anyone to receive miraculous power today (Acts 1:22; 8:18; 2 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:5; 5:26)! Miracles fulfilled their purpose in revealing and confirming God’s Word (John 3:2; Mark 16:20; Acts 2:22; Heb. 2:3-4), and Holy Spirit baptism was a part of that temporary, miraculous system of revelation that has now been replaced by the perfect system of revelation, the complete canon of Scriptures, the Holy Bible (1 Cor. 13:8-12).

By the way, water baptism cannot be the same as “being baptized with the Holy Ghost.” Those two types of baptism did not happen simultaneously in the Scriptures, and they had completely different purposes and administrators. In Matthew 3:11, John makes it clear that being baptized with the Holy Ghost differs from being baptized in water: *“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.”* Jesus also made this distinction, implying that when the apostles would be baptized with the Holy Ghost, there would be no water involved: *“For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence”* (Acts 1:5), so, water baptism and being baptized with the Holy Ghost are not the same.

#### THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS NOT THE ADMINISTRATOR OF ANY BAPTISM

Paul could not have meant that all Christians are literally “baptized by the Holy Spirit,” because the Holy Spirit was not the actual administrator

of any kind of baptism. Christ was the administrator of Holy Spirit baptism. John said, *“...he [Jesus] shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost...”* (Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16; 24:49; John 1:33; cf. Acts 2:17). Jesus did so by the authority of God the Father (John 14:16, 26, 28; 15:26; Acts 2:33). If men were supposed to be the administrators of Holy Spirit baptism, how could any man even begin to baptize someone with the Holy Spirit? We do not have such power, but we do have power and authority from Christ to baptize penitent believers in water for the forgiveness of their sins (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:38; 8:36-39). Men are the administrators of Great Commission baptism, which is for all men to obey in every generation, until the end of the world (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16). The phrase “baptized WITH the Holy Ghost” is used in Acts 1:5 and 11:16, but nobody was literally baptized BY the Holy Spirit, as if the Spirit Himself were the administrator; so First Corinthians 12:13 must mean something other than a baptism being literally performed by the Spirit Himself.

#### BAPTIZED ACCORDING TO THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE SPIRIT

So, what DOES Paul mean when he says, *“by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body”*? The Bible is its own best commentary, therefore, noticing similar passages will help us understand. For example, there is a similar passage in Ephesians: *“That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word”* (Eph. 5:26). The prepositional phrase “by the Word” in Ephesians 5:26 is like “by one Spirit” in First Corinthians 12:13, with both passages using the same Greek preposition. The phrase means “by (or through) the instructions of the Word,” or “by the instructions of the Spirit.” Through the revealing work of the Spirit, men learned they needed to be “washed in water” to be saved and added to the Lord’s one body. A similar phrase is also used in Hebrews 10:8: “by the law.” The Hebrews writer was referring to animal sacrifices which were “offered by the law.” What did he mean by that? Was the Law of Moses literally offering animal sacrifices, or were people offering animal sacrifices by the instructions of the law? Obviously, the

phrase “by the law” means “by the instructions of the law.” The same phrase is used the same way in Hebrews 9:22, meaning “by the instructions, or teaching, of the law.”

Regarding Ephesians 5:26, was the Word of God literally grabbing people and immersing them in water, or were people being baptized “by the instructions of the Word?” Obviously, the phrase “by the Word” means “by the instructions of the word,” and “by one Spirit” means “by the instructions of the Spirit” are we all baptized [in water] into one body. It’s no coincidence Ephesians 5:25-26 sounds like First Corinthians 12:13. They both mention the church/body, and both mention baptism, but Ephesians makes it clear that the baptism under consideration is “the washing of water,” not being baptized with the Holy Spirit!

Yes, First Corinthians 12:13 is in the context of miraculous gifts, but what was the purpose of those gifts — to entertain and show off, or to teach people the Word of God and confirm that the teachings had come from God? Paul’s emphasis in First Corinthians 14 was that such gifts were to be used in a way that taught, edified, instructed — not in a way that was nonsensical or sensational. No doubt the Holy Spirit spoke through Paul, an inspired apostle, when he first came to Corinth, teaching the Corinthians about Christ and how to be baptized into the one body of the saved (Acts 18:8). Keep that in mind when studying First Corinthians 12:13. Remember, the role of the Holy Spirit in man’s salvation was to reveal and confirm God’s Word to teach people how to get to Heaven, not to be busy baptizing every believer on earth until the end of time! (Matt. 28:18-20; John 16:13; Acts 10:38; 1 Cor. 2:9-13; Heb. 2:3-4).

### CONCLUSION

The baptism of First Corinthians 12:13 cannot be Holy Spirit baptism because:

- That interpretation would contradict inspired conversion accounts (Acts 8, 19, etc.).
- A very select few received Holy Spirit baptism — not “all” Christians.
- The duty to preach and baptize all nations was given to men, not to Jesus or the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke

24:47; cf. 1 Cor. 12:13).

- Great Commission baptism is water baptism administered by men for the remission of sins, the entrance into the body of Christ (Luke 24:47; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38-41, 47; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:20-21; Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 5:23, 26).
- Water baptism equals salvation, and being added to Christ’s one body equals salvation, therefore, water baptism equals being added to the one body/church (1 Peter 3:20-21; Eph. 5:23).
- There is no Scripture teaching that anyone was saved when he/she was baptized with the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit was not the administrator when people were “baptized with the Holy Ghost” during the temporary miraculous period; the Spirit was/is not the administrator of water baptism; and the Spirit was never said to be the administrator of any kind of baptism.
- Paul’s language in First Corinthians 12:13 is like Galatians 3:26-28, which was obviously referring to water baptism, when one is born of water and of the Spirit to become a child of God (John 3:5; cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Titus 3:5).
- There is only one type of baptism today, not two — it is “the washing of water” for sanctification and cleansing, by the instructions of the Word (Eph. 4:5; 5:25-26).
- The phrase “by one Spirit” is like “by the Word” or “by the law,” which means, “by the instructions of the Spirit” (cf. Eph. 5:26; Heb. 9:22; 10:8).
- Ephesians 5:25-26 sounds like First Corinthians 12:13, mentioning the church and baptism, but Ephesians makes it clear that the baptism under consideration is “the washing of water,” not being baptized with the Holy Spirit.
- The role of the Holy Spirit in man’s salvation was to reveal and confirm God’s Word, not to be busy baptizing every person on earth until the end of time.
- All the confusion about First Corinthians 12:13 is removed by “rightly dividing the Word” and studying how the rest of the Bible harmonizes with this verse. Fanciful interpretations that do not

harmonize with the rest of the Bible must be rejected.

Water baptism for the forgiveness of sins is the “one baptism” of the Great Commission that will last until the end of the world. Let us all be thankful that the penitent believer, willing to confess his faith in Christ to men, can be immersed in water, by the instructions of the Spirit, to be added to the one body of the saved! (1 Cor. 12:13; cf. Matt. 10:32; Acts 2:38-41, 47; 8:35-39; 17:30).

PO Box 759

Baker, FL 32531

jasonsbibleblog.com

## CONTRIBUTIONS

|                                   |             |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Crandull C/C,                     |             |
| Shady Valley, TN .....            | \$1,500     |
| Anonymous.....                    | \$150       |
| Midway C/C,                       |             |
| Murfreesboro, TN.....             | \$100       |
| Garry & Susan Truitt.....         | \$50        |
| Calvin & Oralee Towell .....      | \$50        |
| Shirley Mae Blair .....           | \$50        |
| Chuck & Nancy Verkist.....        | \$50        |
| Baker C/C, Baker, FL.....         | \$25        |
| Anonymous.....                    | \$325       |
| Dan Huffines.....                 | \$50        |
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| Ed Waggoner .....                 | \$100       |
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# LESSONS LEARNED TOO LATE

Marvin Weir

People journey through this world as if it is the only journey they will ever make. They concern themselves with every imaginable earthly matter while ignoring the passionate plea of the Bible to seek *“first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness”* (Matt. 6:33). If people choose to set their minds on the things of this earth, they will not be prepared for life after death.

Paul realized the danger of worldly influence and pleaded with the brethren at Colosse in saying, *“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory”* (3:1-4). Immediately after death, the majority of people will learn the most important lesson of life, but it will be too late to benefit their soul’s eternal destiny!

Let us learn while it is today (2 Cor. 6:2) from the Biblical account of the rich man and Lazarus. It cannot be made more clear that in eternity some people’s situations will be reversed from what they were in this life!

**Earthly things are not more important than spiritual things!** The rich man, while on earth, had no material needs and evidently could supply all of his wants. His clothing of *“purple and fine linen”* (Luke 16:19) suggests he be compared to royalty. Kings many times wore purple colors, but the common man would not have access to such clothing. The craftsmen of Tyre were known for making a durable purple dye from a certain shell, and due to its cost, it could be afforded only by royalty and the very rich. The Bible stresses that the rich man fared *“sumptuously every day”* (v.19). Basking in his own comfort, the rich man seemed to be indifferent to the needs of Lazarus. Not a day passed that the rich man could not indulge in the luxurious and costly items the world had to offer. This man wanted for nothing or so he thought! The Laodiceans could have told the rich man that there was a fatal flaw in his thinking. To those who trusted in themselves John wrote: *“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods,*

*and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked”* (Rev. 3:17). Woe to the person who ignores what is truly important and does not prepare for eternity!

The beggar named Lazarus lives a life of pain and poverty. His body is covered with sores, but the rich man is not the least bit concerned. Sadly, the only attention given to the beggar was by the dogs who *“...came and licked his sores”* (Luke 16:21). Lazarus longed *“...to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man’s table...”* (v.21) as hunger gnawed at his stomach.

The truth of this matter is that the rich man could have easily seen to the needs of the beggar, but he was selfish and lacked compassion for his fellow man. The sad plight of Lazarus meant nothing to the rich man as he lived his life care-free and extravagantly every day.

Eventually, the rich man dies and is buried. One can only wonder how extravagant his funeral was. The elite of the day surely attended the funeral of the rich man to pay their condolences. Can you imagine the impressive eulogy that must have been delivered in his honor?

Nothing is mentioned in the Bible about the burial of Lazarus. If there was any type of funeral service for the beggar, it surely would have been insignificant in comparison to the funeral for the rich man. Who is going to miss one less beggar who in life laid at someone’s gate?

**Preparation for Heaven must be made while on earth!** Death sheds an abundance of light on things and puts them in their true perspective. In a heartbeat Lazarus and the rich man’s situation was reversed in eternity. The rich man’s fine burial on earth is no consolation to him in *“torments”* (Luke 16:23). Now, it does not matter what he possessed while on earth. For the living, the Scriptures still warn, *“Take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth”* (Luke 12:15). It does matter now to the rich man that he did not lay up for himself *“treasures in heaven”* (Luke 6:20-21). His moment of pleasure while on earth,

now seems so insignificant and brief in comparison to the agony he will endure for an eternity.

Lazarus is now in complete comfort in Abraham’s bosom. His every need is now abundantly supplied. The pain and sorrow he suffered on earth, now forever disappears as he basks in heavenly comfort. H. Leo Boles, in his commentary on Luke, makes these worthwhile comments on the life of the rich man and the beggar. He says: *“It is most deplorable that some commentators have fitted this account into their notions of some new social order, in which wealth is evil in itself, and poverty good. The rich man was not punished for being wealthy, but for being devoid of all sense of humanity; nor was Lazarus rewarded for being poor.”*

**To pray after death is to pray too late!** The rich man now petitions Abraham for relief but to no avail. The concept of a so-called “purgatory” is a figment of man’s imagination as there are no more opportunities to petition God after death. The rich man did not want to see Lazarus while living on earth, but now he would delight having him come to his aid (Luke 16:24). Abraham reminds the rich man that things are now the opposite of what they once were and that the *“great gulf”* prevents one from crossing from torments to paradise (vs.25-26).

The rich man petitions Abraham in behalf of his five brothers who are alive on earth. He is now terribly concerned that they be warned about this horrible place. He does not desire that they follow his footsteps into eternal torment. People have said when discussing religion, *“If it was good enough for my mother and father, it is good enough for me.”* If only mothers and fathers could speak after having passed from this life!

The rich man’s request is refused as it is declared that *“they have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them”* (Luke 16:29). The cry was, *“But if one go to them from the dead, they will repent”* (v.30). That is Not so (v.31)! By the way, Christ was raised from the dead and yet His Word is still rejected by most people?

484 CR 44700  
Blossom, TX 75416



# HARVEST OF SOULS

“During the month of May our preachers in Africa reported 439 baptisms. Many of these baptisms came from the Gospel meetings that are currently going on while our schools are on break. Last Sunday the schools in Malawi reported 47 baptisms during the past week. One area in Malawi the brethren at a congregation that was started three years ago by our preacher students started having problems with the chief of that village. The chief was baptized but later he decided to take a second wife. After much study with him he was withdrawn from by the church. As chief he had given the land where they built the church building. Now he told the brethren to move off the land or pay him \$2,039 for the land. We appreciate these good brethren willing to stand for the truth even if they lose their church building. I am asked sometimes how strong the African brethren are and do they remain faithful when problems arise. How many congregations in the USA would withdraw fellowship from the Mayor of their city for living in adultery? Even at the threat of losing their church building, and still stand for the truth? The brethren in Malawi are working on printing 200,000 Gospel tracts for us before our August trip. Also in Zambia they are printing 100,000 tracts. We are still working on the \$50,000 for Bibles in African languages we need about \$10,000 more to reach our goal. We have some building projects currently going on. One new church building in Zambia is ready for the roof. We have a staff house in Bomet, Kenya, almost finished and another staff house in Malawi ready to start the foundation. We just finished drilling another needed well in Malawi at a cost

of \$5,000. We appreciate our supporters. Please keep our work in your prayers and help us as you can with these projects. Thousands of souls are being brought to the Lord each year through the mission efforts of IBTM (International Bible Teaching Ministries).”

*Ronald D. Gilbert — Director  
rdg@ibtministries.org  
ibtministries.org*

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Editor: **Garland M. Robinson** — [seektheoldpaths.com](http://seektheoldpaths.com)



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