

The “Baptism in the Spirit” or “New Birth” Has Continued without change since Pentecost

written by Alfred Persson | June 10, 2023



The “Baptism in the Spirit” or “New Birth” is the same today as on the Day of Pentecost

On the day of Pentecost two separate groups received the **Baptism in the Spirit**, numbering 120 (Ac. 1:15; 2:1-4) and 3,000 (Ac. 2:38-41).

The First Group (Ac. 1:15-22; 2:1-4) were followers of Jesus from the days of John the Baptist to His resurrection (Ac. 1:21-22). A sound from heaven like rushing wind filled the house, and tongues of fire sat upon each of their heads and they spoke in languages of Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Cyrene, and Rome (Acts. 2:8-10).

The Holy Spirit filled (Ac. 2:4) their spirit (Rom. 8:5-16), God breathing into their souls the breath of lives (Gen. 2:7), they became “new creatures” (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15) risen in Christ (Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12), born “from above” (John 3:7-8; 1 Pet. 1:3) .The “washing of regeneration and renewing” (Tit. 3:5) gave birth to their “inner man” (Eph. 3:16; Col. 3:10). They became partakers of divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4) passing from death into life (John 5:21, 24-26).

Only their soul was made alive, all of this was Spirit to spirit (Rom. 8:5-16) because our Holy God cannot abide with sin and touches no unclean thing (Rom. 7:18; 8:7-13). The flesh must wait for the resurrection yet future (1 Cor. 15:12, 51-55; Rev. 20:5).

Of these 120 unique followers of Christ only the Twelve Apostles did

signs and wonders (Ac. 2:42-43).

When the Second Group received the Holy Spirit (Ac. 2:38-39) there was no sound from heaven like a rushing wind. Tongues of fire did not rest upon their heads. They did not speak foreign languages.

Precisely as the Holy Spirit filled the 120, so did He the 3,000 just as Peter promised (Ac. 2:38; Rom. 8:5-16). God breathed into their souls the breath of lives (Gen. 2:7), they became “new creatures” (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15) risen in Christ (Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12), born “from above” (John 3:7-8; 1 Pet. 1:3). The “washing of regeneration and renewing” (Tit. 3:5) gave birth to their “inner man” (Eph. 3:16; Col. 3:10). They became partakers of divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4) passing from death into life (John 5:21, 24-26).

Confirming the 3,000 saved that day did not manifest revelatory gifts is the fact these were so uncommon they were deemed a “sign from God” of something new (Acts 10:44-47; 15:7-8). God also employed this sign to confirm salvation is only by public confession Jesus is LORD (Acts 19:1-7; 4:12). That this was a special group of Jews who received the revelatory gifts is evident by it being specially noted these were “Twelve” in number (Acts 19:7), clearly implying they were part of this exclusive group of Jews who would establish the Church (1 Cor. 12:28). “Salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22)

The “outward physical evidence” the 3,000 were filled with the Holy Spirit was their changed heart and mind towards God and His Truth, and love for His people (Acts. 2:42-47 Compare 1 Pet. 1:22-23).

That the “outward physical evidence” was the SAME for BOTH the 120 and 3,000 organically follows from it being a function of “the One Body of Christ”, “the One Spirit who regenerates”, “the One Faith all belong to”, “the One Baptism common to every believer”. Every believer is baptized in the Holy Spirit of God whether they “feel” Him or not.

Just as the “soul” cannot be “physically felt”, neither can the soul’s regeneration into a new creature be “physically felt”, it happens in the dimension of the spirit senses cannot sense. That is why Scripture is silent about “physical sensations in body or brain” as though any could indicate when the Holy Spirit is working. *They do not exist.*

Because this radical change in the “spirit in the machine” may cause the brain produce electromagnetic pulses or an Adrenaline/Endorphin cocktail causing experiences, some mistake those as caused by the Holy Spirit. But that is like “putting the cart before the horse”.

The regeneration of the human soul into a “new creature” can only be *spiritually discerned* (1 Cor. 2:14) and logically inferred from many lines of evidence in the Holy Scriptures.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal. 5:22-23)

NKJ; Eph. 5:8-10; Mt. 7:16-18).

Unless God specially reveal the experience of the new birth nothing will be “felt” as the Holy Spirit communicates to the human spirit Divine Nature, quickening it with eternal life. Then one is “born again”, “born from above” (γεννηθῆ ἄνωθεν). What formerly was like “a shade” is now a “new creature in Christ” born of the regenerative power of the Holy Spirit. This new reality can only be spiritually discerned, the changes in personality and perception are clearly evident. Now they “KNOW” God is their Father! Bible Truth that formerly was obscure is now wonderfully illuminated. The beauty and necessity of Christ’s sacrifice, the Incarnation of God the Son now understood beyond natural understanding.

To prove this conclusion we must see the same evidence of the “New Birth” in the 120 who received special empowerment and the 3,000 saved who did not. Then compare that with what happens today in Christian churches throughout the earth.

Both the 120 and 3000 show “holy fear” at the signs done by the Twelve Apostles, and BOTH manifest the Holy Spirit is in them by their devotion to God’s Truth and His people:

43 Then fear came upon EVERY soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

*44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,
45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.*

46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,

47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:43-47 NKJ)

The “outward physical evidence” they were baptized in the Spirit was in their changed perception, their love for God, His Truth, and His children. Being baptized in the Spirit, the “washing of regeneration” is the SAME for every born from above believer from the Day of Pentecost until today:

4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;

5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism;

6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. (Eph. 4:4-6 NKJ)

The one Spirit Personally indwells every member of the body of Christ, BUT to “each one” was given “the grace” (ἡ χάρις) to accomplish the work God appointed they do (Eph. 2:10):

But unto each one of us was the grace (ἡ χάρις) given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (Eph. 4:7 ASV)

The church receives gifts (Eph. 4:10-13) according to God's will (Eph. 4:7; 1 Cor. 12:11), but the One Spirit Personally indwells every member of the church equally so all are "the children of God".

The 120 unique followers of Christ who received special grace to establish Christianity while the New Testament was still being written, were precisely like the 3000 born from above on that day. Never is it said they were superior in any way, to the 3,000 saved that day. Therefore, every born-again believer in Christ is just as much a child of God, as the apostles and prophets who founded the Church.

Today's "born again experience" is the exactly the same believers experienced on the Day of Pentecost, the time of the maximum manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit. All perceive they are changed, loving God, His Truth and His People like never before.

According to Romans 8:5-16 the Holy Spirit bypasses carnal nature and communes directly with the human spirit, bypassing the flesh entirely. Therefore, everything is beyond physical sensory detection. Without special revelation by God, the "new birth" cannot be physically experienced. We can only spiritually discern the reality of our translation from death into life by love for God as our Father (Rom. 8:15-16), God's Truth and God's people (John 13:35; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; 1 Pet. 1:22)

As it is "Spirit to spirit" communion, the flesh is bypassed entirely:

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: (Rom. 8:16 KJV)

This "bearing witness" isn't to body or brain, it is to the human spirit and so manifests itself as conscience:

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor. 2:14 KJV)

I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, (Rom. 9:1 NKJ)

The realm of the spirit is beyond physical senses (1 Cor. 2:13-14). God speaks to us "face to face" through our conscience (Rom. 9:1) as we read the Word of God the Bible—the "sword of the Spirit" (Heb. 4:12):

12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the

heart.

13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. (Heb. 4:12-13 NKJ)

27 “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

28 “And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. (Jn. 10:27-28 NKJ)

Therefore, no born-again Christian is a “second class citizen” because the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit were reserved for the Twelve Apostles and founding prophets (Acts 1:1-5; 21-22), and not given to them.

If anyone still feels like a foreigner among His people, a “dry tree”, hear the Word of the LORD:

3 Let no foreigner who is bound to the LORD say, “The LORD will surely exclude me from his people.” And let no eunuch complain, “I am only a dry tree.”

4 For this is what the LORD says: “To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant—

5 to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will endure forever.

6 And foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant—

7 these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.”

8 The Sovereign LORD declares— he who gathers the exiles of Israel: “I will gather still others to them besides those already gathered.” (Isa. 56:3-8 NIV)

END NOTE

It is alleged I am a “Cessationist” because I never experienced a Pentecostal Church service. That is not correct. I was baptized in Bethany Christian, a four-square “full gospel” Pentecostal Church. “We can’t throw the Baby out with the Bathwater” is what I often said when everyone could discern a “tongues and prophecy” was “of the flesh” and not “of the Spirit.”

Jesus’ and His Apostles miracles are impeccable, modern “manifestations” are not. The facts show *their miracles have not continued in churches today.*

It is written:

“We ought to obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29 NKJ)

God commands we “test the spirits”

*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits, whether they are of God**; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. (1 Jn. 4:1 NKJ)*

We are commanded to “test whether the supernatural in church is of God”, and “hold fast what is good” abstaining from every form of evil:

21 Test all things; hold fast what is good.

22 Abstain from every form of evil. (1 Thess. 5:21-22 NKJ)

God commands all “Examine yourselves” to be certain spiritual experiences are “in the faith”:

Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. (2 Cor. 13:5 NKJ)

A Personal Testimony of “Testing myself”:

As a Pentecostal I believed the Holy Spirit would respond to questions with “a leading” that was either “yes” or “no”. I believed that 100% for a couple of years.

Over time it became clear I often went in circles accomplishing nothing for Christ. I decided to “test” the “leading”, I walked to the corner and asked “should I turn left or right?” The “leading” indicated “turn right”, but I turned “left”. As I walked I justified turning left was the only correct thing to do, and as I did this the “leading” reassured me “you are correct!”

That’s when I realized it was all experiential self-delusion, a fabrication of my mind. At first I was heartbroken as if I lost a companion.

The despair was soon replaced by a sense of liberation! What a slave I was! How many times did it “lead me to nowhere without the resources even to live!” (comp. Isa. 8:21). As the “brain fog” lifted, my critical thinking skills returned restoring autonomy.

“Oh, what a feeling! Free at last, Free at last! Freedom! Nothing can replace it!”

As I evaluated the “fact pattern” of modern “Pentecostalism” their claim of “continuity with NT Church” became impossible. Whatever is occurring among Pentecostalism today is “something different” than what was in the New Testament Church.

That is why I am a “Cessationist.” In 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 Paul

discusses the cessation of the revelatory gifts because they were already ceasing everywhere in the Church, and he had to reassure them God still loved them (1 Cor. 1:4-9). The Reader must factor in the fact Paul believed Christ could return in the 1st century, so the time of their cessation would be seen as “near” to that date. Because “tongues prophecy knowledge” were “partial revelation” it logically follows they would end as the complete revelation of God appears with Christ’s second coming.

The Bible alone is 100% reliable and true, experiences are subjective and possibly self-deception (Jer. 17:9; 23:26; Jas. 1:26-27).

“Extraordinary claims require extraordinary proof”-Carl Sagan, “The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark,” Carl Sagan.

Pentecostals have failed to provide extraordinary proof. The burden of proof is on Pentecostals.

The supernatural events in churches today must be authenticated by rigorous investigation and examination of their “fact-pattern” by a team of experts as truly “supernatural”.

Moreover, Lovers of God’s Truth must insist the “fact pattern” is 100% consistent with scriptural data and teaching.

For example, it is impossible the “fallible prophecy” appearing in Pentecostal churches today is the same “word of the Lord” spoken in the Bible because Scripture declares “fallible prophecy” is “the thing which the LORD has not spoken.”

21 “And if you say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?’—

22 “when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him. (Deut. 18:21-22 NKJ)

So why haven’t Pentecostal churches authenticated the supernatural in their churches?

Without it, Bible Believers cannot accept their claims as true.

Was the NT Church like a Modern Pentecostal Church?

Paul’s Teaching about Tongues Ceasing implies they were already ceasing
Have we not prophesied in your Name?

Does 1 Corinthians 1:7 and 1 Corinthians 13:10 prove Continuance of the Revelatory Gifts

The Coming False Christ and His Followers Revealed