

*“Have Ye Received The Holy Ghost  
Since Ye Believed?”*

By George C. Clark

*“Paul, having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus. And finding certain disciples, he*



*said unto them, ‘Have ye received the holy Ghost since ye believed?’ And they said unto him, ‘We have not so much as heard whether there be any holy Ghost.’ And he said unto them, ‘Unto what then were ye baptized?’ And they said, ‘Unto John’s baptism.’ 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.’ When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve.”* (Acts 19:1-7)

Paul’s question, “*Have ye received the holy Ghost since ye believed?*”, was asked of a group of Ephesian disciples who had, as shown by the inquiry, “believed”. Not only had they believed, but they had also been baptized with water; yet, according to their own testimony, they had “*not so much as heard whether there be any holy Ghost.*”

What a picture of thousands upon thousands today who have believed in Jesus but who, in reality, have not heard about the holy Ghost!

The principal reason so many followers of Christ now have not yet received the Comforter is the same reason that the twelve Ephesian disciples had not yet received it; that is, they were taught by a man who himself had not yet received the holy Ghost. Namely, “*Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John*” (Acts 18:24-25). Of course, “*when Aquila and Priscilla [a Spirit-filled man and his wife] had heard [him teaching], they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.*” Yes, they explained to Apollos the truth concerning Jesus’ baptism, a truth that is unquestionably needed among multitudes today who have been taught only a form of repentance and water baptism.

There are other examples in the Bible of believers who did not (for a short time) have the holy Ghost. For instance, when “*Philip went down to Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spoke, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voices, came out of many that were possessed with them, and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city.*” Moreover, we are told that “*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. . . . Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the holy Ghost, for as yet it was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then [Peter and John] laid their hands on them, and they received the holy Ghost*” (Acts 8:5-17).

The early saints did not wait until the new believers had grown cold and disheartened because of disappointments and defeats encountered in the

start of their journey, but straightway they brought them into the fullness of the holy Ghost. Oh, that it were so today with all who have believed the message concerning Jesus! God has provided for His children the power to live a life of joy through the holy Ghost. The coming of the holy Ghost into one’s life does not bring a burdensome responsibility to live up to some disagreeable command, as many seem to think; on the contrary, it brings God’s gracious offer for a victorious life here among men. And this life is not only the believer’s privilege, but it is also God’s command (Acts 1:4; 17:30).

Christianity labors under the handicap of what may be called, “the Apollos spirit”, which is a ministry without the knowledge of the truth or power of the holy Ghost. Oh, how we need more workers with the experience that Aquila and Priscilla possessed – a fullness of the Spirit and power of God! And how we need more men like Apollos, who humbly repented when more light was given to him! He became one of Paul’s best helpers, spreading the light of the gospel to others!

#### JOHN THE BAPTIST

According to John’s testimony, the baptism with the holy Ghost is the prime credential of Jesus, proving that he is indeed the Messiah, and we believe what John said. In other words, if Jesus had not bestowed on his followers the baptism of the holy Ghost, John’s testimony concerning him would have fallen to the ground, since his clear declaration was that the Christ would bestow this baptism of the Spirit. Then, whoever it is who administers the baptism of the holy Ghost is the Christ, the Savior of the world. That person is Jesus.

John the Baptist’s ministry was designed to prepare Israel to receive the Christ and his baptism. John baptized with water all Jews who repented, thus

making them candidates for Jesus’ baptism with the holy Spirit. John’s message was this: “*I baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I*

*am not worthy to unloose. He shall baptize you with the holy Ghost and with fire.”* Water baptism was



offered to the Jews with the understanding that it was only a preparation for the baptism of the holy Spirit. Isn't it remarkable that so many have received the testimony of John concerning water baptism, yet at the same time have rejected it with regard to

the baptism of the holy Ghost? For as John administered the one, he promised that Christ would administer the other.

This being true, we can understand why Paul told the twelve Ephesian disciples that they had not actually received John's baptism. If they had, they could not have said, *“We have not so much as heard whether there be any holy Ghost”*, for John's baptism always included the promise of the baptism of the holy Ghost. Paul explained that John baptized with water, *“SAYING unto the people, that they should believe on [that is, receive the baptism of] him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.”* Thus we see that John truly baptized *“in the name of the Lord Jesus”* – the same baptism which Peter preached to the Jews on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38), and the baptism which our Ephesian friends finally were given before they received the holy Ghost.

Now, neither John nor any apostle made a ceremonial form of repeating the name of Jesus while administering water baptism, but they all made it crystal clear that baptism in water was only a token of the baptism of the Spirit which Jesus gave – and still gives to all men who truly repent, Jew or Gentile.

Many today have been spiritually conceived, that is, have had the word of God sown in their hearts, yet they are living in condemnation – condemnation that light has come and they have not walked in it. They know that the Bible teaches that believers should receive the baptism of the holy Ghost, but they have not met God's conditions to

receive it. Why haven't they? Only God can say. But one thing is certain: God will not give them the holy Ghost until they do. Those who have been spiritually conceived, or convicted of sin by the word of God, are required to walk in the light; otherwise, they will live in constant condemnation. *“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”*

**“HAVE YE RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST  
SINCE YE BELIEVED?”**

May I ask you now, *“Have you received the holy Ghost since you believed?”* Our Lord declared, *“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 in him should receive)”* (Jn.7:38-39). The age in which we live is especially the dispensation of the holy Ghost, for just as certainly as Jesus made his advent into the world at Bethlehem, even so, the holy Ghost made its



advent into the world at Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost. Those who rejected the Savior when he was sent into the world lost their souls. Those who reject the holy Spirit which he sent as his Vicar will lose theirs.

**TO ALL WHO OBEY**

The commandment to submit to Jesus' baptism was not given to the first generation of believers alone. Listen to Peter in his great sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38, 39): *“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”* Reader, the phrase, *“all that are afar off”* includes you and me, does it not?

Some consider the baptism of the holy Ghost to be unnecessary. But I must tell you, my friend, that to submit to Jesus' baptism is a commandment of God. And since it is His command, we must be obedient. We read in Acts 5:32, *“And we are his witnesses of these things, and so is also the holy Ghost, which God hath given to them that obey him.”* Now, reader, can't you see that if you haven't yet received the holy Ghost, it is because you have not been obedient? And if you have not been obedient, then you have been disobedient, have you not? And disobedience, as students of the Bible know, *“is as the sin of witchcraft.”*

If the early disciples needed this endowment of power, how much more do the disciples of today? If Mary, the mother of our Lord, had need of this precious gift of God (Acts 1:13-14, 2:1-4), what about you and me, my reader? Education cannot bring this gift to us, though we be eloquent and well-versed in the Scriptures. Apollos is proof enough of that. Neither money nor station are useful in attaining it. Jesus, alone, bestows this blessing. And he bestows it upon all those who *“repent and believe the gospel.”*

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