

## *Live the Crucified Life – Display the Glorified One (Part 2)*

### **‘BAPTISM by FIRE’**

By Averine Pennington, 7- 07-22

***“. . . He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire (Matt. 3:11b).”***

This study is the follow-up to our previous discussion about being ‘Born Again & Walking in the Spirit.’ If you have not yet read Part 1 (posted on this site on 7-05-22), may I suggest that you do so. It will give you a better understanding as we examine the baptism given by Jesus and how it differs from the baptism of John the Baptist.

As a short review from Part 1, may I remind you that with our ‘magnifying glass’ in hand we are looking deeper into ‘heavenly things,’ seeking insight from the Holy Spirit into the mysteries of God. A key verse in our previous study was **1 John 1:8** – “And there are three that bear witness in earth, **the Spirit**, and **the water**, and **the blood**, and these three agree in one.” Part 1 was devoted more to a discussion of the water and the blood. Now, we will examine God’s Word to see what new understanding we may find regarding the Spirit, particularly in regards to BAPTISM. How does this baptism that is given by Jesus help us **‘Live the Crucified Life – Display the Glorified One?’**

Let me just say that what I am writing for you here is not an exhaustive study. Entire books have been written on this subject and there is no way I will be able to answer all of your questions. This overview will hopefully send you into God’s Word seeking a fuller understanding with the Holy Spirit as your teacher. If you are looking for answers, you must ‘seek and you will find’ (**Matt. 7:7**).

Let’s begin by addressing the fact, that Jesus and his disciples also performed water baptisms, just as John the Baptist did (see **John 3:22-24; John 4:1-3**). John had to remind his followers that he himself was not the Christ, but only was sent to prepare the way for Him that was to come. John said, “He [Jesus the Christ, the bridegroom] must increase, but I must decrease (see **John 3:29-30**). The FOCUS OF BAPTISM is now on Christ, the Messiah, whose coming has been formally announced to the world at that momentous occasion when He submitted Himself to be baptized by John to ‘fulfill all righteousness’ (covered in Part 1).

You will find many further references to the continued practice of water baptism unto repentance. In **Acts 2:38** we find Peter admonishing his listeners to ‘repent and be baptized every one of you **IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST** for the remission of sins.’ We have accounts of Philip also baptizing. In **Acts 8:12**, it is said of the Samaritans 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. In **Acts 8:35-40**, we see Philip preaching **JESUS** to the Ethiopian eunuch. Notice also, that AFTER the eunuch BELIEVED with all his heart and **CONFESSED JESUS CHRIST AS THE SON OF GOD**, “he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both INTO THE WATER (pattern of submersion), both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.” In **Acts 10**, we find how Peter was sent unto the Gentile

household of Cornelius. They believed the words Peter preached about Jesus and received the Holy Ghost. Peter commanded they be baptized **IN THE NAME OF THE LORD (Acts 10:47-48)**.

Perhaps one of the most obvious instances of placing the emphasis upon baptism in the name of Jesus Christ is found in **Acts 19:1-7**. Paul the Apostle, having newly arrived in Ephesus, found a group of disciples and asked them, "Have you 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." By this we again see that the baptism of John unto repentance was a foreshadowing of what was to come, a preparing of the way for The Messiah, who Himself was **The WAY** back to the Father (**John 14:6**).

While conducting this study, the expediency of being baptized stood out in many of the recorded accounts. New believers were encouraged to be baptized without delay. In reading **Acts 22:10-16**, we find an account of Paul's conversion after his 'Road to Damascus' experience. After Ananias prayed for Paul to receive his sight the scriptures say, "And **THE SAME HOUR** I looked up upon him. And he said. The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of His mouth. For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. **And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.**" Another instance is found in **Acts 16:29-34**, the account of Paul & Silas sharing the gospel with their jailer and his household. In verse 33 we read, "And he (the jailer) took them (Paul & Silas) **THE SAME HOUR OF THE NIGHT**, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, **STRAIGHTWAY** [without delay]. Even on the Day of Pentecost we read in **Acts 2:41** – "Then they that gladly received his (Peter's) word were baptized and **THE SAME DAY** there were added unto them about three thousand souls. This observation would seem to indicate that BELIEVING and following the Lord in BAPTISM go hand in hand.

I would like to point out a couple of truths that can be found by once again looking at Philip's preaching in Samaria, briefly mentioned above. We find this story in **Acts 8:5-23**. It tells of a man named Simon who was a sorcerer who had bewitched those in the city of Samaria. The scriptures say Simon was in wonder when he beheld the miracles and signs he saw while listening to Philip preach about the kingdom of God. It even says that Simon believed also and was baptized. Beginning in **verse 14** we read, "Now when the apostles which were 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 He was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)** Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money. Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. **Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.** Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."

The first point to consider is that **THE HEART** is very much a part of one's salvation experience. Simon may have witnessed the signs & wonders which gave him the head knowledge, but there had been no real change in his heart. He thought he could buy the power of the Holy Ghost with money! Even today, there are those who may miss heaven by 18 inches, the distance from the head to the heart, because there is no evidence in their lives of a **true change in their heart**. You will know when you have experienced that true change of heart, when you have been born again. As discussed in Part 1, you are never the same again. See **2 Cor. 5:17**, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; **old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new.**" **Romans 8:16** says, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

The second point to look at in this passage is the fact that though the Samaritans had believed and were baptized, **the Holy Ghost had not yet fallen on any of them**. Now, we know that in **Acts 2:38** it says if you repent and are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. This would seem to indicate that the gift of the Holy Ghost is not always received at the exact moment of baptism. In many of the accounts already referenced the Holy Ghost fell immediately, but in this instance it was only evidenced sometime later after the **'laying on of hands'** by Peter and John. In **Acts 19:6**, when Paul was with the group of followers he found in Ephesus, we also see this. "And **when Paul laid his hands upon them**, the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied."

Now, I'm going to throw you another curve ball that lets us know the Holy Spirit cannot be put into a box of our own preconceived notions. Look again at the story of how Peter was used to bring the gift of salvation to the Gentiles. That full account can be found in **Acts 10 through Acts 11:18**. The condensed version of what I would like to point out is this: Peter was at the home of Cornelius, preaching his heart out about Jesus and being the witness that he was called to be . . . and when he got to the part about "through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins," we read in **Acts 10:44**, "While Peter yet spake these words, **the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.**" Doesn't that sound out of order to what it should be in our minds? They haven't yet said we believe, they haven't repented of their sins and confessed Jesus Christ as Lord, they haven't been baptized . . . all they needed was to **hear the words**! But because their hearts were ready to receive the words, the gift was given. Do we not serve an amazing God! Hallelujah!

Folks, everything I've written so far has just been the prologue. Do you want to delve deeper into the heart of the matter? Do you truly want to know what the **Baptism by Fire** is? Are you ready to experience it for yourself? There are many in the midst of the FIRE at this very moment and they will testify that what I tell you is truth. I hope I am able to put down on paper what the Holy Spirit has taught and is even still teaching me. Often, it is difficult to find the proper words to convey 'heavenly things' using earthly vocabulary. Much of what I will share is basic stuff, but some will be recent revelation the Holy Spirit has allowed me to understand as I have prayed and prepared to write this piece. Just this morning, He gave me more insight helping me to connect more dots. Many of you who are Bible scholars and have been walking with the Lord many years, may say, "I already knew that. What's the big deal?" But I feel this study is geared more to new believers in Christ who have limited knowledge of the Holy Spirit and may not have a clue of where to start on their journey of discovery.

Let's go back to the verses shared in Part 1, which I promised to expound upon in Part 2:

**Matt. 3:11-12** – “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:** 12) Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. (See also, **Luke 3:16-17**).

The ‘power from on High’, which is the Holy Spirit, is NOT JUST the gift of the promised Comforter. Please read **John 14** for better understanding. I’ll include some of the words of Jesus here from **John 14:23**: “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and **WE WILL COME UNTO HIM, AND MAKE OUR ABODE WITH HIM.**” Do you think that the Holy Spirit is sent only TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE, that God has taken up residence in you? Do you think once there, He will pull up an easy chair and sit and do nothing? If that is what you think, then why would He be called ‘POWER FROM ON HIGH?’ Of what use is power unless we use it? **POWER HAS PURPOSE!** The Holy Spirit has a job to do in every believer’s life. Are we surrendered enough to let Him do His job? **OR** do we tell Him to sit still in that chair, shut-up, and stay out of sight? You know the attitude I’m talking about . . . “If I need you for anything, I’ll let you know; otherwise, this is my life and I’m the one who makes all the decisions around here.”

The job description for the Holy Spirit is multi-faceted, but for the purpose of this study I will only focus on the **BAPTISM BY FIRE**. As I sought further understanding about a couple of intriguing verses, this is what the Holy Spirit showed me. Here’s the passage found in **Luke 12:49-50**: “I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I if it be **ALREADY KINDLED?** 50) But **I have a baptism to be baptized with;** and how am I straightened till it be accomplished?” These verses were particularly poignant to me personally as I read them in context. They follow the parable Jesus taught his disciples about the lord returning from the wedding and the reward given for the faithful and wise steward as opposed the reward awaiting an unfaithful steward. Read **Luke 12:34-50**. Many of you I’m sure have read my testimony which includes hearing the audible voice of the Lord after being awakened suddenly in the middle of the night. He said to me, **“To whom much is given, much will be required.”** This verse immediately precedes the passage in question.

What do you think the **MUCH GIVEN** in **Luke 12:48** means? Maybe I’m dense, but I always thought it had to do with our inheritance as children of God, our rewards for being faithful. What do you think the **MUCH REQUIRED** means? I had the idea it had to do with how I lived my life. When the time came for me to stand before God and give an account of my stewardship, would I be able to say that I followed Christ to the best of my ability? When I realized what this verse (in context) really means through the interpretation given by the Holy Spirit, suddenly everything made so much more sense to me.

Consider this. We know that when we are born again, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is **THE EARNEST**, the deposit if you will, that in our terminology of today ‘seals the deal’ (**2 Cor. 1:22; 2 Cor. 5:5**). Furthermore, we are **sealed unto the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30)**. My ‘aha moment’ was learning that the Holy Spirit is **THE KINDLING**. It is the flame that gets **THE FIRE** going! The **BAPTISM BY FIRE** is the work done in our lives that brings us to the point of our REDEMPTION, the consummation of the covenant we made when we chose to follow Christ. In other words, we’ve entered into a marriage contract. We have been espoused to our soon to be husband, Jesus Christ. He has made a ‘down payment’ on the deal. At the appointed time He will come to collect His bride and the marriage will be finalized! Another way of putting it is . . . we have accepted our bridegroom’s

proposal by saying, “Yes, **I WILL** marry you.” In the meantime, during our espousal (engagement period), while we await the official ceremony, we are busy about getting prepared for the wedding. There will come a time when we stand before our Bridegroom and say, “**I DO!**” But this is a very special wedding, and the preparation to ready the Bride has some really stringent requirements. Now, it is not through anything the Bride does that makes her ready (see **Eph. 2:4-10**). Once she says, I WILL, the Bridegroom is the one who makes her ready. As this is foundational to our topic, I’m going to include **Eph. 5:25b-27**: “. . . 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, That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” I know you are saying, “What? The context of those verses talks about how husbands and wives should conduct themselves in marriage.” Yes, you are exactly right. Paul used the example of an earthly marriage to help us understand our ‘heavenly marriage.’ He talks of how a husband should love his wife as his own body . . . “For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, **EVEN AS THE LORD THE CHURCH**: For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones (**vs. 29-30**). Paul’s conclusion makes it even more clear in **Eph. 5:32** – “This is **A GREAT MYSTERY**; but I speak concerning Christ and the church.”

If you are still in doubt, read the first part of **Chapter 5 of Ephesians**. In summary, the entire discourse is about learning to walk as ‘children of light’ (The Bride) . . . learning what **TO DO** (walk in love) and what **NOT TO DO** (be not partakers of things that bring the wrath of God on the children of disobedience). I think if you read **vs. 14-17**, it sounds much like **Matt. 25:1-13**, the parable of the 10 virgins (5 wise, 5 foolish). Paul teaches to be ‘not UNWISE but understanding what the will of the Lord is. He tells them to be **FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT** . . . sort of reminds me of “the wise **TOOK OIL** in their vessels with their lamps.”

In trying to collect my thoughts to wrap this all up in a tidy bundle for you, I find it very difficult. The **BAPTISM BY FIRE** is the purification process that we go through as believers so that we may be able to stand in the Holy of Holies beside our Bridegroom and be presented to our Heavenly Father. This process is not for the faint of heart. It requires building on a sure foundation. Read **1 Cor. 3:11-15**. Notice that ‘**THE FIRE** shall try every man’s work of what sort it is.’ It requires entering in to the sufferings of Christ . . . drinking of the same cup (**Matt. 20:22-23**). It requires laying aside our own selfish desires. Are you perhaps one of those who have confined the Holy Spirit to his assigned space in your heart? Please read **Rev. 3:14-22**. I will include a few excerpts here: “**I counsel thee to buy of Me, gold TRIED IN THE FIRE, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear**” . . . “**as many as I love I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and REPENT.**” . . . “**To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne.**”

The **MUCH THAT IS GIVEN** is the measure of oil that will fill us to overflowing. Among all His other functions, that precious oil of the Holy Spirit is the fuel that burns away the dross. We are going through a refining process and I’m sure many of you who have been on your journey with the Lord for a while can testify to all He has brought you through. The **MUCH THAT IS REQUIRED?** . . . OUR ALL! . . . TOTAL SURRENDER! I’ll include here **Rom. 12:1-2** – “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a **LIVING SACRIFICE**, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

There is so much more I would like to share but again, I'm trying to stick to the basic truths. I have just a few more scriptures that I can't possibly leave out. They deal with **LIVING THE CRUCIFIED LIFE & DISPLAYING THE GLORIFIED ONE.**"

Read **1 Peter 1:3-23**. I will provide a few excerpts only: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be **TRIED BY FIRE**, might be found unto **PRAISE**, and **HONOUR**, and **GLORY** at the appearing of Jesus Christ." . . . "Who by Him do believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have **PURIFIED YOUR SOULS** in obeying the truth **THROUGH THE SPIRIT** unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently; Being **BORN AGAIN**, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever."

**Gal. 2:20** – "I am **CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST**; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and **THE LIFE WHICH I NOW LIVE** in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

**2 Thess. 2:13-17** – "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through **sanctification of the Spirit** and **belief of the truth**: Whereunto He called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."

## **HE SHALL BAPTIZE YOU WITH THE HOLY GHOST, AND WITH FIRE**

Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor,  
and gather his wheat into the garner; but  
He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Our God is a consuming fire! (Heb. 12:29)

## **Only two possible outcomes!**

**SAFE** – as part of His harvest that has been gathered into His garner . . . **OR . . .**

**CHAFF** – destined to be burned with unquenchable fire. Which will you choose?

Yours for the Harvest,

Averine

