

## SERMON NOTES OF THE DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMS

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### TITLE: THE DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMS

Introduction:

The doctrine of baptisms is one of the basic teachings of Christ revealed in Hebrews 6:1-2. Notice that it is referred to as the “baptisms” and not “baptism,” which points towards more than one doctrine or teaching of baptism. Let us read some biblical texts regarding baptism.

Let us first turn to John 1:33 & Act. 19:4:

“And John bore witness, saying. ‘I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ “

“Paul said, ‘John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus [Yahushua]’”.

Let us also turn to Matt. 28:19-20 & Col. 2:12 & Gal. 3:27:

“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, teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.”

“...buried with him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

And finally, 1 Cor. 12:13 & Act. 2:38:

For by one Spirit, we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus [Yahushua] Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

This sermon focuses on the following three doctrine of baptisms taken from these biblical texts:

1. The Baptism of John the Baptist (John 1:33; Act. 19:4).
2. The Baptism into the Body of Christ (Matt. 28:19-20; Col. 2:12; Gal. 3:27; 1 Cor. 12:13).
3. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13; Act. 2:38; Luke 3:16).

## 1. The Baptism of John the Baptist

Repentance from dead works of sin is one of the basic teachings of Christ revealed in Heb. 6:1-2. John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins in preparation to the coming One (Mark 1:7). **Repentance** is a **decision** leading to an **action**, which requires us to **change** our **minds** about our **sinful lifestyle**, and desire to turn in the **opposite direction** exercising **faith towards God** (Heb. 6:1). Therefore, **repentance from a sinful lifestyle goes hand in hand with faith toward God (Heb. 6:1; Mark 1:14-15; Act. 2:37-38)**. The baptism of John required 3 important conditions. Firstly, John's baptism was in water into repentance in preparation for the coming One's baptism (Mark 1:4-8). Secondly, John's baptism involved a public confession of sins (Luke 3:10-14). And finally, John's baptism required evidence of a changed life (Matt. 3:7-10; Luke 3:7-9). John refused to baptize the religious leaders of his day because they did not meet any of these 3 conditions, as followers of Christ, we too can also learn from these conditions, if asked to baptize anyone. However, John was also reluctant to baptize Christ for completely different reasons, mainly because he humbly recognised that he was unworthy (Luke 3:16). But John also revealed a greater baptism to follow as he proclaimed:

"I indeed baptize you with water, but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loosen. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Luke 3:16).

The baptism of Christ by John the Baptist is a major event in the life of Christ which is described in the 3 synoptic Gospels of the New Testament. At first glance, it seems that Christ's baptism has no purpose at all. As mentioned before, John's baptism was the baptism of repentance (Matt. 3:11), but Christ was sinless and had no need of repentance. Evident by John's reaction, as he was taken aback at Christ' coming to him because John recognized his own sin and was aware that he, a sinful man in need of repentance himself, was unfit to baptize the spotless Lamb of God (Matt. 3:14). Christ replied that it should be done because "it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15). However, there are several reasons why it was fitting for John to baptize Christ at the beginning of Christ' public ministry. Firstly, Christ was about to embark on His great work, so His baptism is an example for all His disciples of obedience and commitment to the great work ahead, and also it was appropriate that He be recognized publicly by His forerunner. John was the "voice crying in the wilderness" prophesied by Isaiah, calling people to repentance from a sinful lifestyle in preparation for their Messiah (Is. 40:3). The baptism of Christ by John revealed to all, the Messiah, the One they had been waiting for, the Son of God, and the One John proclaimed would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire (Luke 3:16).

Secondly, Christ' baptism also showed that He identified with sinners. His baptism symbolized the sinners' baptism into the righteousness of Christ, dying with Him, buried with Him, and rising free from sin and through the power of the Holy Spirit able to walk in the newness of life (Rom. 6:3-11). Christ' perfect righteousness would fulfil all the requirements of the Law for all sinners who could never hope to do so on their own. Therefore, John's baptism of Christ fulfils all righteousness (Matt. 3:15), and so all who come to Him exchange their sin for His righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21).

Thirdly, Christ' coming to John showed His approval of John's baptism, bearing witness to it, that it was from heaven and approved by God. This would be important in the future when others would begin to doubt John's authority (Luke 20:4).

And finally, the occasion of the public baptism recorded for all future generations the perfect unity of the three-in-one God revealed in glory from heaven (1 John 5:7). The testimony directly from heaven of the Father's pleasure with the Son, and the descending like a dove of the Holy Spirit upon Christ is a beautiful picture of the trinitarian nature of God (Matt. 3:16-17). It also depicts the work of the Father, Son, and Spirit in the salvation of those Christ would save, evident by the Father's love for all sinners to be saved (1 Tim. 2:4), therefore He sent His Son (Christ), to be the propitiation [the atoning sacrifice] for the whole world (1 John 2:2; John 1:29), and the Holy Spirit convicts of sin (John 16:8), and the Father by the Spirit draws all believers to Himself through the Son's sacrifice on the cross (John 6:44-45; 12:32).

The baptism of Christ by John is very significant; however, the baptism of John the Baptist is no longer valid as revealed in Act. 19:1-6. On a trip to Ephesus, the apostle Paul found some disciples there and asked them whether they had received the Holy Spirit when they believed. The men responded that they had never heard of the Holy Spirit, which reveals that these believers were not baptized by the baptism Christ commanded, otherwise they would have heard of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:18-20). The apostle Paul then inquired about their baptism, and when he was informed that these men only knew of the baptism of John, Paul responded by explaining why John's baptism was insufficient. Therefore, John's baptism cannot be the baptism which the Lord commanded people to receive under the gospel (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15). Firstly, John's baptism, though it required repentance, yet it looked forward to the coming One, the Messiah (Christ), for whom John was a forerunner (Matt. 11:10). And secondly, Christ had not yet died when John baptized people, and therefore, the baptism that the Lord Christ commanded looks backward to His death and resurrection as accomplished facts (Mark 10:38-39).

## 2. The Baptism into the Body of Christ

The Baptism into the Body of Christ is a **spiritual baptism performed by the Holy Spirit bringing about the new birth**, 'born of the Spirit' (John 3:5-8), a regenerated work of the Spirit who spiritually baptizes and unites us with Christ as part of His body, which is the Church (1 Cor. 12:13; Heb. 12:22-23; Eph. 1:22-23). In other words, to be united and part of Christ's body refers firstly to being baptised into His death (Rom. 6:3). The death that Christ died was to sin, once for all (Rom. 6:10), and in like manner, those IN CHRIST have also died with Christ to our unregenerated self (what we once were), and by a regenerated work of the Spirit, we have been raised up, made alive unto God through Christ the Lord (Rom. 6:11; Eph. 6:2). Another biblical verse that is very helpful in understanding this union IN CHRIST is 2 Cor. 5:17, "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things have become new." Baptism depicts what happens as a result of our union with Christ or in Christ, which comes with faith, that we have died *to the old things* and *have become a new creation*, or that is to say, raised again with Christ (Eph. 6:2), due to the regenerated work of the Spirit who spiritually baptizes and unites us with Christ as part of His body (1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 6:3-11). The water baptism Christ the Lord commanded to be performed on all disciples reflects this spiritual baptism—baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:18-20). Baptism is performed on young children and even infants by sprinkling water onto their forehead, and is accompanied by name-giving. However, the biblical references to baptism overrules this way of performing baptism, and clearly reveals that baptism is to be performed on believers (Mark 16:16). But it is possible for young children who believe to be baptized (Mark 9:37, 42; 10:14-15; 16:16).

## The Biblical Definition of Baptism:

Baptism in the Bible expresses an identification with Christ's death and resurrection—the old self was crucified with Christ (through the waters of death and buried, symbolic to being immersed in water), and now followers of Christ have risen (out of the water) with Him in newness of life, united in Christ (Rom. 6:3-11; Gal. 3:27). Baptism comes from the Greek word "baptizo," which means immersion, which is the act of dipping something in a substance, completely covering it. The earth itself was submerged in the great flood, which symbolized the first step to redeeming it. The baptism of John the Baptist was also by immersion. Therefore, it is so important to follow the biblical definition of baptism. All followers of Christ must be baptized by immersion, and not merely by sprinkling of water.

The Baptism into the Body of Christ like the Baptism of John, also requires 3 important conditions. Firstly, before the baptism into Christ's body we must first hear the gospel. The gospel is the good news of the kingdom of God (Mark 1:17). This is a message which refers to the King (who is Christ, the Lord), and His rule in heaven and earth particularly over His redeemed people (Matt. 28:18-20), which has been accomplished by God's salvation work through Christ's perfect sinless life, from His birth to His perfect sacrifice to suffer death on the cross on behalf of all who would believe (2 Cor. 5:21), and His glorious resurrection from the dead for our justification (Rom. 4:25), and ascension in a cloud into heaven, from where He shall return as a Judge over all (Act. 1:9-11; Matt. 24:30; 26:64), and establish the future visible eternal kingdom of God to come (Matt. 6:10; 25:31-46; Rev. 21:1-8).

Secondly, having heard the gospel, the next condition is to respond in genuine repentance which goes hand in hand with faith toward God through the gospel of the kingdom of God (Mark 1:14-15; Act. 2:37-38), which should as soon as possible follow onto baptism in water by immersion (Act. 8:25-39; 10:47-48; 16:14-15). For water baptism reflects the spiritual baptism into the body of Christ:

"For as many of you who were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27) NKJV. Another translation reads, "did put on Christ" (American Standard Version). But the Berean Study Bible is also helpful, it states, "For as many of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." Moreover, Christ affirmed that His disciples would share a similar fate as His in regards to His death, burial and resurrection (Mark 10:38-39). Therefore, water baptism by immersion is a picture of the spiritual work that God has already done in our heart, so when we go under the water, this is symbolic to death and burial of our old self, and when we arise out of the water, this is symbolic to our new nature, raised into the new life in Christ (Col. 2:12; Rom. 6:4-10). But listen, for this is very important, that water baptism occurs after, and NOT BEFORE the spiritual work of God in our heart, and therefore, prior to the water baptism Christ commanded, a believer is Spirit-filled through hearing and believing the word of God in regards to the gospel, as the Spirit and the Word go together, for both are one and the same (1 John 5:7; John 6:63; Pro. 4:20-22; Eph. 6:17). In other words, when we receive in our heart instruction from the word of God regarding the gospel, in the process we also receive the Person of the Spirit in our heart to help us to respond in repentance and faith to the gospel, and to encourage us to further obey the word of God to perform **water baptism by immersion**, which is **a picture of the spiritual work God has already done in our heart**, as it is **a public declaration that reflects the regenerated work of the Holy Spirit** who spiritually baptizes and unites us with Christ as part of His body, which is the Church in the heavenlies (1 Cor. 12:13; Heb. 12:22-23; Eph. 1:22-23).

And finally, the third condition in regards to the baptism into Christ's body is to realize that baptism does not save you, but it is helpful regarding *a good conscience toward God* as revealed in 1 Pet. 3:21-22, this Scripture makes a comparison between the waters of the flood and the waters of baptism, but the Scripture clarifies this misunderstanding that "Baptism now saves you," (which has led to the view called baptismal regeneration, that is to say, that baptism saves bringing about new birth) by stating, "Not the removal of the filth of the flesh." Therefore, the Scripture does not mean that the water, immersing the body and cleansing the flesh, is of any saving effect, but rather, a good conscience toward God, that is an inner awareness that bears witness regarding the salvation work of God in us, accomplished in Christ's death, burial and resurrection, it is this that saves us, of which water baptism is a picture of, for it is a public declaration of the salvation work God has already accomplished within us (Rom. 6:4-10), as mentioned before, it is a public declaration that reflects the regenerated work of the Holy Spirit who spiritually baptizes and unites us with Christ as part of His body (1 Cor. 12:13).

### 3. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

**What is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit?** Similar to water baptism which is an immersion in water, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is an immersion in the Spirit, and **is a spiritual work performed by Christ, the Son who is the coming One mentioned in Luke 3:16.** In water baptism the water covers our whole body, and similar, in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, Christ in the Spirit covers or fills our whole being. Moreover, similar to water baptism by immersion which is a one-time event, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is also an event that we experience on one occasion (Act. 10:44-47; 11:15-17), but although it also involves being 'Spirit-filled' (an experience that occurs more than once), there is a distinction. The distinction between the baptism of the Holy Spirit and being Spirit-filled is that the Baptism in the Spirit is an outpouring of the Spirit by Christ that produces a greater awareness into the reality of the Presence of Christ in the Spirit (John 14:28; 16:5-7), evident by the diversities of gifts given by His Spirit (Act. 10:44-46; 1 Cor. 12:4, 7-11), whereas being Spirit-filled is an outpouring of the Spirit by the Father producing an internal diffusion of the Spirit that progressively effects our whole inner being (heart, conscience, mind, emotions, will), as the Person of the Holy Spirit enters into our heart to firstly help us to respond in repentance and faith when we hear the gospel, bringing about the new birth, 'born of the Spirit' (John 3:5-8), a regenerated work of the Spirit who spiritually baptizes and unites us with Christ as part of His body (1 Cor. 12:13). Both terms speak of receiving the Spirit, and both refer to a supernatural outpouring of the Holy Spirit which can occur simultaneously (Act. 10:44; 19:5-6), or separately (John 20:22; Act. 1:8). Do you have to be baptized in water to be filled with the Holy Spirit? The answer is NO. If you are a Christian, then there is no need for you to be baptized again in order to receive the Holy Spirit because you already have the Spirit! The Scriptures reveal that at conversion every genuine believer receives the Person of the Holy Spirit (John 3:3-8), as the Holy Spirit is referred to as the endowment every genuine Christian receives as an assurance or guarantee that we are born again (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13-14). However, there is an ongoing debate regarding whether the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred once and for all on the Day of Pentecost (1 Cor. 12:13) or whether the same experience can occur for others who believed (Act. 2:38-39; 11:15-17). I go along and agree with the view that the same experience can occur for others who believed, because [1] there is no statement in Scripture which actually confirms that the baptism of the Holy Spirit took place once and for all at Pentecost, and also [2] the experience of Peter with the household of Cornelius in the city of Caesarea, seems to contradict this idea of a once and for all experience because the Gentiles had their own unique experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and in fact, Peter refers to their experience as exactly what happened on the Day of Pentecost; the baptism with the Holy Spirit (Act. 10:44-46; 11:15-

17). God works progressively as seen in creation; [1] the world was created, formed, then [2] the Lord filled the world, and in like manner, we see the progressive work of God in us through being Spirit-filled, and also see the perfect unity of the three-in-one God in baptism. Firstly, it is *the spiritual work of the Holy Spirit to baptize us into the body of Christ* (1 Cor. 12:13). Secondly, it is *the spiritual work of Christ the Lord to baptize us with the Holy Spirit and fire* (Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Act. 2:3-4, 33). And finally, *the fire* indicates judgment (Luke 3:17), and also a *repeated spiritual work of the Father enduing us with power from on high* (Jam. 1:17; John 14:26-28), so that we are repeatedly Spirit-filled, and in a sense on fire for the Lord, as the Holy Spirit working within us, makes His appeal through us to convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment (John 16:8). Look at it in this way, the Bible reveals that Solomon acknowledged that the heavens cannot contain God, let alone this temple he had built (1 King. 8:27). If heaven cannot contain God, then how can we? The more we obey Him, the more God can fill us, so to work through us, evident firstly in how He comes into our heart by the Person of the Holy Spirit at conversion to create in us a new spirit, to hear and respond in repentance and faith through the gospel, and complete the process through the water baptism in the knowledge that the Lord wants to fill us yet further, and so He fills us in a greater way with His Presence in the Spirit through the baptism of the Holy Spirit (John 14:11, 28; 16:7), evident by the diversities of gifts given by His Spirit, and a repeated filling of the Spirit is necessary by the Father (Luke 11:8-13), so that we may receive Power from on high (John 14:16; 16:7) to fulfil the great commission (Act. 1:4-8).

**What is the evidence or sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit?** The common denominator in regards to the evidence or sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is "the gift" distributed by God (1 Cor. 12:3-11; Act. 10:44-46; 11:15-16; Ps. 68:18-19; Mark 16:17). However, due to on more than one occasion the baptism of the Holy Spirit was evident by the sign of the gift of tongues (Act. 2:4; 19:6; Mark 16:17), this has led to some denominations concluding that the gift of tongues is the only gift testifying to the manifestation of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is unfortunate for the following reasons. Firstly, the Scriptures reveal that it is the Spirit that distributes the gifts as He pleases (1 Cor. 12:11). Secondly, the Scriptures asks a series of questions about the different gifts given which includes, 'Do ALL speak with tongues?' The answer is clearly NO, just like, 'Are ALL apostles' or prophets? The answer is NO (1 Cor. 12:29-30). And thirdly, the gift of prophecy is actually a greater gift than the gift of tongues (1 Cor. 14:1-5), this gift is to be desired (1 Cor. 14:1) because the gift of prophecy edifies God's people (1 Cor. 14:1-5; Num. 11:25-29), and this gift is also mentioned as a sign or evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Act. 2:17-18; 4:31; 19:6).

**Why is the baptism of the Holy Spirit important?** There are two main reasons of the importance of the baptism of the Holy Spirit: [1] to be fruitful and effective witnesses, and [2] the great commission. Let us consider the great commission. Firstly, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is necessary in order for the great commission to be accomplished as evident with the apostles of Christ the Lord who were initially Spirit-filled when Christ the Lord breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit' (John 20:21-22), yet they still were commanded to wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost for the power of the Holy Spirit to flow through them in order to be fruitful and effective witnesses of the gospel (Act. 1:4-8; Luke 24:49). The Son of God [Christ] is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit and fire (Matt. 3:11). But listen, this is a very important point, in order for the baptism of the Holy Spirit to occur, it was essential for Him to ascend to the Father, after His ascension, He then sends and baptizes us with the Holy Spirit (John 16:5-7). The apostles of the Son Christ and the first generational Christians baptized in the Holy Spirit were on fire for the Lord, and they took this

message seriously and began to spread the gospel [the good news of God's salvation work through Christ] to a hostile world, even to the most remote corners of the known world. The great commission would have been a daunting task for the first generational Christians without the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Act. 1:4-8). The baton has now been passed onto our generation. It would be a difficult and daunting task for us without the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and so the baptism of the Holy Spirit is for everyone, not just for pastors or evangelist, we all have a role to play, and therefore, we need the baptism of the Holy Spirit to help us, equip us, and empower us to be Spirit-filled, so to be on fire for the Lord in order to continue to fulfil the great commission (Matt. 28:18-20; Act. 1:4-8). The great commission is the greater works Christ the Lord spoke about in John 14:12-18. Christ the Son's mission was primarily to the lost sheep of Israel (Matt. 15:24), but Christ the Lord has given His disciples the great commission, which is a mission to the world (Matt. 28:18-10; Act. 1:4-8). Moreover, Christ the Lord knew that we could not do this great work alone, so He promised when He goes to the Father, both He and the Father are One (John 14:11), will send another Helper (the Person of the Holy Spirit), who already dwells in us, to help us to fulfil this 'greater works' than He did (John 14:12-18) in regards to witnessing to the whole world (Act. 1:8). Therefore, it is vital that God the Father pours out afresh upon us His power from on high (John 14:26) that we may be constantly Spirit-filled, and on fire for the Lord in order to fulfil the great commission (Matt. 28:18-20; Act. 1:4-8; Luke 24:49). By the saying, 'on fire for the Lord,' I simply mean firstly to be alive by the Holy Spirit (Rev. 3:1; John 6:63), then to be awake or alert to the leading of the Holy Spirit (Rev. 3:2-3; Gal. 5:16-26), and finally to be active by letting the living waters of the Holy Spirit from within overflow into your life particularly evident in service for the Lord with all humility such as evangelism, preaching the gospel out of the abundance of a heart overflowing with the rivers of living water, which is the Holy Spirit in accordance with the Scripture or the word of God (John 7:38-39; 20:1-15; Matt. 12:34-37; Eph. 2:4; 1 Pet. 5:5).

And secondly, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is important to be fruitful and effective witnesses (Act. 1:8). As disciples of Christ the Lord, we are all without exception, called to serve as witnesses to the gospel of God's salvation work through Christ by partaking in the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-20). To be fruitful and effective witnesses we need to be Spirit-filled Christians, who know and use the spiritual gift given by the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:7-11) for the work of ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:11-16), and also to build up the body of Christ by winning more souls into the body of Christ (Eph. 4:11-16), as the Holy Spirit working within us, makes His appeal through us (2 Cor. 5:18-20).

If you have not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, or do not know your spiritual gift, or if you have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but perhaps need to relight the fire in your belly, then I want to agree with you that the power of God come down upon you, as you say this short prayer:

Heavenly Father, Lord of glory, Lord of heaven and earth. You O Lord are the Father of lights, and You possess every good gift and every perfect gift from above (Jam. 1:17), and Your good and perfect gifts comes down to us when we ask (Matt. 7:7-8). For it is Your good pleasure to give Your Holy Spirit, to those who ask (Luke 11:13). Heavenly Father, I want to agree with every brother and sister in the Lord desiring the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, that You will pour out afresh upon us the power of Your Holy Spirit, that those who have yet to receive the baptism of the Spirit may receive today, and know and use the spiritual gift Your gracious Holy Spirit will bestow upon them. We thank You Heavenly Father, for our Great High Priest whoever intercedes on our behalf (Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:34; 1 John 2:1; John 14:12-18). Thank You Lord for such love towards us. Be pleased Lord to hear our united prayers, with one accord we agree (Act. 2:1), for we ask for the baptism of the Spirit that we may be endued with power from on high, Spirit-filled, and on fire for the Lord to fulfil Your great commission to the world.

We thank You heavenly Father for receiving and answering our prayers (John 14:13). For we ask it in the name that is above all names, in the name of the Lord Yahushua [Christ] we pray. Amen.

In summary, so to recapitulate, in the first heading; **'The Baptism of John the Baptist,'** we saw that this was a baptism in water by immersion into repentance that is now insufficient (Act. 19:1-6) because the Lord has commanded another baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit for believers under the gospel (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15). The second heading; **'The Baptism into the Body of Christ,'** we saw that this is a spiritual baptism performed by the Holy Spirit bringing about the new birth, 'born of the Spirit' (John 3:5-8), and also water baptism by immersion is a picture of this spiritual work God by *the Spirit* has already done in our heart, as it is a public declaration that reflects the regenerated work of the Holy Spirit who spiritually baptizes and unites us into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). Therefore, it is very important that water baptism occurs after, and NOT BEFORE the spiritual work of God in our heart, as through hearing and believing the gospel, a believer is Spirit-filled, as we receive the Person of the Spirit in our heart (John 20:21-22) bringing about the new birth, 'born of the Spirit' (John 3:5-8). However, we do require another empowering Spirit-filling experience to equip us for witness and ministry (Matt. 28:19-20; Act. 1:8), as revealed in the final heading; **'The Baptism of the Holy Spirit,'** is a spiritual work of *Christ the Lord* (Luke 3:16; John 1:33), an outpouring of the Spirit from heaven above, that produces a greater awareness into the reality of the Presence of Christ in the Spirit, and evident by the diversities of gifts given by His Spirit (Act. 10:44-46; 1 Cor. 12:4, 7-11), and *the Father* repeatedly endues us with Power from on high (Jam. 1:17; John 14:26), so that we are Spirit-filled, and on fire for the Lord to fulfil the great commission to the world (Matt. 28:18-20; Act. 1:4-8; Luke 24:49).

I hope this message has been helpful to you and may God bless you richly. Amen.