

Four Different Baptisms



Foundations (Day 116)
by Derek Prince

Bearing in mind this picture of the nature of baptism which we've seen the last couple of days, let us turn back once again to the passage where baptism is specified as one of the foundation doctrines of the Christian faith – that is, Hebrews 6:2. We observe that the word baptism is here used in the plural, not in the singular. It is "the doctrine of baptisms" (plural), not "the doctrine of baptism" (singular). This indicates plainly that the complete doctrine of the Christian faith includes more than one type of baptism.

Following this conclusion through the pages of the New Testament, we discover that there are actually four distinct types of baptism referred to at different points. If we set out these four types of baptism in chronological order, conforming to the order in which they are revealed in the New Testament, we arrive at the following outline.

First, the baptism preached and practised by John the Baptist – a baptism in water – is directly connected with the message and experience of repentance.

> "John came baptising in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." (Mark 1:4)

Second, there is a type of baptism which is not precisely described by any one word in the New Testament, but which we may call "the baptism of suffering." Jesus says:

> "But I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!" (Luke 12:50)

It is also referred to in Mark 10:38. This passage records a request made by the sons of Zebedee to have the privilege of sitting with Christ on His right hand and on His left hand in His glory. To this request Jesus replied with the following question:

> "You do not know what you ask. Can you drink the cup that I drink, and be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with?"

This baptism belongs to a more advanced level of spiritual experience than the rest and therefore does not come within the scope of this series of studies.

The third type of baptism revealed in the New Testament is Christian baptism in water. Christ told His disciples:

> "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matt. 28:19)

The primary feature which thus distinguishes Christian baptism from the baptism of John the Baptist is that Christian baptism is to be carried out in the full name and authority of the triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This was not so with John's baptism.

The fourth type of baptism revealed in the New Testament is the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Jesus speaks about this baptism in Acts 1:5 and carefully distinguishes it from baptism in water. He says to His disciples:

> "For John truly baptised with water, but you shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

Although in the New King James Version the preposition used is "with" – baptised "with" the Holy Spirit – in the actual Greek text the preposition used is "in" – baptised "in" the Holy Spirit.

Jesus also reveals the basic purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. He says:

> "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me (Acts 1:8)."

Primarily, therefore, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a supernatural enduement with power from on high to be a witness for Christ.

Devotional

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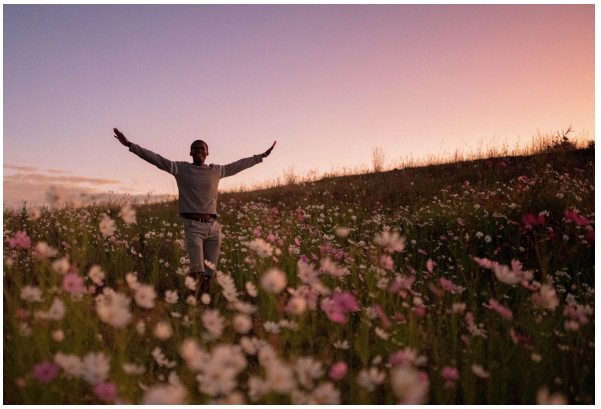

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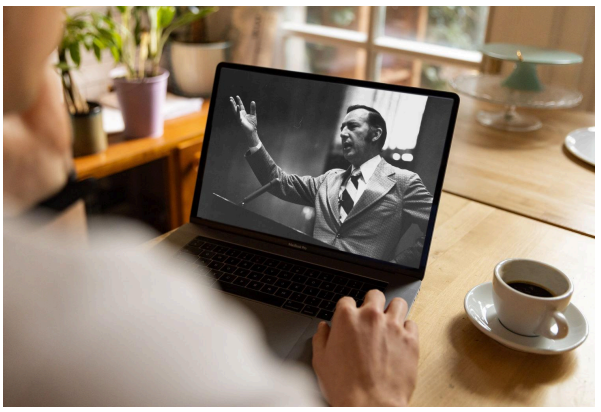

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