

The Baptism Of John Did Not Centre Around The Death And Resurrection Of Jesus



Foundations (Day 117)
by Derek Prince

In the coming days we will deal with three forms of baptism, in the order in which they are mentioned in the New Testament: the baptism of John, the Christian baptism in water followed by the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Many Christians may not be clear as to the difference between the baptism of John the Baptist and Christian baptism. Therefore it is helpful to begin the study of these two forms of baptism by turning to Acts 19:1-5, where these two types of baptism are set side by side and the important difference between them is clearly brought out.

> "And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' And they said to him, 'We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.' And he said to them, 'Into what then were you baptised?' So they said, 'Into John's baptism.' Then Paul said, 'John indeed baptised with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.' When they heard this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Here in Ephesus Paul encountered a group of people who called themselves "disciples." At first Paul took them to be disciples of Christ – that is, Christians – but on closer examination he discovered they were only disciples of John the Baptist.

They had heard and accepted John's message of repentance and the form of baptism that went with it, but they had heard nothing of the gospel message of Jesus Christ, or of the Christian form of baptism directly connected with the acceptance of the gospel message.

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After Paul had explained the message of the gospel to them, these people accepted it and were once again baptised – this time, the Scripture states, in the name of the Lord Jesus.

This incident shows clearly that the baptism of John and Christian baptism are distinct in their nature and their significance and that once John's ministry had closed and the gospel dispensation had been inaugurated, John's baptism was no longer accepted as being equivalent to, or a substitute for, Christian baptism. On the contrary, those who had only received John's baptism were required to be baptised again with full Christian baptism.

Devotional

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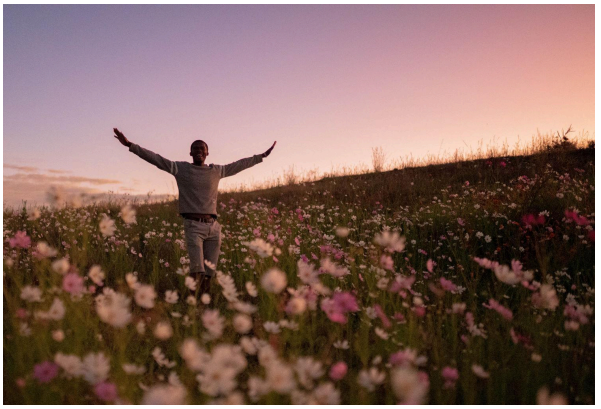

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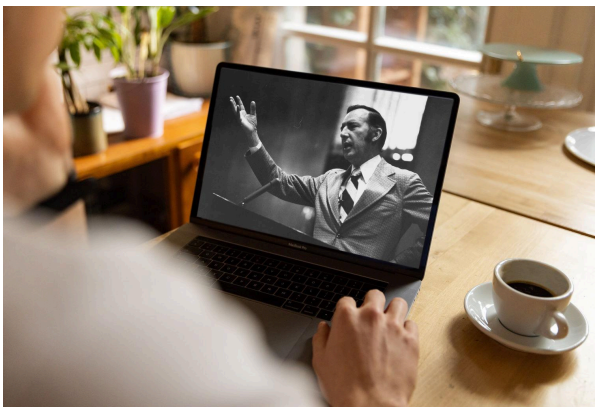

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