

WHO BAPTISES WHOM?

Who baptises whom, and with what, and what for? John is baptising in a baptism of repentance in preparation for the coming of Christ. Later the disciples are baptising in a baptism of new life in Jesus. Jesus Himself baptises us into the Holy Spirit. It all can get a bit confusing as we see in Acts; much later after the Pentecost outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Paul meets Christians who have not quite got the understanding of baptism. Paul shows these faithful people that as Christians they need to receive the Holy Spirit as well. First was their Baptism into the life of Christ, declaring that all they have, and all they are, is surrendered to Jesus Lordship. But to understand His authority Paul reminds them of John's words "He will baptise you in the Holy Spirit. Jesus taught that He would give us the Holy Spirit who would be our guide and umpire and teach us all things. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ and when He dwells upon us then we see how God connects us with Him in our lives and in the lives of others.

Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?

I baptised you with water; but He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.

When John said, "there is one more powerful than I coming after me; and I am not worthy to untie his sandals," this was a massive understatement! Jesus was and is and has the authority over all Creation, as we see in the Old testament reading and David's psalm. John says, "It is He who will baptise you with the Holy Spirit." Can you imagine there is more to being a Christian? God wants to overwhelm you, fill you, with His presence and authority? Paul prayed for the Ephesian Christians to receive the Holy Spirit and God demonstrated His authority in them. Likewise, our prayer should be that we receive and be continually filled with the Holy Spirit because it is He who opens our eyes and our hearts to seeing Him in a new and wonderful way. Jesus said in John 14 that He would not leave us on our own and this is what He means. As we walk in faith in our daily lives, we can know with abundant assurance that the presence of God is with us and enables us to serve Him effectively in and with His full authority.