

Peter Explains Spirit Baptism (Acts 11:13-18)

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Abstrak

Pembaptisan Roh adalah doktrin yang sering dipahami dengan salah. Biasanya, teologi sistematika menyediakan penjejelasan tentang doktrin dengan meneliti semua teks yang relevan mengenai suatu topik dan membuat kesimpulan yang logis berdasarkan pada teks-teks itu. Namun, teologi sistematika harus dibangun di atas eksegesis sehat yang menggunakan metode eksegesis yang benar. Jadi, tujuan sederhana artikel ini adalah menggunakan metode eksegesis yang benar dan menyediakan eksesis sehat dari satu perikop Alkitab yang harus dipertimbangkan dengan serius dalam debat tentang pembaptisan Roh. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif melalui studi literatur, jurnal dan peneliti terdahulu yang dapat dijadikan sumber dari pembahasan topik ini. Melalui penelitian ini ditemukan bahwa makna baptisan Roh menurut Petrus dalam Kisah Para Rasul 11:13-18 teks yang penting untuk memahami doktrin terhadap refleksi teologis Petrus yang jelas. Baptisan Roh pada dasarnya adalah suatu pertobatan yang tersembunyi dan bukan pekerjaan yang terlihat dan penuh dengan fenomena.

Kata Kunci: Pembaptisan, Doktrin, Roh, Sistematika, Eksegesis

Abstract

Spirit baptism is a commonly misunderstood doctrine. Typically, systematic theology provides an explanation of a doctrine by examining all the relevant texts on a topic and offering logical conclusions based upon those texts. However, systematic theology must be built upon sound biblical exegesis using a proper exegetical method. The modest aim of this article, then, is to use a proper exegetical method and provide sound biblical exegesis on one text that must be given its due weight in the debate about Spirit baptism. This research uses descriptive qualitative methods through literature studies, journals and previous researchers which can be used as sources for discussing this topic. Through this research it was found that the meaning of the baptism of the Spirit

according to Peter in Acts 11:13-18 is an important text for understanding the doctrine of Peter's clear theological reflection. The baptism of the Spirit is essentially a hidden conversion and not a visible and full-fledged work of phenomena.

Keywords: *Baptism, Doctrine, Spirit, Systematics, Exegesis*

I. Introduction

The Acts of the Apostles describes the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit perhaps more than any other New Testament book. In this theological narrative, a clear view is given of how the Spirit brings into existence and sustains God's new covenant people. It is not insignificant, then, that the new covenant is referred to as "the ministry of the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:8). Due to the prominent role the Spirit plays in Luke's narrative, it is obvious why so many have suggested "The Acts of the Holy Spirit" as a more theologically accurate title.

Foundational to the Spirit's ministry in the primitive church was the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Christ himself called the Spirit baptism the "promise of the Father." He then said, "for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:5). The apostles waited in obedience for this baptism and after it occurred, nothing was ever the same. In David Dockery's words, "The activity of the Spirit in Acts universalized the mission of Jesus"¹; in a little more than three decades the message of the resurrected Messiah had spread throughout the Roman empire, his disciples gathering weekly for worship even in the heart of that great empire, imperial Rome. This was due not to the ingenuity and leadership abilities of a few clever men, but rather to Christ's continuing ministry being carried on through the Holy Spirit.

Even though Spirit baptism is foundational, as Acts portrays, there is much disagreement about its precise nature. While there are several different perspectives about the Spirit baptism's nature and

¹ David Dockery, "The Theology Of Acts," *Criswell Theological Review* 5, no. 1 (1990, January 01): 45.

effects,² there are really only three different conceptual categories for understanding the doctrine. The *first category* understands Spirit baptism as distinct and subsequent to salvation. Within this paradigm, believers are baptized with the Spirit and experience certain manifestations of the Spirit (Wesleyan, Pentecostal, and Charismatic perspectives tend to emphasize different effects and manifestations³; some Puritans as well as D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones⁴ could be included in this category). The *second category* understands Spirit baptism as “conversion-initiation.”⁵ In other words, all believers are baptized with the Holy Spirit at salvation; the Spirit cleanses their hearts, unites them to Christ, and takes up residence within them. According to the *third category*, the Spirit baptisms described in Acts are inaugural events associated with the coming of the Holy Spirit to indwell God’s people – both Jews (Acts 2) and Gentiles (Acts 10).⁶ This paradigm stresses that the Spirit baptism was limited to these events within redemptive history to demonstrate that through Christ the Holy Spirit now indwells people from every ethnic category. It shows that God’s people are no longer limited to ethnic Israel, but are a spiritual people found among the many nations. This was emphasized at each of the Spirit baptisms when people spoke in tongues; Babel had finally been reversed in God’s new people, the dividing wall being torn down.

II. Theory

Obviously, advocates of each of the above conceptual categories attempt to give a biblical explanation for their understanding of Spirit baptism. However, this article will argue that the second category – conversion-initiation – is the *primary* and *ongoing* way in which Spirit

² See Chad Brand, ed., *Perspectives on Spirit Baptism* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2004). This book lists five perspectives.

³ J. I. Packer, "Baptism In The Spirit," in *New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Sinclair B. Ferguson and David F. Wright (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-varsity Press, 1988), 73.

⁴ For his full treatment on the subject see: D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Joy Unspeakable: The Baptism and Gifts of the Holy Spirit* (Eastbourne, UK: David C. Cook, 2008).

⁵ James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 2nd ed (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 2010), 3. Dunn was the first to use the phrase “conversion-initiation.” Evidently, he understood conversion as the entire process of becoming a believer, rather than the narrower way it is defined in Reformed theology – repentance and faith.

⁶ Acts 8 (Samaritans) and 19 (John’s disciples) do not refer to the Holy Spirit events as Spirit baptisms. However, a plausible argument could be made that they are. Either way, the two events do not strengthen or weaken the above argument.

baptism should be understood. It should be stated that there are many biblical truths within the first category. However, these truths seem to be defined wrongly, using exegesis that in many cases is not faithful to the biblical text. Through exegesis of Acts 11:13-18, along with relating this crucial text to its wider context within Acts, this paper will attempt to show that Peter explains Spirit baptism as the means through which Christ's work is applied to an individual. Once Peter is rightly understood, then one can not only better grasp the Spirit baptism doctrine itself as it relates to individual salvation, but also gain a proper perspective for understanding the redemptive-historical elements that unfolded both at Pentecost and Cornelius' house when Gentiles first called upon the name of the Lord Jesus.

III. Method

Perhaps the most obvious place to begin examining Acts' teaching about Spirit baptism would be Jesus' promises in Acts 1:4-5, 8 and their fulfillment in Acts 2. However, both passages contain very little theologizing either by Jesus or the apostles on the nature of Spirit baptism. Luke only records Jesus' promises and then records what happened at Pentecost. It is the raw narrative without any comments or accompanying teaching. Rightly, many scholars have pointed out that "it is methodologically flawed to build doctrine on narrative, unless, of course, the narrative has didactic elements embedded in it..."⁷ While Acts' first few chapters do contain some helpful passages that contribute to a more complete understanding of Spirit baptism, Peter's speech in Acts 11 contains the most insightful didactic elements. The speech is the result of Peter's fresh understanding about God's desire to include the Gentiles in the church, along with his theological reflection after several years concerning what happened to him and the others at Pentecost.

IV. Result and Discussion

Before His death, Jesus promised that when the Spirit of truth came, he would guide the apostles into all the truth (John 16:13). Many

⁷ Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2007), 205.

truths were perhaps instantly understood at Pentecost, as Peter's speech in Acts 2 demonstrates. But other truths took much longer to realize. What is important for the discussion of Spirit baptism, however, is that when Peter gives his speech in Acts 11, he has had ample time to reflect upon Christ's promises concerning the Spirit in light of everything the primitive church had thus far experienced. It is for this reason that this pericope is significant for understanding the Spirit baptism doctrine in Acts.

Acts 11:13-18 Context

Peter's speech must be set in context in order to understand his reason for giving the speech in the first place. Acts 10 begins with two brief narratives about Peter himself and a Gentile named Cornelius. In both narratives, the men are praying when they receive a theophany. Cornelius receives an angelic vision, in which he is told that his "prayers and [his] alms have ascended as a memorial before God" (10:4). Even though he is a Gentile, Cornelius is portrayed in many ways like the pious among Israel. As Robert C. Tannehill writes:

The emphasis on Cornelius' piety is a noteworthy feature of the narrative rhetoric of this episode. Cornelius is clearly an uncircumcised Gentile (cf. 11:3), yet his piety parallels that of a devout Jew...He is favored with a vision of an angel of God, and the narrator presents the encounter in a form common in the Old Testament and previously used in Luke-Acts to describe divine messages to faithful Jews like Mary (Luke 1:26–38) and Ananias (Acts 9:10–17)...Thus Cornelius is addressed like a Jew by the angel and portrayed like a Jew by the narrator.⁸

In the vision, the angel told Cornelius to send for Peter, who was staying in Joppa. After the vision, Cornelius then responded to the angel's imperative by sending three men to Joppa to obtain Peter.

⁸ Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1986), 133.

The following day, Peter also received a vision. His vision was not of an angel but of a great sheet being let down from heaven. In the sheet were many animals that were not kosher for Peter to eat as a Jew. They were unclean. Peter then heard the Lord's voice, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat" (10:13). Peter responded by telling the Lord that he could not for he had never eaten anything common or unclean. The Lord then said, "What God has made clean, do not call common" (10:15). This happened three times.

The men sent by Cornelius arrived at Peter's lodging place as he was in the process of trying to comprehend the vision. The Holy Spirit told him to go with the men, something he ordinarily would not have done since they were Gentiles. So, Peter obeyed the Spirit and traveled with the men to Cornelius' house the following day. After entering Cornelius' home and observing the situation, Peter understood the meaning of the vision from the day before – Peter is not to call *men* unclean whom God makes clean (10:28). Peter then told his Gentile audience about Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and the coming judgment. He ended his *kerygma* by declaring, "To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name" (10:43).

As Peter was speaking these words, "a Gentile Pentecost"⁹ occurred. The phrases that are used to describe this Holy Spirit event are significant: "the Holy Spirit fell" (10:44), "the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out" (10:45), and the Gentiles "received the Holy Spirit" (10:47). Ben Witherington III writes that these phrases should not be pressed too neatly "to line up a chronology of different spiritual experiences."¹⁰ He thinks they are general phrases used interchangeably, rather than technical terms. However, there does seem to be a logical way in which the phrases can be put together. Perhaps something like this: the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out, after which it fell upon those who heard the word. When it fell upon them, they received the Spirit just as they received the word (cf. 10:47 with 11:1). Although the phrases are not technical, they do describe various angles of the same event. What's important to consider, though, is that all these phrases in this context

⁹ John B. Polhill, *The New American Commentary*, ed. David S. Dockery, vol. 26, *Acts*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992), 267.

¹⁰ Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 1998), 69.

describe an *initial* experience of the Holy Spirit. In other words, the Gentiles in Cornelius' household did not have the Spirit before, in spite of their Jewish-like piety. James D. G. Dunn states that all the phrases mentioned above, among others, are "used by Luke only of the *first coming* of the Spirit into or upon the persons referred to" (emphasis added).¹¹ This is significant because it indicates that Spirit baptism happens only to those who do not yet have the Spirit.

After baptizing the Gentiles and staying some days longer with them, Peter returned to Jerusalem. News of the Gentiles' conversion had already reached before his arrival. Of those who heard the news, there was one group who was particularly agitated at what had taken place through Peter's ministry – the circumcision party. They did not criticize Peter for preaching to the Gentiles. But they criticized him because he "went to uncircumcised men and ate with them" (11:3). It is, then, before these critics (and others no doubt) that Peter gives his insightful speech about the nature of Spirit baptism.

Acts 11:13-18 Exegesis

In Acts 11:4-12, Peter began his speech by telling his critics about the incidents which led to the Holy Spirit event. He began from his own perspective, not chronologically with Cornelius' vision. But in verse 13, he began to describe the incidents from Cornelius' perspective. In verses 13-14 Peter states, "And he reported to us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying, 'Send to Joppa and have Simon, who is also called Peter, brought here; and he will speak words to you by which you will be saved, you and all your household.'" It is not insignificant that the phrase, "he will speak words to you by which you will be saved," is not mentioned either in the angel's original words (10:4-6) or in Cornelius' retelling of those words (10:31-32). Peter, then, is not retelling the angel's message verbatim; he is rather giving a concise summary of Cornelius' vision together with his own retrospective interpretation of God's purpose in sending him to these Gentiles – their salvation. Perhaps for Peter this purpose became clear when he stood in Cornelius' home in Caesarea and heard the words, "Now then, we are all here present before God to hear all that you have been commanded by the

¹¹ James D. G. Dunn, "Baptism In The Holy Spirit: Yet Once More - Again," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 19, (2010, January 01): 33.

Lord” (10:33). For, as stated above, Peter’s *kerygma* subsequently ended with this promise about faith in Jesus, “To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name” (10:43). Peter was an authoritative witness whom Jesus commanded to proclaim forgiveness of sins in his name (cf. Luke 24:47-48), a role which Peter continued when he stood before that small group of Gentiles gathered in Cornelius’ home. In David Peterson’s words, “So both the appearance of the angel to Cornelius and the precise nature of his message confirmed for Peter that God wanted him to offer this Gentile salvation through faith in Christ.”¹² Primarily, then, the Holy Spirit event in Acts 10 should be understood as an event which brought salvation, as Peter’s words make clear.

In 11:15, Peter began to make comparisons between the Gentile Holy Spirit event and that which took place on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). He used one of the phrases mentioned above in 10:44 that was used to describe what happened in Cornelius’ house: ἐπέπεσεν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον (the Holy Spirit fell). Peter indicates this was the same reality which happened at Pentecost, for he stated that the Spirit fell on the Gentiles, “just as on us in the beginning.” In order to compare the two events, he used the word ὡσπερ (just as), which seems to indicate a “somewhat *more emphatic* marker of similarity between events and state” (emphasis added).¹³ Peter, then, is wanting to emphasize the similarities between the two Holy Spirit events. He wants his critics to realize there was no difference between the Gentiles’ Spirit baptism and the Jews; *precisely the same event had occurred*.

In order to further draw out the similarities between the two events, in 11:16 Peter recalled Jesus’ promise in Acts 1:5, “John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” In its original context, Jesus called the Spirit baptism “the promise of the Father” (1:4). This promise was made to the apostles and was the foundation for Pentecost. But Peter also recognized that the very same promise was actualized in what he had witnessed in Cornelius’ house; Jesus’ promise of Spirit baptism belonged to the Gentiles, as well. Elaborating on this, F.

¹² David Peterson, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary*, ed. D. A. Carson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2009), 345.

¹³ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, eds., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*, second ed (New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1989), Domain 64:13.

F. Bruce wrote, "...as Peter saw what took place in the house of Cornelius, and heard those Gentiles speak with tongues and magnify God, these words came afresh to his mind, and he recognized that now they were being fulfilled anew."¹⁴ It was not only the same event, but it was also *based upon precisely the same promise*.

In 11:17, Peter alluded to the phrase used in 10:45 (ἡ δωρεὰ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος). But, instead of calling it "the gift of the Holy Spirit," like in 10:45, he continued with his comparison of the two Holy Spirit events. Peter said that when the Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles, "God gave the same gift (τὴν ἴσην δωρεάν) to them as he gave to us." Peter was continuing to emphasize the two events' similarities. But, in 11:17 he went on to add another dimension to the comparison with these words, "God gave...when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ." The two events, then, happened through *precisely the same means* – belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is perhaps difficult to see how *both* the Gentiles' belief and the Pentecost Jews' belief are mentioned simply from reading the ESV. In this translation, as well as others, the verse seems only to mention the Pentecost Jews' belief. However, if the Gentiles' belief is not obvious in 10:43-48 where they are described as praising God in response to Peter's words, "everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins," then Peter's later comments at the Jerusalem council are decisive (Acts 15:7-9). Peter stated that God had given the Gentiles the gift of the Holy Spirit and cleansed their hearts through faith. Additionally, it is absurd to think that God would have given the Gentiles his Spirit apart from any connection to belief.

The Greek syntax of 11:17 is possibly unclear about the Gentiles' belief because their faith should be quite obvious. It should be assumed. In his speech, Peter was not trying to underscore the Gentiles' belief (or the Pentecost Jews' for that matter), but he was trying to show that both groups received the Spirit baptism as a result of belief. If this is the case, then it is best to see the participle πιστεύσασιν as adverbial rather than adjectival. This means it would modify the verb ἔδωκεν and create a temporal connection (the time of believing) between God giving the gift of the Holy Spirit and belief in the Lord Jesus.¹⁵ Therefore, the action of the verb could have taken place *after* the action of the participle or at the

¹⁴ F. F. Bruce, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, ed. F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Book of Acts*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1981), 236.

same time. To be more specific, ἔδωκεν...ὁ θεός (God gave) could have taken place after πιστεύσασι (believing) or at the same time. The ESV translates the action of both happening at the same time (God gave... *when* we believed), while the NASB translates the action of the verb happening after the action of the participle (God gave... *after* believing). In the Gentiles' experience, both happened simultaneously. In the Pentecost Jews' experience, however, belief happened before the Spirit was given. If the two events were the same ontological reality (as Peter has already made clear), how should the difference in timing be properly understood?

What is most important in this discussion is to see the connection between belief in the Lord Jesus Christ and Spirit baptism. This, in reality, is what Peter is trying to emphasize; both groups believed and as a consequence they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. The fact that the Pentecost Jews received the Spirit baptism *after* they believed only serves to highlight Pentecost's uniqueness in redemptive history. In Peterson's words, "In fact, the 120 disciples mentioned in 1:15 were already believers in Jesus before the events of Acts 2 took place. The delay in their experience of the Spirit resulted from their unique position in salvation history."¹⁶ It was indeed at this "climactic salvation-historical event"¹⁷ that the Holy Spirit came to indwell God's people and unite them to Jesus Christ. Before Jesus' ascension, even though his disciples believed in him, they were not in spiritual union with him for he was physically present. But the Spirit baptism at Pentecost affected their union with the ascended and exalted Christ. Christ's promise that he and the Father would come and take up residence in the disciples was then realized for the first time (cf. John 14:23). David Dockery writes about the redemptive-historical uniqueness of Pentecost, "Although the Spirit would continually be outpoured [the Spirit baptism in Cornelius' house is an example!], the outpouring would never again signify the inauguration of a new era."¹⁸

¹⁵ Darrell L. Bock et al, *The NET Bible, First Edition Notes* (Richardson, TX: Biblical Studies Press, 1996), translator note on Acts 11:17.

¹⁶ Peterson, *Acts*, 348.

¹⁷ D. A. Carson, *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians, 12-14*, Kindle Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1996), Kindle Locations 2285-2289.

¹⁸ Dockery, "The Theology of Acts", 46.

So, the Pentecost Jews' experience should not be viewed as an ongoing paradigm for understanding Spirit baptism. They stood at the end of the old era and walked through the threshold of the new. Peter's words in Acts 11:15 confirm this truth: "the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us *at the beginning*" (emphasis added). Consequently, there are aspects of their experience that are not normative, particularly that God gave them the gift of the Spirit *after* they believed. In agreement with this perspective, James D. G. Dunn wrote, "...in the transition of the history of salvation marked by Jesus' mission and Pentecost, there was a unique and unrepeatable first-ness which meant that the experience of those who lived through that transition could not serve as a precedent for those whose lives were entirely subsequent to these events."¹⁹ Although the Pentecost Jews' experience should not be taken as normative, the Gentiles' Spirit baptism should. God gave them the gift of the Spirit *when* they believed, and it was this gift which applied salvation to their lives.

Peter's critics' response in 11:18 also demonstrate this much. They replied to Peter by saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life." These men did not conclude that the Gentiles had received a second blessing, deeper experience of God's love, gifts of the Holy Spirit, or any other manifestation; but they concluded that the Gentiles had been given repentance through the Spirit baptism they had received. Peter's message announcing forgiveness of sins to anyone who believes (10:43) was indeed a message through which they were saved (11:14).

Acts 11:13-18 Summary

Peter's speech contains very clear and important didactic elements concerning Spirit baptism. He not only clarifies what exactly happened to the Gentiles in Cornelius' house, but also what happened to the Jews at Pentecost. According to Peter, both events were the same ontological reality, based upon the same promise, and happened through the same means – belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. For the Gentiles, belief took place within a context where Peter had proclaimed the gospel and told that faith in Jesus would lead to forgiveness of sins. It was this

¹⁹ Dunn, "Yet Once More – Again", 42.

salvific message that God desired the Gentiles know (11:14), and through which he baptized them in the Holy Spirit. This pericope, then, makes plain the nature of Spirit baptism – it brought “conversion-initiation” through applying salvation.

V. Conclusion

Acts' Wider Context

The primary aim of this paper was to show the meaning of Spirit baptism according to Peter in Acts 11:13-18. As it has already been stated, this is a crucial text for understanding this doctrine due to Peter's clear theological reflection. But the question must be asked, “Does Peter's explanation explain other places in Acts where there was or may have been Spirit baptism?” It has already been shown how “conversion-initiation” explains the Pentecost Jews' experience – for them there was a chronological gap between belief and Spirit baptism due to their unique position in redemptive history. But, what about the others? What about the Samaritans (Acts 8)? Or John's disciples in Ephesus (Acts 19)? It can be plausibly demonstrated that both these events were precisely the same as the event that happened in Cornelius' house. However, a full exegetical explanation of those Holy Spirit events in light of the “conversion-initiation” paradigm is far beyond the scope of this conclusion.²⁰ But, there is a more “silent” pericope which may be helpful for understanding Spirit baptism as “conversion-initiation,” and in bringing this paper to a conclusion. It is helpful not due to the phenomena which accompanied Spirit baptism (which perhaps distracts many people from understanding the true nature of the doctrine), but to the lack of anything spectacular. It helps nuance the argument that Spirit baptism is primarily a hidden work of conversion rather than a phenomena-filled visible work.

It is necessary, then, to return to Pentecost in Acts 2. However, what is helpful for understanding Spirit baptism's ongoing nature is not 2:1-4 where the Apostles are filled with the Holy Spirit, but two significant verses from Peter's Pentecost speech. It is clear from Peter's speech that he interprets “the promise of the Father,” i.e., the Spirit

²⁰ See Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, for a clear explanation of these two Holy Spirit events in light of “conversion-initiation.”

baptism (Acts 1:4-5), as a promise that was given in the Old Testament. For, after the initial Spirit baptism (2:1-4) he quotes Joel 2:28-32 in order to explain what had occurred. What's important to consider, though, is how the Joel quotation ends. Peter quotes, "And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (2:21). This verse, though often neglected in any discussion of Spirit baptism, is vital for understanding "the promise of the Father." What Joel, and Peter, by implication, are stating is that Spirit baptism leads a person to call upon the Lord for salvation. *It is implied in Acts 2, then, that this is precisely what happened with Peter's audience.* After hearing his speech, they were convicted and cried out, "Brothers, what shall we do?" (2:37). Again, Peter's words are instructive: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive *the gift of the Holy Spirit*. For *the promise* is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself" (emphasis added). Peter uses the same Spirit baptism cognate, τὴν δωρεάν τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος (the gift of the Holy Spirit), which is used in 10:45 and conceptually in 11:17. Additionally, he calls the gift of the Holy Spirit "the promise." As Richard Longenecker writes, "The 'promise' of which Peter speaks includes both the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Both are logically and indissolubly united in applying Christ's redemptive work to the believer."²¹ As these words imply, then, the Spirit baptism – which is the gift of the Holy Spirit, the promise of the Father, and brings forgiveness of sins – is for everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself. It is not a special manifestation to those who have already experienced salvation, nor is it limited to a few events within redemptive history (although the events in Acts did have redemptive-historical significance). But it is primarily that mysterious reality which applies redemption and unites men and women to the Lord Jesus Christ.

²¹ Richard Longnecker, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Accordance Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990), comment on 2:39.

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