Matthew 3:11-12

Baptized into the Holy Spirit and Fire

1. **Review:**
2. Baptism is an act of cleansing following a change of mind, a decision to repent, and it is accompanied with confession. (Matthew 3:1-6) This is to be an ongoing characteristic of the recipient’s life. But there is an order to the process: (1) intellectual understanding, (2) change of mind and will, (3) repentance, (4) confession, and (5) baptism.
3. Baptism is an act of fleeing the wrath of God to come, Baptism being the initial step of a lifetime of repentance, and the fruit that comes with repentance, and dependence upon God. (Matthew 3:7-10)
4. Baptism, ultimately when done by Christ, is a final destination and not a means to some other end. (Matthew 3:11-12) To live a lifestyle of True Christian Baptism, is to have arrived at a destination of being refined.
5. **Prayer**

**INTRODUCTION:** Re-Baptized in Ephesus

1. Acts 19:1-7 – Our grizzled and chiselled church-planting missionary, the Apostle Paul, finds himself once again in the pagan city of Ephesus on his third and final missionary expedition. At the conclusion of his second church planting expedition he had left two good friends, Aquila and Priscilla, in Ephesus and he hoped to reunite with them again. So he made the arduous journey through the inland country and now he has arrived looking for his companions, but as he tours through the city in his search, he happens upon twelve men who have the appearance of being devout disciples of Jesus Christ. As Paul converses with the men, it becomes apparent that they are disciples.

And yet there is something amiss about these twelve men. Though they do seem to have knowledge of Christ, having been the disciples of Apollos, there is something missing. There is a lack of passion, a lack of zeal, a lack of joy... Actually, while Paul is conversing with them, it seems that they lack most of the outwardly visible fruit of the Holy Spirit. So, Paul dutifully asks, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

“No,” the twelve men responded after looking around at each other awkwardly for a few moments. “We have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit!”

“If you’ve never even heard about the Holy Spirit, then what – precisely – were you Baptized *into?”*

At this point one of the twelve men, interrupted and said, “Excuse me Mr. Paul – what’s the difference? After all, we *were* baptized! We were fully immersed in water. Does it really matter what we were baptized into? Does it really matter what reason we were baptized for? I’m sure at some point, Mr. Paul, Apostle Church Planter Extraordinaire, you’re going to probably insist that we get re-baptized, but before you do, before you rebaptize us- I’d just like to know: what’s the big deal?

What is the big deal? What is the difference? Why do guys run around insisting that there is significance in the way in which a person was baptized? Why do we have an entire denomination of individual Christians that refer to themselves as ‘Baptists?’

**Proposition:** The reply in short is “...to live a lifestyle of True Christian Baptism, is to have arrived at a destination of being refined.”

**I want you to commit to a lifestyle of Baptism.** We need to commit to a lifestyle of Baptism. In other words, we are not baptized until we have arrived at a destination, of being refined day by day through the tireless ongoing never ending war that the Holy Spirit makes against the flesh in your life.

**PRESENT TENSE (3:11a)**

1. (Primary Clause)I am baptizing (immersing) you by means of (en – instrumental) water for (into - eis) repentance (accusative),
   * + 1. **Illustration:** “I go in car.” Apart from the silliness of sounding like a grade 1 basic entry level reading book, what do I mean when I say this? It can be a bit ambiguous. Is car my real destination, or am I going somewhere in my car? In other words, is car a tool that I am using to “go” or is car the destination at which I have arrived, after I “went”? Repentance is the destination. Baptism, being immersed in water, is the car that gets you to the destination of a state of repentance.
       2. **Fruit in Keeping with Repentance:** 2 Corinthians 7:11
          1. Sincerity, transparency, authenticity
          2. Eagerness to clear yourselves
          3. Indignation at one’s own behaviour
          4. Fear for what God may do
          5. A longing to restore relationships that have been broken
          6. A zealous hatred of sin, knowing its harm
          7. A desire to see justice done, punishment
   1. ***But*** (sharp contrast) he who is coming after me is mightier than I,
      1. whose sandalls I am (eime- present active indicative) not worthy to carry.

**FUTURE TENSE (3:11b-12)**

**TRANSITION: So what’s the difference between the two guys?**

1. **SHARP CONTAST carried over from III.b:** (Primary Clause) He will baptize (f) (immerse) you in (en – locative or instrumental) the Holy Spirit (Locative of Sphere/Instrumental of Means) and fire (Locative of Sphere or Instrumental of Means)
   * + 1. En – in/by means of (locative or instrumental, “there is a combination of the two ideas” ~A.T. Robertson, Pg. 590)
          1. Holy Sprit
          2. Fire

**TRANSITION: What does it look like to be Baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire?**

* 1. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and
     1. he will clear (future) his threshing floor
        1. and will gather (future) his wheat into the barn,
        2. but the chaff he will burn (future) with unquenchable fire.

THRESHING/REFINING/DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION

1. What does threshing look like:
   1. To be trampled underfoot of a horse or an ox.
   2. **Doctrine of Sanctification**: **(Isaiah 28:18–29, ESV)** *Then your covenant with death will be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol will not stand; when the overwhelming scourge passes through, you will be beaten down by it. As often as it passes through it will take you; for morning by morning it will pass through, by day and by night; and it will be sheer terror to understand the message. For the bed is too short to stretch oneself on, and the covering too narrow to wrap oneself in. For the Lord will rise up as on Mount Perazim; as in the Valley of Gibeon he will be roused; to do his deed—strange is his deed! and to work his work—alien is his work! Now therefore do not scoff, lest your bonds be made strong; for I have heard a decree of destruction from the Lord God of hosts against the whole land. Give ear, and hear my voice; give attention, and hear my speech. Does he who plows for sowing plow continually? Does he continually open and harrow his ground? When he has leveled its surface, does he not scatter dill, sow cumin, and put in wheat in rows and barley in its proper place, and emmer as the border? For he is rightly instructed; his God teaches him. Dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge, nor is a cart wheel rolled over cumin, but dill is beaten out with a stick, and cumin with a rod. Does one crush grain for bread? No, he does not thresh it forever; when he drives his cart wheel over it with his horses, he does not crush it. This also comes from the Lord of hosts; he is wonderful in counsel and excellent in wisdom.*” **(Isaiah 28:18–29, ESV)**
2. To be threshed must be a painful experience.
3. True Christians have already arrived at the threshing floor. True Baptism symbolizes that we have arrived at the destination of the Kingdom of God, of the Holy Spirit and fire. We stand in the Kingdom of Purity, and we are being refined by Hs hand.
4. The Nature of Being Refined (Sanctification) **Romans 8:13 & Galatians 5:17**
5. Illustrated by Peter in **Luke 22:31**. Peter writes with wisdom many years later **1 Peter 1:6-7**.

Response to the Pharisees:

1. You can’t just go through the motions on this.
   1. The Pharisees and Sadducees had no real intention of forsaking their self-ascribed systems of holiness. They had no intention of abandoning everything they had ever known and following Christ and seeking to be conformed to the image of Christ through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. They thought they were just getting dunked in water!
2. This baptism, while important and significant, is only the beginning. This is only preparatory work.
   1. John’s baptism was *just* a dunking in water, but it was preparatory for another kind of Baptism that Jesus was bringing. This baptism would be conjoined with John’s Baptism. But for now, John’s Baptism was a baptism of repentance, but it must be a genuine repentance.
3. But to have a true beginning, to have a true start on the Christian life, this beginning of repentance is absolutely necessary.

Conclusion: Finishing Acts 19

Prayer

**Psalm 1**