

**QUESTION: I heard someone say that when we accept Jesus, we receive the Holy Spirit at that very moment. In Acts 1:5, it says, "For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." Does this indicate two baptisms are required? Then in Acts 1:8, it seems that "new birth" baptism does not give us power, not until the Holy Spirit comes on us. The apostles were baptized with water, however, they were told that they would not get the Holy Spirit until a few days passed.**

**ANSWER:** There are several issues involved in your question, but it breaks down into these questions:

- 1.) The disciples were baptized in water by John the Baptist, so was that Christian baptism, and did they receive the Holy Spirit at that time? Were Jesus' disciples or any other believers "born again" and did they have the "new birth" before Pentecost? What was John's baptism?
- 2.) Why did Jesus say the disciples had to wait until the Day of Pentecost? What was the significance of the Day of Pentecost?
- 3.) Under the New Covenant, in the "Age of Grace", when does a believer in Jesus receive the Holy Spirit? How do we access the POWER of the Spirit in our lives?

As we look at each of the components of your question, we hope you will no longer be confused on this subject. **The book of Acts is a HISTORICAL book, showing us what happened when the Church of Jesus Christ first came into being**, and is not meant to be a "doctrinal book" in that sense. In other words, when Jesus told the disciples they must wait a few days, **he was speaking to them specifically, and NOT to ALL believers**. If Jesus were speaking to all believers, then we would all have to go to Jerusalem to receive the Holy Spirit, because that's what He told them to do (Luke 24:49). We would all have to fall off a horse and be blinded for three days as Saul was, before he became the Apostle Paul (Acts 9:1-20). We would all have to wait until an earthquake happened, because that's how the Philippian jailer got saved (Acts 16:26-34).

**1.) The disciples were baptized in water by John the Baptist, so was that Christian baptism, and did they receive the Holy Spirit at that time? Were Jesus' disciples or any other believers "born again" and did they have the "new birth" before Pentecost? What was John's baptism?**

No, the disciples of Jesus had not yet received the Holy Spirit (John 7:39) or the "new birth" when they were baptized in water (the Baptism of John), because **they were still under the Old Covenant, because Jesus had NOT YET gone to the CROSS to PAY for their sins and our sins**. At the Last Supper, Jesus told His disciples that **He would be sending the Holy Spirit** to them, but at that time **they only had the Holy Spirit WITH them, not IN them** as we do now. John 14:16-17, "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth (Holy Spirit), whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but **you know Him, for He dwells WITH you**, and WILL BE IN YOU." As for John the Baptist, John's ministry was to have people come out to him in the desert, at the Jordan River, and they would confess their sins, and be dunked in the water, **symbolizing** the washing away of their sins. **They were being made ready and prepared for the Lord Jesus**, and their repentance was a preparation for

the remission of their sins when they would fully come to believe in Jesus as their Savior. This is the only baptism that Jesus' disciples had been baptized with. John's baptism did not save them, and was **only looking forward to when their sins WOULD BE remitted (taken away) through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.** Until Jesus went to the cross and shed His blood for our sins, there was no remission. John's baptism of "repentance for the remission of sins" was two-fold: the act of REPENTANCE was NOW, but the "remission" part was **looking to the future, when Jesus would SHED His BLOOD on the CROSS for the remission of our sins.**

- **Mark 1:4** "John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a **BAPTISM of REPENTANCE for the remission of sins.**"
- **Luke 3:3** "And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a **baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.**"
- **Matthew 26:28** "For this is **My BLOOD of the NEW COVENANT,** which is shed for many for the **REMISSION of SINS.**"
- **Acts 19:3-5** "..... 'Into what then were you baptized?' So they said, 'Into John's baptism.' Then Paul said, '**John indeed baptized 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 baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."
- **Luke 24:46-47** ".....thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that **repentance and REMISSION of SINS** should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."
- **Hebrews 10:18-19** "Now where there is **remission** of these, there is no longer an offering for sin. Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest **by the BLOOD of Jesus,** by a new and living way which He consecrated for us....."

**Definition: REPENTANCE & REMISSION** - Repentance means turning away from your sins and going in the opposite direction, which would be towards God. Remission or to REMIT means to **RELEASE from the GUILT or PENALTY, as of sins; to cancel or refrain from inflicting a penalty.**

Again, **John's baptism was symbolic** of the cleansing from sin that would happen when the Messiah would come and die for our sins. After Christ died on the cross, **Christian baptism is SYMBOLIC** of His death and resurrection and our new life in Him. You were DEAD in your sins, and you have been RAISED to NEW LIFE in Christ Jesus (Romans 6:3-4). **Going down under the water and coming up again is SYMBOLIC of your dying with Christ and being raised with Him.** Our word BAPTIZE comes from the Greek word "baptizo" which means "to be identified with" or "to be placed into". When you are baptized in water, you are making a PUBLIC IDENTIFICATION with Jesus Christ! Both John's baptism and Christian baptism today are SYMBOLIC only. Water baptism DOES NOT SAVE YOU or do anything more than GIVE a PUBLIC PROFESSION of your faith in Christ, and is an act of obedience to Him, and **an OUTWARD PICTURE of what has ALREADY HAPPENED to you ON THE INSIDE** when you believed in Jesus and were born again (the "washing" of regeneration - Titus 3:4).

## **2.) Why did Jesus say the disciples had to WAIT until the Day of Pentecost? What was the significance of the Day of Pentecost?**

Pentecost means "fiftieth" and refers to the Feast of Weeks, or HARVEST, which was celebrated by the Jews fifty days after the Passover (Exodus 34:22-23, Leviticus 23:15-22). At Pentecost, an offering of "firstfruits" was always made. The Holy Spirit came for the FIRST TIME to live in ALL believers and cause them to be born again ("**born of the Spirit**" - **John 3:5-6 & 8**). This is why Jesus told them to wait until the Day of Pentecost, because **it became the beginning or "firstfruits" of the great HARVEST of believers in Jesus Christ who would make up the whole Body of Christ, the Church.** Those first several thousand believers on the Day of Pentecost were "**born of the Spirit**" and received the

**Holy Spirit dwelling in them**, and were the "firstfruits" or first representatives of ALL believers. Since then, for almost 2,000 years now, we all receive the Holy Spirit immediately upon believing in Jesus and being born again.

- **John 7:37-39** "On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and DRINK. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his HEART will flow rivers of LIVING WATER." But this He spoke concerning **the SPIRIT, whom those BELIEVING in Him would RECEIVE; for the Holy Spirit was NOT YET given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.**"
- **Ephesians 1:13** "In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, **having BELIEVED, you were sealed with the HOLY SPIRIT** of promise,"

**Definition: "JESUS was not yet GLORIFIED"** - Jesus was speaking about His death and resurrection, which at this point when He was speaking, was yet in the future. **On the Day of Pentecost**, AFTER Jesus was "glorified" by His resurrection and ascension to heaven, the Holy Spirit was GIVEN and continues to be given to ALL WHO BELIEVE in Him (II Corinthians 1:22, II Cor. 5:5).

- **Romans 8:9** "But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed **the Spirit of God dwells in you**. Now if anyone does NOT have the Spirit of Christ, **he is not His.**"

**Definition: "HE IS NOT HIS"** - This means there is no such thing as a Christian who does not have the Holy Spirit living (dwelling) inside of him. **You CANNOT BE a Christian, you CANNOT BE SAVED, and NOT have the Holy Spirit IN YOU.**

But what about verses in the Bible that say to "ask God for the Holy Spirit" or to "wait for the Holy Spirit"? People get in trouble and come up with all sorts of wrong doctrines because they do not **take scripture in its context!** All of the verses that say to "ask for the Spirit" or "wait for the Spirit" are Jesus talking to His disciples BEFORE Pentecost! The Day of Pentecost was when the Holy Spirit came to dwell in ALL BELIEVERS, and now it happens automatically when a person is saved. We don't have to wait, there is no second baptism, and we don't have to ask for the Holy Spirit to come to live in us. The Holy Spirit is actually the One who gives us life and causes us to be born again (in John 3:6 Jesus calls it being "born of the Spirit").

- **Luke 11:13** "If you, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"
- **Acts 1:4** "And being assembled together with them, He commanded them **not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father**, 'which,' He said, 'you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now (speaking of Pentecost).'"

**3.) Under the NEW COVENANT, in the "Age of Grace", when does a believer in Jesus receive the Holy Spirit? How do we access the POWER of the Spirit in our lives?**

You receive the Holy Spirit the moment you accept Jesus as your Savior. According to I John 4:13 & 15, "**whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God" has the Spirit of God dwelling in them.** Romans 10:9-10 tells us that "if you CONFESS with your mouth the Lord Jesus and BELIEVE in your HEART that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be SAVED." Ephesians 1:12-13 says that first, you HEARD the WORD of TRUTH, then you TRUSTED in CHRIST (put your faith in Him, received Him as Savior), then **AS SOON as you BELIEVED, you were SEALED with the Holy Spirit.**

- **I John 4:13 & 15** "By this we know that we ABIDE in Him, and **He in us**, because **He has given us of His SPIRIT**. (Verse 15) "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, **God ABIDES (DWELLS) in him**, and he in God."
- **Ephesians 1:12-14** "That we who first **trusted in Christ** should be to the praise of His glory. **In Him you also TRUSTED**, after you **heard the word of truth**, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also **HAVING BELIEVED**, you were **SEALED with the HOLY SPIRIT** of promise, who is the **GUARANTEE (pledge)** of our inheritance until the REDEMPTION of the PURCHASED possession, to the praise of His glory."

**Definition: "GUARANTEE"** - a down-payment, a deposit, a PROMISE that the full price will be paid. When we accept Christ as Savior, our **spirit** is born again, and the **Holy Spirit comes to live in us** as a **GUARANTEE or promise** until our **BODY** is redeemed and made perfect at the **RESURRECTION**

- **I Corinthians 6:17 & 19** "But he who is joined to the Lord is **ONE SPIRIT with Him**." "Or do you not know that your **BODY** is the **TEMPLE** of the **HOLY SPIRIT**, who is **IN YOU**, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?"
- **I Corinthians 3:16** "Do you not know that **you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God DWELLS IN YOU?**"
- **Romans 8:9, 11 & 16** "But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the **SPIRIT of GOD dwells in you**. Now if anyone **does NOT have the SPIRIT of CHRIST**, he is not His (does not belong to Him)." "But if **the Spirit of Him** who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through **His Spirit who dwells in you**." "**The SPIRIT HIMSELF** bears witness with **our SPIRIT** that we are CHILDREN of God."
- **Ephesians 3:16** "That He would grant (give) you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might (power) **through His SPIRIT in the INNER MAN** (your human spirit)."

**Definition: "INNER MAN"** - Your **human spirit** within you, and also called your "**HEART**" in scripture. The **Holy Spirit of God** comes to **LIVE WITHIN your spirit**, and **YOUR SPIRIT** is "born again" when you receive Jesus as your Savior. Sometimes we call this "asking **Jesus to come into your HEART**." He comes in and **DWELLS** in you by His Holy Spirit.

- **Ephesians 3:17-19** "That **CHRIST may DWELL in your HEARTS** through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height - to know the **love of Christ** which passes knowledge; **that you may be FILLED with all the FULLNESS of God**."

**Definition: "FILLED with the fullness of God"** - This is the same as **being FILLED with the Holy Spirit**. "Filled" means "controlled by." In Ephesians 5:18, Paul says that **INSTEAD** of being drunk, which is to be "**UNDER THE INFLUENCE**" of alcohol, we are to be **CONTROLLED BY or "UNDER THE INFLUENCE" of the Holy Spirit**. Some people think the filling of the Holy Spirit is a one-time experience, and therefore do not examine themselves on a daily basis to see if they are **continually ALLOWING the Holy Spirit to be in CONTROL** of their lives or not. We are **COMMANDED** to be filled with the Holy Spirit. **It is NOT a "second baptism" or ONE-TIME experience**, but a continuous, moment-by-moment **YIELDING** of ourselves to the Holy Spirit's control in our lives. The literal translation of the Greek is "**keep being continually filled with the Spirit. All the FRUIT of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control** will be abundant in your life as you allow the Holy Spirit to control your heart, mind, and actions. This is what Jesus meant by our lives producing fruit that will glorify God the Father. "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit" (John 15:8). **This is how we ACCESS the POWER of the HOLY SPIRIT in our lives!** The **POWER** to **TRANSFORM** our lives! The **TRANSFORMATION** and **FRUIT** that God wants to grow in our lives is

also called "the fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23), because **the Holy Spirit is the POWER source for the growth of this fruit as you abide in Jesus**. Jesus promises that the spiritual fruit of His JOY will remain in you, and that your JOY will be full, if you abide in Him.

- **I John 4:13 & 15** "By this we know that **we ABIDE in Him**, and He in us, because **He has given us of His SPIRIT.**"
- **John 15:4-5, 7 & 11** "**Abide in Me**, and I in you. As the branch cannot **bear FRUIT** of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. **He who ABIDES in Me**, and I in him, **bears much FRUIT**; for without Me you can do nothing." "If you **ABIDE in Me**, and My WORDS abide in YOU, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you." "These things I have spoken to you, that **My JOY may remain in you**, and that your JOY may be full."
- **Ephesians 5:17-18** "Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but **be FILLED with the SPIRIT.**"