

## Excerpt from the *Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* by Dr. Todd Kennedy

### Point 12 on *Baptism of the Holy Spirit*

12. Baptism of the Holy Spirit is an often misunderstood biblical doctrine. At the point of faith in Jesus Christ for eternal life the Holy Spirit baptizes the believer into the body of Christ and into union with Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). The Corinthians had many problems, but each was baptized by the Holy Spirit into the church. At the same time, the Holy Spirit indwelt the new believer never to leave (“drink of one Spirit” in 1 Corinthians 12:13). One is not a church age believer if the Holy Spirit does not live in that person. He provides the ability to live the supernatural Christian life, and He produces growth, service, and the ability to live God’s way instead of the way of the flesh and the sinful nature. The baptism of the Holy Spirit did not occur until Pentecost and from then on in the church age it always occurs at the point of eternal life faith.

- a. Baptism with the Holy Spirit is the act by which the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ the moment he believes, and by this indwelling God identifies and unites that believer with Christ and His spiritual body, the church. The baptism of the Holy Spirit did not occur until the church began at Pentecost in Jerusalem (Acts 11:15-18; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:22-23; Romans 8:9). One cannot be a believer and in the church apart from the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Corinthian believers, with all of their spiritual failures, had been baptized with the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- b. The baptism of the Holy Spirit provides the basis for Christian living; 1. Because the baptism of the Holy Spirit identifies each believer with Christ in Christ’s death to sin and in Christ’s new resurrection kind of life (Romans 6:1-11), 2. Because the baptism of the Holy Spirit is our spiritual circumcision—the removal of the legal control over us by our unbeliever self (Colossians 2:11-12), and 3. Because the baptism with the Holy Spirit is the time when the Holy Spirit comes to indwell the believer in Christ (Acts 11:15-18).
- c. Jesus prophesied the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Matthew 3:11, Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, John 1:33, and Acts 1:5. Jesus said, in Acts 1:5, that the baptism of the Holy Spirit would begin after he ascended. It was therefore not a part of the age of Israel, but was the fundamental and basic sign of the church age.

## Point 12 on *Baptism of the Holy Spirit* (Continued)

- d. Jesus' prophecy was first fulfilled in Acts 2:1-4 when the Jewish believers were in the upper room waiting for God to give the Holy Spirit to them. This same thing happened while Peter was preaching to Jews and Gentiles at Cornelius' house in Caesarea when they believed in Jesus Christ for eternal life (Acts 10:44-48). A little later on, Peter went to Jerusalem where Jewish believers criticized him for eating with Gentiles when he was with Cornelius. He explained to them what had happened when the Gentiles at Cornelius' house believed the gospel—he saw the Gentiles being baptized with the Holy Spirit. Peter then explained that this baptism was exactly what Christ had predicted when he spoke to his disciples before his ascension in Acts 1:5 (Acts 11:15-18). This demonstration also happened for the Samaritan believers (Acts 8:12-17) and for Old Testament believers being brought into the church (Acts 19:1-6). Each of these incidents (Jews at Pentecost, Samaritans, Gentiles in Cornelius' house, and disciples of John the Baptist) demonstrated that all races and groups of people were brought into the church through faith in Christ, and that the baptism of the Holy Spirit put them into the church at the time of their faith. Once people understood about the beginning of the church, this outward demonstration was not repeated.
- e. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is something that God does for each believer in Christ.
  - i. It is not something that is felt.
  - ii. It occurs at the time a person believes in Christ.
  - iii. It is supernatural.
  - iv. It cannot be improved upon.
  - v. It is complete and perfect when it happens.
  - vi. It is not now evidenced by signs, though several times in the young church it was evidenced by signs in order to confirm that the Holy Spirit was given to every church age believer in Christ.
  - vii. It is revealed only by the Word of God.
  - viii. It is the basis for the supernatural Christian life.