

What is the difference between Holy Spirit baptism, water baptism, and the baptism of fire?

1. Holy Spirit baptism was a PROMISE...

- a. **To the apostles.** After His resurrection, Jesus said to them, "...you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:1-5). He commanded them to go to Jerusalem and wait for the "Promise of the Father."
- b. **Administered by Christ.** John the baptizer, quoting God the Father, said Jesus "baptizes with the Holy Spirit" (John 1:33; c.f., Matt 3:11; John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26).
- c. **To reveal and confirm His word.** Jesus promised the eleven, "He, the Spirit of truth... will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). Truth was confirmed by "signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will" (Heb 2:3-4).
- d. **Fulfilled by God.** His word was fully revealed and completely confirmed before the close of the first century (2 Pet 1:3; Jude 3). When Paul wrote his epistle to the church in Ephesus, he spoke of only one baptism in effect at that time (Eph 4:4-5).

2. Water baptism is a COMMAND...

- a. **To everyone.** Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them..." (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 10:48).
- b. **Administered by men to accountable people .** "Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him" (Acts 8:38).
- c. **Carried out by God's authority.** "...in the name of the Father...Son...and Holy Spirit" (Matt 28:19).
- d. **To be buried in water and raised to a new life.** "We were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life" (Rom 6:4).
- e. **And a condition of forgiveness and salvation.** "Repent, and let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." (Acts 2:38)
"baptism...now saves us...through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet 3:21).
- f. **Continuing to the end of time.** To His disciples, who carry on the work of preaching, baptizing and teaching His commands, He promised to be with them "always, even to the end of the age" (Matt 28:20).

3. The baptism of fire is a PENALTY...

- a. **For the rejecters of Jesus Christ.** "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into a furnace of fire" (Matt 13:41-42; Luke 3:16-17).

- b. **Of vengeance upon faithless people**, “...who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess 1:7-9).
- c. **That will commence as the end of time**. “But the heavens and the earth which now exist are kept in store by the same word, reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men” (2 Pet 3:7).
- c. **That will never end**. This “fire” is in a terrible place, far away from the presence of God. It “shall never be quenched” (Mark 9:42-50). Jesus said both the “fire” and “punishment” is “everlasting” (Matt 18:8-9; 25:41-46).

In summary, Holy Spirit baptism is not promised to Christians of our age; the baptism of fire is a warning everyone. Water baptism, however, plays an important role in our escape from the wrath of God upon a disobedient world. “...Once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us, namely baptism...” (1 Pet 3:20-21).

Study your Bible and search the Truth. Thanks for reading!

~ C. Boyd Jennings