

FOUR BAPTISMS—NOW JUST ONE (3)

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In the first two parts of this article, we discussed three of the four baptisms mentioned in the New Testament. As a reminder, these are: **(1) Baptism of John; (2) Baptism of Fire; (3) Baptism of the Holy Spirit; (4) Baptism of Christ.** Today, we examine the last of the four—the baptism of Christ.

Baptism into Christ. Administrator: *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.” {Matthew 28:19,20}* Jesus commissioned His disciples to go and baptize people of all nations. In Acts 9, Ananias was sent to Damascus to preach to Saul of Tarsus. In Acts 10, Peter was sent to preach to and baptize the first Gentile convert, Cornelius. In Acts 8, Philip was sent to teach and baptize the Ethiopian eunuch.

Elements: *“Jesus answered, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.’” {John 3:5}* The elements of Jesus’ baptism consist of water and the spirit. One is “born again” when he accepts the Spirit’s inspired words—Christ’s teaching—and submits to burial in water. Remember Cornelius’ conversion. What happened after Peter taught Cornelius and his household and they accepted Peter’s teaching? *“Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord...” {Acts 10:47,48}*

Nature: *“And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.’” {Mark 16:15,16}* This is a call to lost men whose sins have separated them from God. Christ calls on us to accept the remedy to our sin condition.

Subjects: *“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and*

brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” {Acts 2:36-38} Penitent believers are fit subjects for Christ’s baptism, which must be preceded by faith and repentance.

Duration: *“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” {Ephesians 1:7} Christ’s baptism was first administered on the Day of Pentecost. It will remain in effect until the Lord returns in judgment. As long as there is sin in the world, we will need this baptism.*

Purpose and Design: *”And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” {Acts 22:16} Sinners need this baptism to receive remission and forgiveness of sins. Blotting out their past sins offers them salvation and hope of eternal life.*

Now that we have examined the four baptisms, can you understand why the one baptism mentioned in Ephesians must be the **baptism into Christ**? The baptisms of John and the Holy Spirit served their purposes and were set aside. The baptism of fire is yet to come, and we should seek to avoid it. Christ’s baptism puts us into His body {Galatians 3:26,27}; buries us into His death {Romans 6:3,4}; and is called the operation of God {Colossians 2:11-13}. Failure to make the distinction leads to false conclusions about a vital subject. Seek this baptism and have a relationship with the Savior! ***