

DID YOU RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT

Jonathon Wills, Presbytery Word for week commencing Sunday 23 March 2025
Transcription of recording, slightly edited

It is a delight to share together in the word. As Pete said, we have been meditating around our baptism and our understanding of that since our New Year's seminar. Personally, I have been completely captivated in my spirit by this one initiative of baptism that has three sanctified elements or initiatives from Father, Son and Holy Spirit, all carried within it. It has completely opened my eyes to a true understanding of what our baptism is and then the implications of how we walk in the faith of our baptism each day. Understanding our baptism (and understanding is once it is now in us culturally) is essential to our establishment as worthy homes. We cannot talk 'worthy homes' apart from not only the foundation, but also the daily faith of our baptism. Each initiative of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is essential for our proper functioning as households and congregations.

We are not just adding onto what we already have, as in we hear something new and go, 'Okay, I will add that onto what I already have.' I have either been really illuminated to it, or it is, 'Well, okay, that is what they are saying, but I will just keep adding it onto whatever I already have.' In some cases, what is there is not the foundation to be built upon. If what is being proclaimed is the foundation to be built upon, you cannot just add that onto what is already there. The provocation and the conviction of the Holy Spirit is toward a doing away with what is there, and being established in what is new and the foundation that is coming to us. It is not the baptism of the Holy Spirit added onto whatever you have already. It is getting right to the foundation - ensuring that it has been laid.

When we consider into what are we baptised, in one sense it is easy... (We have talked about this in previous weeks) ...it is

easy to do something, to find some water and go, 'Well, however it is that we apply it, it does not really matter because baptism only applies to water. I will find some water. What is the right formula to say?' And so, I say, 'in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit', or 'in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ', and something happens. Christ's commission was that we would make disciples through baptism. It is not about 'What is the word that I need to say?' It is 'How do I make a disciple by baptising them into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit?' What does this actually look like? That is (as we understand the initiative of the Father, of the Son and the Holy Spirit in baptism) where it is been made clear to us that this is how we disciple someone.

The beginning point of discipleship is there needs to be a word proclaimed that is by the Holy Spirit that ministers faith to the hearer. The initial point of faith to the hearer is then going to be that they can receive the Son and the Father into their heart. The Son can then pray that this one is hearing and receiving the word and receiving a love of the truth. The Son who now dwells would now pray that we would receive the Holy Spirit.

Receiving the Holy Spirit is the beginning point of the gospel of salvation. Let us read this in John chapter 14 verses 16 to 18. I am loving this expression of the Son, and we will build out on this as we proceed through this morning. Jesus says in verse 15 of John chapter 14... (We do need the whole chapter for our context here) ... He says, 'If you love Me, keep My commandments, and I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever — the Spirit of truth, 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.'

I love the expression here 'that He may abide with you forever'. The context of receiving the Holy Spirit is not just for some help because I find it difficult to live the Christian life and I need the help of the Holy Spirit who is going to give me that extra little boost each day. This is *forever*. We will *forever* be a temple of the Holy Spirit and for His expression. We need to make the distinction here between the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of adoption coming to us as the firstfruits of the Spirit that begins the adoption and then leads to new birth, with the baptism of the Holy Spirit (the baptism of a son of God with the Holy Spirit), when our bodies become a temple of the Holy Spirit as He fills us. This is the full immersion of our bodies into the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and He enables us to live and to walk in the fellowship of the New Covenant.

I want us to be able to see the distinction here that when we say, 'Receive the Holy Spirit', it is not firstly talking the *baptism* of the Holy Spirit. It is talking receive the Holy Spirit who is the *Spirit of adoption*, that you might then receive the conviction, 'Do you want to be a son of God?' If you respond to that conviction by faith, you are then able to cry out 'Abba Father, Father, Father! Hallowed be Your name' - the cry of a son now to the Father. That motivating Spirit is then going to lead us all the way through then, to be desiring the baptism of the Holy Spirit which will be evidenced as we are speaking in tongues and able to prophesy together in the fellowship of the *agape* meal.

I have a number of questions sitting here as we begin. Does all this matter? All these things that we are teaching, are they essential for your salvation? Or in your mind, are there essential and non-essential truths? Within many, many denominations, they very clearly articulate the essential and the non-essential truths. All those things that are non-essential are the things that they all debate

around, and then they split and form new churches because of how it is that they are believing.

I sat in a ministers' association meeting once, listening to all of the different expressions, and even [listening to] ministers confessing and saying, 'Yes, I am fully immersed (water baptised), but I do not tell my denomination because we are not supposed to do that.' Someone else is filled with the Holy Spirit and speaks in tongues, but 'Do not tell them because I am not supposed to be either.' Then someone said, 'Well, we all have things denominationally that we do not actually agree with, and we do not [actually] believe.' I was sitting there quite stunned at what was being said. I made comment in terms of (and we will look at this) Paul coming into Ephesus and inquiring of the disciples of John. 'Into what have you been baptised?' And 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?'

The conclusion that one of these ministers made was, 'Do you know what I think? What really matters is that when we stand before the Lord, He will ask us a couple of questions. This is what it all comes down to. This is what is essential. "Did you love Me, and did you serve Me?" ' And everybody heartily agreed - in all their doctrinal differences and eccentricities. Imagine receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit and refusing to minister that to your congregation. Imagine that! Imagine how effective that baptism of the Holy Spirit is in your life if that is the manner in which you are going to minister.

Do you know what really is going to matter when we stand before Him? [It will be] whether He says, 'I know you.' Not this other context of, 'I have been very loyal in Christian community for 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 years.' Ultimately for you, it would not matter what church you sat in. You are saved and you like to hear a word proclaimed. You think it is necessary. You like to live and

function and serve within Christian community and be engaged in missions. But ultimately, it does not matter which church you sit in, because your salvation belongs to you, and in many ways, you just put up with whatever is being said. Everything that is being proclaimed to us is essential for our salvation. Our obedience to that word is what establishes and then locates us on the pathway that is bringing us forth in God's covenant purpose, which is to bring us forth in His image and His likeness.

A question would be (I have heard this question asked before): is baptism essential for salvation? This is often used by people who are trying to trap us in terms of what we doctrinally believe and otherwise. What would we say? Do you know what we are talking 'by salvation?' Are we talking saved from sin, or is salvation describing for us the covenant purpose of God being brought forth in our lives? In other words, did God have a plan for you before Adam fell? The kids are going to learn in Sonseekers this morning about the fall of mankind. God had a plan for us before Adam fell. In fact, that plan went before the foundation of the world, and that plan initiated everything. [It was] His covenant purpose to bring us forth into His image and likeness that we might live at one with Him and one another. This is the atonement. [It has] nothing to do with sin at that point. There was capacity within the offering that brings this to pass - to deal with sin and to save us from our sin. But our salvation is running all the way to the day of resurrection. This is not just that you were saved from your sin, but that you have been brought forth in the image and likeness of God. By faith each day, you have walked in the sanctified initiative of Father, Son and Holy Spirit towards you. Amen.

Baptism (and I love this statement) is immersion into a process through which the covenant purpose of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is accomplished in the life of a

believer. Their covenant purpose was to make us in Their image and according to Their likeness. Is baptism essential for salvation? 100 percent absolutely, emphatically! I cannot say it more strongly. Yes, it is! The question is: into what were you baptised? Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed, and the implications of this?

While we say that baptism is *essential* for salvation, it does not *guarantee* your salvation. Please do not sit there going, 'Oh, I want a law. Tell me which one I can have so I can have some sense of assurance.' Your assurance is that you are found walking by faith in the process that brings you forth into His image and likeness. If you are found on that pathway, then you have an assurance of salvation while you continue to walk it. In the same way, new birth is essential for salvation, but it does not guarantee you salvation if you do not continue to walk in faith. You must be found on the pathway of salvation.

In this regard, the will of God is only fulfilled in the body of Christ, in the body that was prepared for Him. The first initiative of baptism is the Father taking the newly born son of God and placing them by one Spirit into the fellowship of the corporate body just as it pleases Him. By the way, Christ is the Head of that body. The whole context of the love of the Father towards us (and that we would now walk in love in the fellowship of His body), is that we are submitted to the headship of Christ and all the daily implications of that for us. That is where all the power for living as a member of Christ's body is going to be found - submitted to the headship of Christ.

You cannot be brought forth in the image and likeness of God and you will not be saved if you are not found walking in the fellowship of Christ's baptism in the sanctified initiative of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Could I say, let us not have any

arguments over that point at all? Not interested in them; will not engage you in them. Please do not misappropriate Scripture to try to justify some other point and perspective. That is not how Scripture is to be used. Do you need the baptism of the Holy Spirit to be a Christian? Amen, we do. We cannot live the Christian life without the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit enables our participation in the New Covenant of the Spirit. How can we journey with Christ without the baptism of the Holy Spirit? *He* did not journey without the Holy Spirit coming and strengthening Him with Eternal Spirit, which is the sevenfold Spirit of the Lord. How can *we* presume to journey with Christ without the Holy Spirit strengthening us daily by that same Spirit?

John the Baptist made it clear when he said in Luke chapter 3 verse 16, 'I indeed baptise you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.' In this regard, the Holy Spirit is the capacity of *El Shaddai*, bringing to us the sevenfold Spirit of the Lord.

I would like us to come to Acts chapter 19. For most of our time now, we are going to look at two accounts in the book of Acts. One is at the beginning of chapter 19. The other is at the end of chapter 18. This is as Paul comes into Ephesus and he finds some disciples of John. Let us keep in mind this is at least 20 years after Christ has finished His offering journey. Our redemption is complete in Him. The adoption is now available, and Christ has ascended. The whole ministry of the Spirit has been committed to the church - the apostolic administration and the members of His body. Paul comes to Ephesus and finds these disciples of John. The question that he asks has captivated me over the course of the last number of weeks. He says to them in verse 2 of Acts chapter 19, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?'

Could I ask that that question rest on you this morning? Initially, what do you think that question means? Is Paul trying to find out if they speak in tongues and prophesy? Have they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit? When it comes down, I think it is in verses 5 and 6, where that is exactly what happens. They receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit when Paul lays hands on them and they immediately begin to speak in tongues and to prophesy. In other words, the fellowship of the *agape* meal (we could say) is activated. It is ignited among them because of this baptism of the Holy Spirit. Is that what Paul is asking about when he says, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' The key point here is 'when you believed'. To believe, you need to hear a word. He is asking, 'What happened when you heard the gospel proclaimed to you - when you heard of Christ and Him crucified? What took place in your heart? Did you receive the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of adoption?'

Did they hear the word of Christ declaring Yahweh *Elohim's* covenant purpose? Did they receive a love of that truth, filled with the hope of becoming a son of God through prevenient grace and the Spirit of grace and supplication? Did they receive the same faith of Abraham that he received? Did Christ then manifest Himself to them by the Father sending the Spirit of the Son into their heart to abide with them? This is the Seed sown into the heart through the word because they are hearing the word, loving it, receiving it, believing it. Christ is sent into the heart and because the Father and the Son are one, the Father comes too. Then this is that verse that we read at the beginning. Did the Son then pray for the Father to give them the help of the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of adoption? When they believed, did they receive the Holy Spirit?

Can you see what Paul is asking here? He is pressing to know, 'Are you new creation born again sons of God?' The answer to that

question is, 'No, they are not.' They are disciples of John. We could say that they love God relative to what they are understanding, but they are not new creation sons of God. They are not born again, and they are not journeying that process to be brought forth in the image and likeness of God. This is what Paul is pressing for. It is this wonderful point of a seed sown into the heart but not yet germinated. Can you see how someone can stall in their journey through, thinking that that (because it is so wonderful), is all that God is actually wanting to do? Yet, as the Son prays to the Father, 'Send the Holy Spirit into the heart', He comes with the conviction, 'Do you want to be a son of God?' That is then the choice. That is now the faith of Abraham that is inherent within the word, and 'will you depart from fear?' That is the beginning point then of the gospel preached to Abraham. 'Do not fear. I am your shield of faith. I am your exceedingly great reward.' This is what we are now believing for... (This is what Abraham believed for - this interaction right now) ...that as Christ is preached to a hearer, they would receive Abraham's faith; that the Father would send the Spirit of the Son into the heart; that a seed would be sown; that Christ would pray to the Father, 'Send the Holy Spirit with conviction into this believer's heart.' This is what Abraham is believing for. This is what all the heroes of faith were believing for and looking forward to - the glories that would be revealed. New creation sons of God with a spirit that is not the spirit of Adam, but a spirit that is reborn as a son of God, but still in this mortal body that we live in. The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit alive because of righteousness.

Did they receive the Spirit who would have brought that conviction? Would they then have cried out, having received that and choosing as the Holy Spirit then adopts them as a child of God? Would they then have cried out, 'Abba Father, Father, Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name!' It is

wonderful! I tell you, I ask the question, how long would this take in someone's heart - the interaction here? How long does it take? Can I put to you that it can be less than I have been speaking? Less than I have been speaking. Perhaps somewhere in the building or on screen, it has happened and is happening in someone's heart right now. Hallelujah. Wouldn't that be wonderful? What a wonderful thing to happen in church, for someone to receive the Holy Spirit when they believed, and to cry out through that Spirit of adoption, 'Father, Father, who art in heaven, You are my Father!' Amen.

That is not even the end of it because the Seed has not yet germinated. The Holy Spirit then germinates the Seed as we are delivered from our bondage to fear and then reborn. The Spirit of the Son is now crying out in our heart and is expressed through us, 'Abba Father, Abba Father, my Father!' Amen. This is wonderful. This is what Paul is asking, 'When you believed, did you receive the Holy Spirit?'

Paul says in Romans chapter 8 and verse 14, 'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.' Romans 8:14. Tommy and I have been memorising that verse at home. We have a little song that runs with that. 'As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.' In this regard, if you do not have the Seed, you cannot be born again. The Seed needs to be sown, and the Seed is the Spirit of Christ. It is the Holy Spirit who gives life, but the Son needs to have prayed for the Holy Spirit to be sent into the heart.

Even the disciples were not born again as sons of God until after Christ had completed His offering journey. What was it that brought them to birth? He breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.' Joh 20:22. You see how receiving the Holy Spirit when you believe is the beginning point of these things? That Spirit of faith, which is the Spirit

of adoption, does not cease actively working within us. It is motivating us forward every time the gospel is proclaimed to us. That motivation is understanding that this word is essential for my salvation. This word is essential for my walking as a son today. Every word that proceeds is what I am living by.

Returning to this context with these disciples: they then say to Paul that they have not even heard of the Holy Spirit. It makes it very clear then, 'Did you receive the Spirit when you believed?' Well, 'We did not, because we have not even heard of the Holy Spirit.' He then presses further and says, 'Well, into what were you baptised?' And they say, 'Well, it was John's baptism.' Clearly, they have not met Christ. Let us make a few comments in relationship to John's baptism.

Paul explains that John's baptism and its purpose was to lead them to Christ. This is Acts 19 verse 4. 'John indeed baptised 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.' It is right here that Paul preaches Christ and Him crucified. He has condensed it all in there to say that this was John's baptism; but John's baptism was leading you to believe in Christ. He is preaching a gospel that reveals the finished redemptive work of Christ and the hope of becoming a son in the image and likeness of God. John's baptism was the preparation of the way. He said, 'Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' It was a baptism of repentance and the forgiveness of sins.

Remarkably, John's confession was when Jesus came to be baptised by him, 'I am the one who needs to be baptised by You.' What did he recognise Christ's baptism was going to be? Christ was the One who would baptise him with the Holy Spirit and with fire. John's understanding was that that baptism is not available until Christ has finished His

offering journey, which Jesus described as being 'His baptism'. John is recognising, 'I need to be baptised by You, but I know that I cannot be baptised by You yet.' Yet when Jesus was baptised by John, the Spirit descended upon Him like a dove and alighted upon Him, His body was anointed as the temple of God. The Father spoke from heaven and said, 'This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.' Mat 3:17.

This body (this was His physical body) had been prepared for Him to fulfil the will of God. As we know through Hebrews and Psalm 40, 'Behold in the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Your will.' Heb 10:7; Psa 40:7-8. Where is that will going to be fulfilled and accomplished? In the physical body of Christ and in that offering journey and the process that brought Him forth.

The kingdom of heaven would be established through the body of Christ. John is saying, 'Repent, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' It is right here, almost close enough for us to reach and lay hold of. But it is not quite there yet because Christ has not run His offering journey. John then directed his disciples to Jesus when he said to them, 'There He is. There is the One that I have been speaking about. Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.' Jesus then asked them, 'What do you see? Come and see. Come and follow Me.' That was when many did (and all of them ought to have) become followers of Jesus.

At this point the kingdom of heaven had not yet come. It is going to be brought forth through the body of Christ. But as it is even being preached, the people are pressing in (in repentance) to take it by force. You cannot enter the kingdom of heaven unless you receive a heavenly body. All of our heavenly bodies were brought forth when Christ finished that offering journey and committed His Spirit to the Father. The question could then be (because the disciples then began to baptise), what were they baptising people

into? It is not the baptism of the church, what we are understanding now. It was not the kingdom of heaven because it had not yet come. They were baptising for discipleship and then establishing believers as a network of worthy homes, readying them and their homes for the finished work of their redemption.

John's disciples had to become followers of Christ. It is only the followers of Christ who receive the adoption and the right then to be born of God and to receive the joy of baptism.

It is right here that we can see the hang up with the 'new' surpassing the 'old'. Instead of becoming followers of Christ as Andrew did, some found cause to dispute and make criticism over different points. In Matthew chapter 9 we read about the disciples of John coming and contending with Jesus over the fact that they, as John's disciples, are fasting. The Pharisees are even fasting. But Jesus' disciples are not fasting. What is the story here? We now have our doctrinal differences here. What is essential and what is non-essential for salvation? What is going to get me to heaven? How do I sit in judgement over another person? Do you know Jesus does not even answer it? Does the fact that He does not answer it mean we now have a doctrine of never fasting because Jesus did not answer the dispute on fasting? Again, that would be nonsense. You can hear that this is where the competitive, the disputing, the contentions arise because of the oldness of a wineskin and the newness of the wine that is coming. Even at that point, as it is being proclaimed, the old wineskin is already at breaking point, unable to receive it.

John's disciples needed a new wineskin to receive his word. John's response was, 'He must increase, and I must decrease.' It was John that then said of Jesus, 'He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.' Mat 3:11. Then he said, 'He who believes in the Son has everlasting life. He who does not believe in the Son shall not see life, but the

wrath of God abides in him.' Joh 3:36. John is pretty clear in terms of pointing that pathway forward?

Again, the great mystery and wonder here is it then says in verse 5 of Acts chapter 19, 'When they heard this...' I love the Scriptures, and I love statements like this. 'When they heard this...' Stop at that point. Do not rush forward. 'When they heard this' causes us to ask the question: what was it that they heard, remembering that when they heard, they could believe to then receive the Holy Spirit? Right in this interaction that is happening here ('when they heard'), there is the most remarkable transaction taking place within their spirit. Their spirit is then rebirthed because the Son (the Seed of sonship life) has come to abide in their heart as they believed. [They] received the faith of Abraham to receive that word, and the Son prays for the Holy Spirit to come. The Holy Spirit comes with conviction, 'Do you want to be a son of God?' They then receive the Spirit of adoption and cry out as a son. The Holy Spirit then germinates that Seed, and the Spirit of the Son cries out within them.

I am repeating these things so that we catch it. When I repeat it, I am summarising something that we could take the whole hour on, and it would not sufficiently state all of the things that are happening here.

'When they heard this...' What happens in your spirit when you hear this? Each week as the gospel is being proclaimed to you, what happens in your spirit when you hear this? This is the word of life to you overflowing through the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, as He is ministering to you 'the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit [to] be with you always, amen.' As that is being ministered to us and we go, 'I will lay that one on top of what I heard last week. You have given me some things to think about today.' They [Father, Son and Holy Spirit] go, 'Well, thinking about it is not going

to do you any good.' 'When they heard this, they were baptised.'

What does that mean? It means that they have been brought forth as new creation sons of God, and the Father, in love has then baptised them by one Spirit now into the corporate body of Christ, submitted to their Head Christ, now able to fellowship with one another and to build one another up in love. What is their desire then? Is it not then to be baptised by water in the name of the Lord Jesus? This is just talking the location of it. As we have discussed before, it is not now the invocation of His name. They are clearly understanding that this is a fellowship together. Then 'Paul laid hands on them, and the Holy Spirit came upon them [the baptism of the Holy Spirit], and they began to speak in tongues and prophesy.' Act 19:6.

I tell you what, that is an *agape* meal table that I would like to sit at. Imagine the vibrancy of life, of testimony, of prophecy that would be taking place at that table, even as they are ministering to one another saying, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit' when you heard, and did you believe when you heard? Perhaps we could be a little more provocative in the spirit to one another to ask these questions, because look at what it opened for these disciples of John.

Come now with me to the end of Acts chapter 18. We are going to read about a man called Apollos. It says here in verse 24, 'Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord.' Who would like that to be the commendation of you? I tell you, I would take most of those things. Matt has his hand up; he wants to be that sort of man. It then says, '...though he only knew the baptism of John.' We will come back and explain things, but we should

already be going, 'Hang on, what is happening here?'

'...He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace, for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.'

A question for us would be, is Apollos born again? He is not. Does Apollos know Christ? He does not. This man is mighty in the Scriptures; eloquent; instructed in the way of the Lord; fervent in spirit; even saying that he teaches accurately the things of the Lord. This is all according to the Old Covenant. He is teaching it as well as anyone possibly could. There is a lot of this preaching going on in many different places. Just because there is the ability to use the Scriptures to make particular points, it does not mean that the one preaching it is born of God. [It does not mean] that the one preaching it has received the Holy Spirit when they believed. It is a little bit provocative in this regard, in terms of what defines our devoutness as a Christian [or] as a churchgoer. Could it be that you could sit anywhere, and it would not really matter what it was that you were hearing because you are a devout, good person who wants to live in Christian community?

How can Apollos be born again if he only knows John's baptism? He is preaching a pre-redemption gospel. He did not know the way of God, which is the offering and suffering journey of Christ, whereby Christ was brought forth as the first Man in the image and likeness of God, and that every person can be brought forth just like Christ in that image if we join the same process. In one sense, we could say Apollos was preaching

the faith of Abraham, not knowing that the faith of Abraham had come and was now available to those who had believed.

For many people, their assurance of salvation is in their own devoutness and goodness. They are loyal congregants, but their devoutness is greater than the authority of the Scriptures. That is, they do not live by every word that proceeds. They do not need to be submitted in headship order for the life of God to come to them. They find it apart from all these things - we could say in spite of all of these things. Again, this is all approximately 20 years after Christ, and Apollos is still a disciple of John. Some things can run for quite a while, especially because we take pride in our history. They had not entered into what John testified concerning the One who was to come, that He would baptise them with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Apollos was clearly not there on the day of Pentecost.

John's ministry that he [Apollos] remained loyal to was now an old wineskin and he needed to be made anew. Whatever it was that you began with or wherever it was that you began, you must keep moving forward. We must keep moving forward. When Priscilla and Aquila took him aside, they explained the way of God more accurately to him. Would you love to have listened while they explained that to him in an *agape* meal? This is *agape* fellowship as they sat down eating and drinking together with him and explained the way of God more accurately. This is not an argument or contention over the Scriptures or going, 'Gee, are we just splitting hairs over points of theology? John's baptism and the baptism of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, both were into water. What is the difference? I was in faith, so therefore it is. I will add to the next point here.' This is not what took place here.

It is so much more than just a description of how humble a man can be - that a man mighty in the Scriptures can be adjusted by

two tentmakers - two humble, worthy house tentmakers. They are able to adjust this man who knew the Old Testament Scriptures far better than they did. But they know Christ.

I like to think that perhaps Aquila and Priscilla said to Apollos, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' Then beginning with the Spirit of adoption, the firstfruits of the Spirit, and then the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the full capacity of the sevenfold Spirit of the Lord was then coming to this man. Again, how long did it take for Apollos to receive the new birth? How many weeks did he think about this? How many months did he listen to them again and again while they made their points clearer and clearer? How long did it take for him to be persuaded in his mind, as though that is how we are born again? Do you know, I think from the very first word, Apollos is jumping out of his skin. 'This is what I have been desiring. Every word that is being proclaimed is "yes and yes, amen and amen" and please Lord, yes, send that Spirit into my heart. I am crying out through conviction. I am believing by faith. Abba, Father, hallowed be Your name!" ' Behold! The Spirit of Christ then. This is happening in minutes. It is in minutes, the interaction of the gospel preached by the Holy Spirit. Again, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?'

It then says in verses 27 and 28, 'When he then desired to cross over to Achaia [which is to Corinth], the brethren wrote, and exhorted the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who believed through grace.' How was he able to help? He has received the Helper - the Helper who is the Spirit of adoption and then the Helper through the baptism of the Spirit. 'He will be with you.' 'I will pray the Father that you would receive the Holy Spirit who will be with you and in you *forever*.' Hallelujah. He goes as a great helper then to the brethren, as a member in particular of the body of Christ, submitted and accountable to

the love of God the Father toward him, that the Holy Spirit is pouring into his heart; submitted to Christ his Head; submitted to the lordship of Christ; now with a capacity by the Spirit to build up the other members of the body in love. Then by the capacity of the Holy Spirit, he is very clearly here, baptised into the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, joined now in these waters each day by the capacity of the Holy Spirit. What does it say then? 'He vigorously refuted the Jews.' In other words, the Jews who believed what he believed an hour ago. Vigorously now refuting the Jews showing from the Scriptures (that he knew so well), that Jesus is the Christ, and that this is the only way of salvation. This is what is now being ministered.

I hope we are encouraged through these two examples here. We can begin to understand the integrated fellowship of the sanctified initiatives of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We need to understand what the Father is doing in love; the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ that is coming to us; and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. We need to understand the Person of each One. But as we understand the Person of each One, we then begin to wonder and marvel, even in astonishment at how that One is revealing and helping the Other. We can never find One who stands alone apart from the Other.

We begin to understand that this is the dynamic fellowship of the body of Christ, together as by the Spirit we are so given in love for the sake of each other. But I cannot be given in love for your sake, unless I am firstly motivated in my own personal accountability to be joining the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus each day; but I am doing it for your sake. I find as I am offering myself in love in that regard (by the love that the Holy Spirit is pouring into my heart for you as a member of the body), that you are joining the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ each day, and you are ceasing

from sin and rising to walk in the newness of His life - the grace of His resurrection life. *You* are doing it for *my* sake, by the Holy Spirit. As you do that for my sake, resurrection life is being ministered to me. And I go, 'Well, I will counter your resurrection life for me with a further ministry of life to you.' Such is the vibrancy of fellowship.

We then understand that the help of the Holy Spirit is coming from among us as we are given. We are not sitting there waiting to have my say so that what I have heard can be revealed. The reason I speak is for *your* sake, not for *my* sake. It is that *you* would be built up. Paul is saying at this point, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' Not for *his* sake, for *their* sake. He is then understanding that there is a point of ministry.

I ask you, how many times did Paul come into places and say, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' I believe he did it everywhere that he went. In some towns, he was then physically and verbally assaulted and sent right back out of the place, beaten, because he presumed to offer to them the gospel of sonship by which their spirits could be reborn.

All this new birth activity is taking place in your spirit. It is then that the Father baptises you by one Spirit into the body. That is when body life begins for you. There is no point trying to function as a member of His body unless you have been born again. You can call yourself whatever you want, but you are not a member of the body, because the Father has not baptised you and placed you there.

Our accountability is then *toward* one another and *for* one another, because of the intimate and the purposeful manner in which the Father has placed us 'as it pleases Him' - every child into a covenant home as it pleased the Father. You are now given as a gift - every child given as a gift in a covenant

home for the sake of your brothers and sisters and for the sake of your mum and dad. If you want to know what the works are that have been prepared for you, that is what they are - to serve them in love. How can I serve them in love? The Holy Spirit (your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit) is pouring the love of the Father for them into your heart that you might participate with Christ for their sake; that you might obtain the grace of resurrection life so that you might not react to them. Instead, you would love them. You would love their sanctification more than your own selfish desire to react out of self-centeredness. This is the miracle that is being brought forth here.

Let me read again as we finish 2 Corinthians 13 verse 14. 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all forever. Amen.' Bless the Lord.