

THE BAPTISM AND R.A. TORREY

Contemporary with Roberts and Penn-Lewis was another eminent leader who taught this same error concerning the Baptism of the Spirit.

R.A. TORREY- "The Baptism with the Holy Spirit is a work of the Spirit separate and distinct from His regenerating work. To be regenerated by the Spirit is one thing, to be baptized with the Spirit is something different, something additional.

"This is evident from Acts 1:5. There Jesus said: 'Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost **not many days hence.**' They were not then as yet 'baptized with the Holy Ghost.' But they were **already** regenerated. Jesus Himself had already pronounced them so. In John 15:3, He had said to the same men, 'Now ye are clean through the Word.' (Baptism With the Holy Spirit, pp. 12, 13.)

"In Acts 10:38, we read 'how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil.' We find that at the Baptism of Jesus at Jordan as He prayed, the Holy Ghost came upon Him. Then, 'in the power of the Spirit,' He begins His ministry. In other words, Jesus the Christ never entered upon the ministry for which He came into this world until He was baptized with the Holy Spirit. If, in the light of these recorded facts, we dare enter the service to which we are called without receiving the Baptism, it seems like an offence going beyond presumption. The Baptism with the Holy Spirit is an absolutely necessary preparation for effective service for Christ along every line of service." —R.A. Torrey (Ibid., pp. 27, 28.)

"The practical question confronts us: how can we obtain this baptism with the Holy Spirit which we so sorely need? The Word of God answers this question very plainly and explicitly. It points out a path, consisting of seven steps, and whoever takes these seven simple steps will, with absolute certainty, enter into this blessing. All seven steps are stated or implied in Acts 2:38: 'Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.'

1) " 'Repent.' Change your mind about Christ. Change from a Christ-hating

and Christ-crucifying attitude of mind to a Christ-accepting attitude of mind. Accept **Jesus Christ as Saviour**, Christ and Lord. This then is the first step toward the Baptism with the Holy Spirit.

2) “The second step is also found in the word ‘repent.’ It is a change of mind about sin: renounce sin, all sin, every sin. The second step then toward the Baptism with the Holy Spirit is to **put away every sin**.

3) “ ‘Be baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins.’ It was immediately after His baptism that the Holy Ghost descended upon Jesus. So we must humble ourselves to make open confession of our sin and renunciation of it and acceptance of Jesus Christ, in God’s appointed way, by **water baptism**.

4) “The fourth step is clearly implied in our verse, but is brought out more explicitly in Acts 5:32: ‘The Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that **obey Him**.’ The fourth step is obedience. This means **total surrender** to God.

5) “The fifth step is found in John 7:37-39: ‘Jesus stood, and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive.’ This then is the fifth step—**intense desire** for the Baptism with the Holy Spirit.

6) “The sixth step is shown in Luke 11:13: ‘If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.’ The sixth step is **asking**.

7) “The seventh and last step is found in Mark 11:24: ‘What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, **believe** that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.’

“It is clear that the prayer for the Baptism with the Holy Spirit is ‘according to His will,’ for it is definitely and plainly promised in our verse. I know then that the prayer is heard, and that **I have the petition which I have asked of Him** (I John 5:14, 15).

“That is, I have the Baptism with the Holy Spirit. I have then the right to arise from my knees and say, on the all-sufficient authority of God’s Word: ‘I have

the Baptism with the Holy Spirit,' and **afterwards** I shall have in experimental enjoyment what I have appropriated by simple faith; for God has said, and He cannot lie, 'All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye have received them, and ye shall have them'. " —R.A. Torrey (Ibid., pp. 37-54.)

Dr. Torrey not only lists the conditions for receiving this "blessing," but goes on to list the conditions by which it may be lost.

- 1) "God withdraws His power from men and women when they go back upon their separation to Him. Men and women the Lord once used, become untrue to their separation, their consecration to God. Would you get the old power back again? Renew your consecration to God!
- 2) "Power is lost through the incoming of sin. This is the history of many whom God has once used. Sin has crept in. They have done that which God has told them not to do, or they have refused to do that which God bade them do, and the power of God has been withdrawn.
- 3) "Power is lost again through self-indulgence. The one who would have God's power must lead a life of self-denial.
- 4) "Power is lost through greed of money. Those who would have power, need to have the words of Christ: 'Take heed and beware of covetousness,' writ large and graved deep upon their hearts.
- 5) "Power is lost through pride.
- 6) "Power is lost through neglect of prayer.
- 7) "Power is lost through neglect of the Word." —R.A. Torrey (Baptism With the Holy Spirit, pp. 66-77.)

Note that the above reasons for losing this so-called enduement of power are actually but **symptoms** of the real cause of all the trouble. Self! When one's life and ministry does not rest upon the work of the Cross in dealing with the old' nature, there is nothing left to do but seek to control external symptoms. Law! Finally, a few thoughts concerning the answer to the holiness error of this mythical Baptism

with the Holy Spirit

Dr. M. Unger writes: “Dr. R. A. Torrey, followed by a multitude (right up to the present), fell into the error of making ‘the filling,’ ‘the Holy Spirit upon,’ and ‘the gift of the Holy Spirit,’ all equivalent to ‘baptized with the Holy Spirit.’

“The baptizing work of the Holy Spirit is one of the most vital and important of scriptural doctrines. Its vast significance can readily be appreciated when it is realized that it is that divine operation of God’s Spirit which places the believer ‘in Christ,’ in His mystical body, the Church, and which makes him one with all other believers in Christ—one in life, the very life of the Son of God Himself, one in Him, a common Head, one in sharing His common salvation, hope and destiny (I Cor. 12:13).

“Confusion is caused by the widespread practice of confounding the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit with the new birth. The baptism with the Spirit and regeneration are simultaneous and eternally wrought in the believer the moment he exercises saving faith in Christ. By regeneration the soul is quickened from death unto life (Eph. 2:1-4). By the Spirit’s baptizing work the quickened soul is organically united to Christ as Head (Eph. 1:22, 23) and to all other believers as members of the one body (I Cor. 12:12-27).

“Another cause of confusion is the error of mistaking the baptizing work of the Spirit for the filling with the Spirit. The baptizing work of the Spirit is a once-for-all operation, whereas the filling with the Spirit is a continuous process. One baptism for the believer is contrasted to the many fillings.

“The one baptism puts the believer ‘in Christ’ (Rom. 6:3,4; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12), into His Body (I Cor. 12:13), and, therefore, brings the believing one into an eternal **position**, which is unalterable and immutable, having the finality of God’s own unchangeable nature, of which the believer becomes partaker (II Peter 1:4).

“Since this position in Christ is unchangeable, and eternal, the baptizing work of the Spirit is not repeatable, as there is not the least occasion for its being repeated. One ‘in Christ’ positionally, can never again through all eternity be ‘out of Christ’ positionally, as that position depends wholly upon the efficacy

of the finished redemptive work of God the Son, and does not hinge upon human merit or faithfulness. Accordingly, the baptism with the Spirit is never said to be repeated in the believer's experience.

“The filling with the Spirit, on the other hand, is repeatable (Acts 2:4; 4:8, 9:17 with 13:9), and is, in fact, a continuous process, as it conditions mutable experience, and has nothing whatever to do with immutable position. Christian **position** is effected by the baptism with the Spirit. Christian **experience** is affected by the filling with the Spirit. One effects our standing, the other affects our state. The baptizing work of the Spirit is **non-experiential**, whereas the filling with the Spirit is **experiential**.

“There is no command in the Word for anyone to be baptized with the Spirit, but there is a distinct injunction for every believer to be filled with the Spirit. The unequivocal declaration of Scripture (I Cor. 12:13) is that ‘all’ believers ‘were baptized by one Spirit into one body.’ No command appears for the simple reason that it is an absolute impossibility to be a Christian at all in this age, and not be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

“The baptizing work of the Spirit is universal among Christians, whereas the filling with the Spirit is not. There are no conditions connected with the baptism with the Spirit, since it is a vital and integral part of salvation, simple faith in Christ as Saviour from the penalty of sin is the one and only requirement. ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved’ (Acts 16:31).” —Dr. Merrill F. Unger

(The Baptizing Work of the Holy Spirit, pp. 15-40.) This book is recommended for further study.