

NEW HOPE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH
DR. AARON L. CHAPMAN, PASTOR
23455 W. NINE MILE ROAD
SOUTHFIELD, MICHIGAN
PHONE: (248) 353-0675
WEBSITE: www.newhope-mbc.org

2025 ANNUAL THEME: “HOPE IN THE FACE OF DIFFICULTY”
October 2025 Theme: Unleashing the Holy Spirit

BIBLE STUDY
November 5, 2025
“Holy Spirit Baptism”
(John 1:33)

Topics

- Scripture Reference
- Reflection Questions
- Important Emphasis
- Key Terms
- Outline
- Introduction
- Background and Context
- Exploring The Text
- Check For Understanding
- Life Application

Scripture Reference: John 1:33 (NASB 2020)

*³³ And I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize **in** water said to me, ‘He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes **in** the Holy Spirit.’*

Reflection Questions

A. What is your understanding of baptism?

B. What is your understanding about the difference between water baptism and Holy Spirit baptism?

IMPORTANT EMPHASIS

Baptism of the Spirit Overview

Baptism defined – Baptism is one of the most important expressions and or demonstrations in Christendom. (**Matthew 28:19-20**) This holy practice should be transacted by believers with reverence and decency. God has ordained this practice of baptism as an outward euphoric occasion as a symbol of an inward transformation. “Baptism incorporates us into Christ and forms us into God’s people.... Rescues us from the power of darkness and brings us to the dignity of adopted children.

Baptism is formed from the word *baptein*, “dip” and means “dip frequently or intensively plunge or immerse. Baptism is associated with a general group of related words to wash. In addition to the common terms for the word baptism. Another form of the word baptism is *baptizo* which occurs seventy-seven times in scripture, is used always or almost always in the cultic sense of Jewish washings. Oepke indicates baptize means to immerse and it has an additional meaning : “ to sink a ship” to sink (in the mud), “ to drown, “ and perish. We as believers must die to our will (**Mark 12:30**) (**Mark 8:34**)

Baptism becomes a focus of God’s immense salvific work: He is the one active behind it and in it. Baptism means identification. In New Testament baptism it involves identification with Christ in his death and resurrection. Baptism with/in the Holy Spirit fire (**Matthew 3:11,14-17**)

There must be a public acknowledgement of our faith partnered with a passionate private devotion. Our devotional time before God should reflect the residuals of God’s glory. This touch of his glory should be demonstrated in our daily walk before God and society!

“Baptism establishes a relationship between the individual and God, and incorporates the individual into the community of believers, the priesthood of the faithful. Baptism also confers on the soul a permanent character designating a permanent relationship with Christ and his Church.” *The New Dictionary of Theology*.

Baptism attained its importance because of its doctrinal association with the cross of Christ. The strong emphasis on the necessity of baptism was reinforced by **John 3:5** which was the favorite baptismal text of the early church.

Baptism of the Spirit – The work of the holy Spirit in placing the believer into union with Christ as the head and with believers the body of Christ.

Baptism of the Spirit Blessing promised by John the Baptist as accompanying Jesus ministry (Mark 1:8) which is seen at Pentecost as a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy (**Acts 2:16-21**). May believe all Christians receive this baptism (**1 Corinthians 12:13**); some that it is a special act.

The Spirit as the power of God sovereignly at work, enables believers to say the right thing at the right time. **Mark 13:11**... the giving of the Spirit may precede baptism **Acts 8:17**, or it may follow baptism with the laying on of hands.

Believers are temples of the Holy Spirit (**1 Cor. 3:16**) The classic formulation of the problem of indicative and imperative- if we live by the spirit, let us also be guided by the spirit, let us also be guided by the spirit. (*ei zomen pneumatic, pneumatic kai stoichomen*) Gal 5:25) means that the spirit who has that Spirit who has been given produces fruit consisting especially of love (agape)

Dead Sea Scroll the common term is rahas inward and outward cleaning and the conjunction of these where repentance... ritual washings were common religious practices in the first century CE These were external rites of purification signifying what they effected – death to an old way of life; rebirth into a new community.

Key Words and Terms

Forgiveness
Jesus
Messiah
New creation
New life
Power
Rebirth
Recognize
Regeneration
Remission
Spirit baptism
The Divine
The One
Water baptism

OUTLINE

- I. Remission by Water Baptism (John 1:33a)**
 - A. Water for Repentance (Matthew 3:11)
 - B. Water for Forgiveness (Acts 2:38)
 - C. Water for a New Life (Romans 6:3-4)
- II. Regeneration by Spirit Baptism (John 1:33b)**
 - A. Re-Born by the Spirit (John 3:5-6; Acts 1:8)
 - B. Re-Born a New Creation (2 Corinthians 5:17)
 - C. Re-Born Regenerated (Titus 3:5)

INTRODUCTION

The concept of baptism holds significant theological importance within Christian doctrine, symbolizing both a physical and spiritual transformation. Water baptism, as highlighted in various biblical passages, serves as a profound act of repentance, forgiveness, and the beginning of a new life. This ritual, deeply rooted in scripture, is seen as a public declaration of faith and a commitment to a life aligned with Christian teachings. Through water baptism, believers are invited to experience a cleansing of past sins and a renewal of their spiritual journey, as emphasized in the teachings of John, Matthew, and Acts.

In contrast, Holy Spirit baptism represents a deeper, more intrinsic transformation, often described as a rebirth through the Holy Spirit. This spiritual regeneration is characterized by a profound internal change, marking the believer as a new creation in Christ. Scriptural references from John, Acts, and Corinthians illustrate this transformative process, emphasizing the role of the Holy Spirit in renewing and regenerating the believer's soul. Together, water and spirit baptism encapsulate the dual aspects of Christian initiation, offering both an outward expression and an inward renewal of faith.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

John 1:33 is part of the New Testament in the Christian Bible, specifically within the Gospel of John, which focuses on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. This verse is situated in the context of John the Baptist's ministry, where he is baptizing people in the Jordan River and preparing them for the coming of the Messiah. John the Baptist, a prophetic figure, is recounting his experience of baptizing Jesus. He explains that he did not initially recognize Jesus as the Messiah, but God had given him a sign: the one on whom he saw the Spirit descend and remain would be the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. This revelation confirms Jesus' divine identity and mission, emphasizing the transition from John's preparatory work to Jesus' redemptive ministry.

Exploring the Text

I. Remission by Water Baptism (John 1:33a)

*³³ And I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize **in** water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him,*

John 1:33a highlights the significance of water baptism in the Christian faith. It describes how John the Baptist was instructed by God to baptize with water, serving as a precursor to recognizing Jesus as the Messiah. The act of baptism is portrayed as a divine directive, with the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus serving as a sign of His divine identity and mission. This moment underscores the importance of baptism as a symbolic act of purification and preparation for receiving the Holy Spirit.

A. Water for Repentance (Matthew 3:11)

In the broader context of Christian teachings, water baptism is associated with several key aspects of spiritual transformation. As noted in Matthew 3:11, it is a call to **repentance**, urging individuals to turn away from sin.

B. Water for Forgiveness (Acts 2:38)

Acts 2:38 emphasizes baptism as a means of receiving **forgiveness**, marking a **new beginning** in one's spiritual journey.

C. Water for a New Life (Romans 6:3-4)

Furthermore, **Romans 6:3-4** connects water baptism with the concept of a **new life**, symbolizing the believer's **union with Christ** in His death and resurrection, and the start of a renewed existence in faith.

Check for Understanding

1. What role does water baptism play in recognizing Jesus as the Messiah according to John 1:33a?

2. How is water baptism associated with repentance and forgiveness in the context of Matthew 3:11 and Acts 2:38?

3. What symbolic meaning does Romans 6:3-4 attribute to water baptism in the Christian faith?

Exploring the Text

II. Regeneration by Spirit Baptism (John 1:33b)

*...this is the One who baptizes **in** the Holy Spirit.'*

This passage highlights the concept of **spiritual regeneration** through the **baptism of the Holy Spirit**, as referenced in John 1:33. This baptism is portrayed as a transformative experience, marking a significant **spiritual rebirth**. The phrase "this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit" emphasizes the role of Jesus as the one who facilitates this profound change, offering believers a new **spiritual identity** and connection with the divine.

A. Re-Born by the Spirit (John 3:5-6; Acts 1:8)

The first aspect of this regeneration is being "**Re-Born by the Spirit**," as mentioned in **John 3:5-6** and **Acts 1:8**. This suggests that through the Holy Spirit, individuals undergo a **spiritual rebirth**, gaining **new life** and empowerment. This transformation is not merely symbolic but is seen as a real and dynamic change that equips believers with the strength and guidance needed to live out their faith.

B. Re-Born a New Creation (2 Corinthians 5:17)

The text refers to being "Re-Born a New Creation" and "Re-Born Regenerated," drawing from 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Titus 3:5. These references underscore the idea that through the Holy Spirit, believers are not only renewed but also fundamentally changed into new creations.

C. Re-Born Regenerated (Titus 3:5)

This **regeneration** is described as a **cleansing** and **renewal** process, where the old self is left behind, and a new, spiritually vibrant life begins, characterized by a closer relationship with God and a commitment to living according to His will.

Charles Spurgeon viewed the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a spiritual reality and an experience of being filled with God's power, which he linked to a new, regenerated life in believers. He saw it as an "immersion" of the soul into the Holy Spirit, distinct from water baptism, which he understood as a symbol of dying to sin and being resurrected to new life in Christ. Spurgeon taught that this experience is received by faith and is essential for spiritual power, zeal, and a new, righteous life that separates believers from the world.

Check for Understanding

4. How does the concept of spiritual regeneration through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as described in John 1:33b, influence a believer's understanding of their spiritual identity and connection with the divine?

5. In what ways does the idea of being "Re-Born by the Spirit," as referenced in John 3:5-6 and Acts 1:8, suggest a tangible transformation in a believer's life, and how might this impact their daily faith practice?

6. Considering the notion of being "Re-Born a New Creation" from 2 Corinthians 5:17, how can this perspective shape a believer's approach to personal growth and spiritual development?

Life Application Questions

Think about it!

- What will you commit to do, starting today, to begin yielding to the Holy Spirit power within you to serve God and others more faithfully.
- Identify two people to help this week with a kind act at home, work, in the community, or at church.

Resources:

Adult Questions for LESSONMaker, LOGOS Bible Software

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