

Adult Sunday School Class “Our Christian Heritage” - Lesson 13

Pentecost Experienced and Defined in the 20th Century

In our last lesson and study of Christian history, we studied the Pentecostal movement in the 20th century beginning with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Topeka, Kansas, under Charles Parham (1901) and the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles, California, under William Seymour (1906-1909). The Azusa Street revival was the “cradle of the Pentecostal movement” in the 20th century with the experience and teaching of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, evidenced by speaking with other tongues. The Pentecostal experience literally spread world-wide from the humble beginnings of Azusa Street.

In the 1800’s and in the first few years of the 1900’s those Pentecostals from a Holiness background typically believed that a person was saved at conversion, then sanctified in a later experience with God, then after that, a person could receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. However, at Azusa Street and all over the world, this doctrinal progression of experiences was being questioned because people were coming off the street, repenting at the altar and instantly receiving the Holy Spirit. Did a person have to experience “sanctification” before God would fill him with His Spirit?

William Durham and the “Finished Work” Doctrine

The first doctrinal division after Azusa Street came over sanctification. Shortly after the great Azusa Street revival, a prominent minister named William Durham (1873-1912) began to question whether sanctification was actually a separate experience. Durham was a Baptist minister from Chicago who traveled to the Azusa Street revival in 1907 and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Durham had previously claimed experiences of conversion and then sanctification. He testified that the Holy Spirit baptism was different from the experiences he had previously had. Durham said, “I saw clearly, for the first time, the difference between having *the influence and presence of the Spirit* with us, and having Him dwell within us *in person*.”

John 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Durham also realized that he could not simply “claim” the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Durham said, “I could not kneel at the altar, and claim the Holy Ghost and go away. This was a real experience. I must wait until He came.”

Durham further stated that speaking in tongues was invariably the initial evidence of this experience. Durham wrote, "Dear reader, the Spirit may not deal with you just as He did with me; but when He comes within you, to take up His abode, He will speak in tongues and magnify God."

Durham's baptism in the Holy Spirit was glorious. He fell prostrate on the floor for three hours, his body shook, and he finally spoke in tongues for a long time. This experience completely overshadowed his earlier blessing that he had identified as "sanctification." Durham took the supposed experience of sanctification out of the mix, and he stated that a converted person should seek the baptism of the Holy Ghost, evidenced by speaking in other tongues.

Therefore, Durham ceased preaching an experience called "sanctification." Durham said, "The Spirit began to reveal in my heart the *finished work* of Christ on the cross of Calvary . . . The Spirit kept revealing in my heart the precious Gospel as preached by the Apostles: identification with Jesus Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection." Beginning in 1920, Durham began preaching "the finished work of Calvary." He taught that there was no "second work of grace" experience called "sanctification." Instead a person was sanctified beginning at conversion and through his Christian life. Durham preached this doctrine in many places.

In 1911, Durham went back to Los Angeles. He preached at the Azusa Street mission, where revival had diminished. Seymour was away on an extended trip at the time, and revival broke out again at Azusa Street under Durham's preaching. Some called it the second Azusa outpouring. Durham attributed the outpouring to preaching tongues as the evidence of the Holy Spirit baptism and the teaching of the "finished work" doctrine. Durham went elsewhere in Los Angeles to preach, and the revival continued. He left that work in the hands of Frank Ewart - a very important person in the history of the Pentecostal movement. He then returned to Chicago.

Durham preached in many places, taking little rest. At age thirty-nine, he died of pneumonia in Los Angeles. Durham had defended the importance of "growth after conversion" and living "a holy, separate life." He taught that God expects Spirit-filled believers "to live a clean, holy, separate life, to crucify the flesh, and walk in the Spirit." This was closer to John Wesley and the early Methodist's teaching on sanctification.

Durham spoke of the baptism of the Holy Ghost as an integral part of God's plan of salvation that should immediately follow repentance and faith. Since all that believers needed to do was to claim the finished work of Calvary, they could receive the Spirit without delay.

Durham minced no words in stating who belonged to the New Testament church:

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is the seal of a finished salvation in Jesus Christ . . . God's standard of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is found in Acts 2:4, and He has only one standard . . .

Wherever we find converts in the New Testament who are not filled with the Holy Spirit, we find the Apostles dealing with them to lead them into the experience.

Acts 19:1 And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples **2** he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"

So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."

3 And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?"

So they said, "Into John's baptism."

4 Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized 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."

5 When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. **6** And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. **7** Now the men were about twelve in all.

Acts 18:24 Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man *and* mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. **25** 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, though he knew only the baptism of John. **26** So 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.

We continue with Durham's remarks:

We conclude, therefore, that a church, from a Scriptural standpoint, is a company of people who are called out of the world, made new creatures in Christ Jesus, buried with Him by baptism into death, and filled with the Holy Spirit . . .

. . . As said above, people become members of Christ's true, holy, spiritual Church when they are born of the Spirit and filled with the Spirit, as this is the only normal Scriptural experience . . .

If the Bible teaches anything it is that salvation is by grace through faith . . .

The question then is: How may a man receive this great blessing of full deliverance through Christ? Acts 2:38-39 tells us . . .

Acts 2:38 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. **39** For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

This is a wonderful truth! Men do not have to join any particular church, nor subscribe to any creed of man, but can be saved eternally by simply repenting and believing on the Lord Jesus Christ; and then they can receive the gift of the Holy Ghost with signs following, as in the days of the Apostles.

When we appeal the case to the Scriptures, we see that they teach to repent and be baptized and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38-39. All through the Acts and the Epistles of Paul, we see this order of teaching. Not one single Scripture ever mentions any second work of grace [sanctification]. But the rule laid down by Peter on the day of Pentecost is continually followed, both in teaching and practice . . .

Romans 3:21(NIV) But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. **22** This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, **23** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **24** and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. **25** God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood.

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **2** through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

Romans 5:18 . . . just as the result of one trespass [Adam's sin] was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness [Jesus' death on the cross] was justification that brings life for all men. **19** For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

Romans 6:1 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? **2** By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? **3** Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? **4** We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Romans 6:11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. **12** Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. **13** Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.

Romans 6:19 . . . Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. **20** When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. **21** What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! **22** But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.

Romans 8:5 Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. **6** The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; **7** the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. **8** Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

9 You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. **10** But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. **11** And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

12 Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. **13** For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, **14** because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. **15** For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." **16** The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. **17** Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Romans 8:26 . . . the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. **27** And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

Durham continues:

The Epistles were written for the instruction of those who had received the Holy Spirit according to the standard of God lifted up in Acts 2:4 . . . Peter's answer [Acts 2:38] forever settles the question as to what the standard of God is . . .

We are identified with Him by faith in His death on the Cross, and in His burial, by our immersion in water; and in His glorious resurrection life by the blessed Holy Spirit, Who is supposed to come upon us when we come up out of the water. And, thank God, we have lived to see the blessed day that He has restored the Scriptural order of things, and the Spirit is falling on thousands and they are speaking in tongues as at the beginning.

Durham died before the Oneness movement began, but Ewart believed he would have received the Jesus' Name message had he lived. He was a trinitarian, but he place great emphasis on the name, person, and work of Jesus Christ.

The Finished Work Controversy split the emerging Pentecostal movement in half. Organizations that continued to teach three experiences (saved, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Ghost) included the groups of Parham and Seymour, the Church of God (Cleveland), and its later offshoot, the Church of God of Prophecy, and the largest Pentecostal group which eventually became a mostly black organization, the Church of God in Christ. This group is currently the fifth largest Christian group in the U.S.

The Pentecostal groups that would accept the Finished Work view included the Assemblies of God, the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, the Oneness groups including the United Pentecostal Church, and the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World. A few small Oneness groups kept the doctrine of sanctification as a separate experience.

1 Cor. 6:11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

Spirit and Truth

It is no surprise that when people began receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit *en masse* in the early 1900's that the Spirit of God would lead them back to biblical truths of God's Word. Read this account of the woman at the well:

John 4:19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. **20** Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship."

21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. **22** You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. **23** But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. **24** God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

The above Scripture shows the spiritual reality of Jesus' day. Jesus had gone to Samaria, leaving Judea. The Samaritans worshiped God at Mt. Gerizim in

Samaria instead of at the Temple in Jerusalem as God had commanded. The Samaritans were a foreign people who were imported into the land of Israel by the Assyrians after they had conquered it. A Jewish priest was sent back to Samaria to teach them the religion of the land. The religion of the Samaritans ended up being a mixture of Judaism and heathen worship.

2 Kings 17:5 (NKJV) Now the king of Assyria went throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years. **6** In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria . . .

7 For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt . . . and they had feared other gods . . . **11** There they burned incense on all the high places, like the nations whom the Lord had carried away before them; and they did wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger, **12** for they served idols, of which the Lord had said to them, "You shall not do this thing."

. . . **18** Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone . . . So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, as it is to this day.

24 Then the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel; and they took possession of Samaria and dwelt in its cities. **25** And it was so, at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they did not fear the Lord; therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which killed some of them. **26** So they spoke to the king of Assyria, saying, "The nations whom you have removed and placed in the cities of Samaria do not know the rituals of the God of the land; therefore He has sent lions among them, and indeed, they are killing them because they do not know the rituals of the God of the land." **27** Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, "Send there one of the priests whom you brought from there; let him go and dwell there, and let him teach them the rituals of the God of the land." **28** Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear the Lord.

29 However every nation continued to make gods of its own, and put them in the shrines on the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in the cities where they dwelt . . . **33** They feared the Lord, yet served their own gods—according to the rituals of the nations from among whom they were carried away.

34 To this day they continue practicing the former rituals . . . **40** However they did not obey, but they followed their former rituals. **41** So these nations feared the Lord, yet served their carved images; also their children and their children's children have continued doing as their fathers did, even to this day.

Jesus testified of the Samaritans: "*You worship what you do not know.*" He also prophesied that a time was coming when true worshipers would worship "*in spirit and truth.*"

This example from Scripture can be used to describe the state of Christianity after it mixed in the worship of the trinity in the 4th century. "*You worship what you do not know,*" is a good description of Christians who made the worship of three divine persons the law of the land for over 1000 years. Catholic Christianity also inserted the worship of Mary and the saints. The Protestant Reformation had brought back biblical truths little by little, and now it was time for Christianity to return to the worship of the one true God in Christ Jesus. The outpouring of the Spirit would now bring the truth of who Jesus Christ really is.

The Jesus Name Controversy

Another doctrinal controversy erupted a few years after the Azusa Street revival over water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ and the Oneness of God. The Oneness doctrine affirms that God is one personal being, not a trinity of persons, and that Jesus Christ is the manifestation of the fullness of God, not just one of three persons.

Deut. 6:4 "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!

Colossians 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

1 Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory.

Trinitarians called this belief "the New Issue," and "Jesus Only," the latter because proponents baptized in the name of Jesus only instead of using the traditional trinitarian formula. Some trinitarians, however, began using this label to accuse Oneness believers of denying the Father and the Holy Spirit. For this reason, most Oneness believers rejected the term, "Jesus Only." Instead, they called themselves Apostolic, Jesus Name, or Oneness Pentecostals.

Throughout history, many Christians have baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, and many have promoted a concept of God that is essentially the same as the Oneness view. The American revivals of the 1700's brought about some Oneness thinking, and the Holiness movement of the 1800's also produced those who taught this. These movements were characterized by a strong devotion to Jesus Christ and the frequent use of the name of Jesus in prayer, praise, testimony, and song. In these movements there was a strong move to restore the message and experience of the first-century church. With the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the 20th century and the move to restore the church to what it was in the Book of Acts, it was only a matter of time until people began to realize that the apostles always baptized in Jesus' name and never spoke of God in the terms of fourth-century trinitarian teaching (which was made prominent through the teaching of Tertullian). People began to see this teaching as significant.

We cannot underestimate the power of the Holy Spirit to lead people into more truth. Light regarding Jesus' name and the Oneness came with the Holy Ghost.

John 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— **17** 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.

John 16:12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear *them* now. **13** However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth . . .

John 14:25 "These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. **26** But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

When the early Pentecostals were baptized with the Holy Ghost, they no longer had a theory about God, but a direct, personal experience with Him. They did not receive three divine spirits, but one Spirit. They did not have multiple relationships with the Godhead, but they had an intensely personal relationship with the One God.

At Azusa Street, the Holy Spirit came down upon those who were exalting Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on Calvary. The baptism of the Holy Spirit actually intensified their focus on Jesus Christ.

Therefore, it is no surprise that Charles Parham, the catalyst for the entire Pentecostal movement, began to baptize in Jesus' name because he saw in the book of Acts the example of the apostles. Some at Azusa Street were baptizing in Jesus' name. Another early example was Andrew D. Urshan (1884-1967), an immigrant from Persia (Iran) who received the Holy Ghost in Chicago in 1908. He established a Persian mission there and was ordained by William Durham in 1910. That same year he came to a new understanding of truth as he pondered the question: Why did the apostles always baptize in the name of Jesus in the Book of Acts when Jesus Himself instructed them to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in Matthew 28:19? As he thought about it, Acts 4:12 came to his attention, and he concluded that the Lord Jesus Christ was "the one name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." Ushan wrote:

The blessed Lord showed me then and there, that "the Lord Jesus Christ" is the one proper name of God for this gospel dispensation; because in Him, Jesus Christ, our Lord, all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt; and to Him, all power in heaven and earth was given; that repentance and remission of sins should be preached everywhere in Jesus' Name only (see Colossians 2:9, Matthew 28:18, and Luke 24:47).

The early Pentecostals would say that they had "received a revelation" of the absolute deity of Christ. This did not mean that they had received something outside of the Word of God, but they had received understanding of the Scriptures that had been lost down through the centuries. To "receive a revelation" meant to receive a true understanding of Scriptural concepts by the Spirit of God.

Luke 24:45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

46 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, **47** and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. **48** And you are witnesses of these things. **49** Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."