



Part 4

Copyright © Christopher Alton - Roger Aubrey, Living Rock Church, 2021

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage or retrieval system without permission in writing from the author.

Contents

Baptisms

1 The Act Of Water Baptism

- 1.1 The Pre Christian Tradition
- 1.2 A Physical Act
- 1.3 An Instrumental Act
- 1.4 A Historical Act

2 The Pictures Of Water Baptism

- 2.1 The Emergence Of God's Creation
- 2.2 The Emergence Of God's Family
- 2.3 The Emergence Of God's People

3 The Power Of Water Baptism

- 3.1 The Past - 'Letting Go'
- 3.2 The Present - 'Giving Up'
- 3.3 The Future - 'Laying Hold'

4 Baptism in The Holy Spirit

- 4.1 What is the Baptism in the Holy Spirit?
- 4.2 Why do we speak in unknown languages/tongues? Tongues and the mind:
- 4.3 Everyday Application
- 4.4 The Greater Works

Baptisms



For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ

Galatians 3:27

Our next foundation stone is Baptism. We'll start with water baptism, then look at Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

1 The Act Of Water Baptism



1.1 The Pre Christian Tradition

The pre-Christian era offers us no Biblical evidence of baptism, except of course for that of John. Converts to Judaism were baptized in a ritual bath called a *mikvah*. This immersion was a public statement that you wanted to join the Jewish community, sharing their beliefs and intended to live that in accordance with them. Baptism was therefore a **joining** and a **pledge**.

The Greek word for baptism used in the New Testament is usually one of two words:-

- Baptismos** - a washing, purification effected by means of water
Baptisma - immersion, submersion

In terms of purification, this was found in the OT where the ritual purification of the priests,

12 Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting and shall wash them with water **13** and put on Aaron the holy garments. And you shall anoint him and consecrate him, that he may serve me as priest. **14** You shall bring his sons also and put coats on them, **15** and anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may serve me as priests. And their anointing shall admit them to a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations.”

Exodus 40:12-15, ESVUK¹

On the Day of Atonement, the high priest bathes both before and after his offering (Lev. 16:4, 24). As Harper’s Bible Dictionary describes, ritual cleansing extended beyond just the priesthood itself,

Visitors to the Temple should not enter the inner courts without washing hands and feet. Water washings are linked not only with religious purity but also with concern for sinfulness and moral purity (see Isa. 1:16-17; Jer. 4:14; Ezek. 36:25). More domestic versions of these concerns are found in Jewish ablutions in Jesus’ time. John 2:6 speaks of large stone jars that hold water ‘for purification’ (see Mark 7:2-4). John’s baptism and the

¹ All quotations from the English Standard Version Anglicised (ESVUK) © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers, unless otherwise stated..

ablutions of the Qumran covenanters belong to this tradition of cultic and moral ablutions.²

Both of these Greek words are derived from a root word,

Baptizo³- to dip repeatedly, to immerse, to submerge (of vessels sunk) or to cleanse by dipping or submerging, to wash, to make clean with water, to wash one's self, bathe

The root word carries with it a permanent change brought about through the submersion. It was often used of dyers who immersed cloth in dyes that would permanently change the colour of the cloth.

1.2 A Physical Act

Baptism is a physical act which has spiritual consequences. We must be clear on this and the New Testament makes it clear that when those who came into the kingdom of God in the 'wrong order', the Apostles ensured that the physical act of baptism was not neglected: -

44 While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. **45** And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. **46** For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, **47** "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" **48** And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Acts 10:44-48, ESVUK

Peter did not observe the baptism of the Holy Spirit and consider baptism in water therefore unnecessary. It was their faith that saved them and saw them justified before God, but Peter knew that baptism in water was a necessary act,

² Achtemeier, P. J., Harper & Row, P., & Society of Biblical Literature. (1985). *Harper's Bible dictionary* (1st ed.) (92). San Francisco: Harper & Row.

³ Not to be confused with *bapto* (Strong's number 911). The clearest example that shows the meaning of baptizo is a text from the Greek poet and physician Nicander, who lived about 200 B.C. It is a recipe for making pickles and is helpful because it uses both words. Nicander says that in order to make a pickle, the vegetable should first be 'dipped' (*bapto*) into boiling water and then 'baptised' (*baptizo*) in the vinegar solution. Both verbs concern the immersing of vegetables in a solution. But the first is temporary. The second, the act of baptising the vegetable, produces a permanent change. When used in the New Testament, this word more often refers to our union and identification with Christ than to our water baptism. e.g. Mark 16:16. 'He that believes and is baptised shall be saved'. Christ is saying that mere intellectual assent is not enough. There must be a union with him, a real change, like the vegetable to the pickle! © Bible Study Magazine, James Montgomery Boice, May 1989.

to seal that decision. As we spend some time now looking at the physical act of baptism we shall see exactly why this was still a necessary step.

1.3 An Instrumental Act

Many who come to the church with some ecclesiastical history behind them are often misguided into thinking that a sprinkling of water as a child will be enough to secure their future in the kingdom of God; some may even have the Holy Spirit and be speaking in tongues – however the command of God (through Peter) remains, *‘he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.’*⁴

In the history of the church there have been swings in doctrine between what is known as **Baptismal Regeneration** (or Sacramentalism) and **Baptismal Symbolism**; the former heretically places the point of salvation in the baptismal waters whereas the latter underestimates the power of baptism regarding it as purely symbolic, a token gesture. Neither are correct. The Bible teaches us that faith saves us, but faith must be accompanied by deeds to be effective for us. Baptism is **instrumental** in laying hold of our salvation. We shall come back to this point later on in this study (3.3 below).

1.4 A Historical Act

What makes baptism unique amongst the foundation stones of Christ is that it is the only one which is a single historical event. There is no repetition whatsoever with baptism. In fact when the **Anabaptists**⁵ arose in Europe during the early days of the Reformation they were so called because the established church considered them to be ‘re-baptising’ people who had been ‘baptised’ as babies. This criticism persists today from many parts of the traditional church, where baby christenings are considered valid as the baptism we see in the Scriptures.

Although, as we have said, baptism is a believers’ act the principle above is correct in that one cannot be re-baptised nor does Scripture ever teach us that we should need to be.

In just the same way as Jesus’ one historical act of resurrection carries the power over sin and death for eternity, so our one historical act of baptism maintains its significance in our lives.

⁴ Acts 10:48

⁵ The name *Anabaptist* is derived from the Latin term *anabaptista*, or “one who baptizes over again.” This name was given them in reference to the practice of re-baptizing converts who already had been baptized as infants. Anabaptists required that baptismal candidates be able to make their own confessions of faith and so rejected baptism to infants.

2 The Pictures Of Water Baptism



Although baptism as we know it was instituted by John the Baptist as he preached his gospel of repentance, it was prefigured through the Old Testament.

2.1 The Emergence Of God's Creation

Although beyond the scope of this study, a careful reading of the Scriptures shows us that **water** teaches us about the cleansing judgment of God. In Genesis for example, water is God's means of separating, judging between things,

6 And God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." 7 And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. 8 And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day. 9 And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. 10 God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:6-10, ESVUK

Notice that it is the **water** that moved to bring separation, because it is God's judgement which moves to set things apart from one another, to distinguish them from each other and thereby judge between them.

So water as a picture of judgment conveys two main characteristics of God's judgment - **setting apart** and **pronouncing judgment as a result**. Interestingly the land emerges from this judging process, **rising up out of the judgment waters**. The water, like God's judgment overwhelmed everything and what emerged from it as it receded is what God judged to be good.

2.2 The Emergence Of God's Family

The next major event we see in the Bible concerning water is the flood. Again we have water, judgment resulting in the emergence of that which God judges to be good. Observe Peter's words,

20 ... God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. 21 Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you,

not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, **22** who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

1 Peter 3:20–22, ESVUK

Noah's family was saved not by the water but by Noah's faith in God⁶. However the water was God's means of separating them from the evil of the world and the judgment that was to come upon it.

Scripture takes particular care to point out that the even the mountains were covered by the flood waters, by just 18 inches or so⁷. God's intention was that everything from the evil age had to be cut off, not one thing could survive His judgment except that which He judged as good, namely Noah's family justified by faith⁸.

2.3 The Emergence Of God's People

Another foreshadow of baptism we find is the great drama that was played out in the lives of God's people in their escape from Egypt.

1 For I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, **2** and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, **3** and all ate the same spiritual food, **4** and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. **5** Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. **6** Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did.

1 Corinthians 10:1–5, ESVUK

Although a real historical event, in their deliverance from the Egyptian army through the Red Sea, God was providing us with a picture which is 'an example for us'.

Elsewhere Paul says that we have *been baptized into Christ Jesus*⁹. Baptism is a corporate act as well as an individual act. We are set apart, separated from that which cannot stand under the judgment of God, but *set apart into Christ*. We are joining the covenant community. Thus Paul tells the Ephesians,

⁶ Genesis 7:1, Hebrews 11:7

⁷ Genesis 7:20

⁸ Genesis 7:20-23

⁹ Romans 6:3

4 There is **one body** and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— 5 one Lord, one faith, **one baptism** ,...

Ephesians 4:4-5, ESVUK

So in these three pictures we have a building image of the judgment waters of God: -

- In the Creation narrative we see the waters making *distinction* so that judgment can be made by God of what is good.
- In the Flood we see the waters move to not only separate but also *cut off* an evil enemy.
- In the Red Sea we see both the distinction, the cutting off (of the drowned Egyptian army) but also the *setting apart into* Christ, the Spiritual Rock.

As believers we experience all of these elements when we were baptised into Christ. As we move into our next foundation stone in the next session we shall see how the Cloud and the Pillar of Fire demonstrate the presence of the Spirit to lead the believer from the waters of baptism to new life in Christ.

3 The Power Of Water Baptism



We have already touched on the power of baptism and the swing in doctrinal theology between the role and efficacy of baptism in our salvation. Now we need to consider the power of baptism in our Christian life. Although a historical act, it is one which like the resurrection of Christ never loses its efficacy.

Baptism is a Foundation Stone which joins us to Christ and upon which our life rests. We draw upon the power of that historical act every day of our new lives in Christ.

3.1 The Past – ‘Letting Go’

We start with the past. We all have one when we come to Christ. Each of the disciples had a different past when Jesus recruited them. Jesus met each of them where they were at. Faith in Him gains us access to the grace of God¹⁰, but it is necessary to deal with our old nature as part of our rebirth.

When we look back on our past before Christ we would most likely say there was some good and some bad. When we join with Christ everything we were dies with Him,

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his **death**?

Romans 6:3, ESVUK

It is not possible to half die – we are alive or dead. So all of us has to die – **this is why the baptism waters overwhelm us**, like the flood waters covering the mountains, like the Red Sea covering the Egyptian army.

- **Letting Go of the Good**

For some this can be difficult, to let go of everything in their life before Christ. However Paul tells the Ephesians that our new lives must be 100% God’s handiwork or workmanship¹¹, such that our fingerprints are not found anywhere on God’s work, so that He alone may be glorified.

When it comes to our past therefore baptism is about letting go of our past, good and bad. It is not that we ignore our past lives, but the people we once were are now dead. As Paul proclaims to the churches in Galatia,

¹⁰ Romans 5:2

¹¹ Ephesians 2:10

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:20, ESVUK

Paul himself had laid down much; he told them that he had much to boast about from his previous life. However these things only carried value in a fallen world and not in the Kingdom of God where what counts is only that which is born out of faith and which therefore carries a faith value – all else is worthless in God’s kingdom. Even Christ Himself had to let go of His life and live the life of another, His Father,

For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.

Romans 6:10, ESVUK

- **Letting Go of the Bad**

For others, letting go of the past is difficult for a different reason, because they struggle to believe that baptism has truly dealt with things in their past they wish had not happened, for which they still feel shame. In his letter to the Romans Paul speaks of the power of Christ’s act of obedience on the cross in contrast to Adam’s act of disobedience in Eden,

15 But **the gift is not like the trespass**. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, **how much more** did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! **16** Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man’s sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification.

Romans 5:15–16, NIVUK

What Paul is saying here is that the power of Christ’s work on the Cross far exceeded the destructive power of Adam’s sin. Although the consequence of Adam’s sin was great, the consequence of Christ’s obedience was much greater.

In other words, it took a lot more to put things right than it took to make them wrong in the first place! It is relatively easy to let some things out of the bag and a lot harder to put them back again! The work of Christ not only put sin back in the bag but it started in us the process of maturity into the image of Christ, which was God’s original intention for Adam.

Now, when it comes to accepting the power of baptism over our past, we should remember that *the power of our past is based on Adam's sin, whereas our new life is based on that infinitely greater power of Christ's obedience*. If we believe in the efficacy of our past, *how much more* can we believe in the power of Christ's death (in which we have partaken) to overcome it!

3.2 The Present - 'Giving Up'

The power of baptism can have a daily impact on our lives. Embracing the death of *who we were* is only part of the baptism experience, because we now have to live the life of another as well. It is not enough to let go of our old lives, we have to let go of our present efforts as well.

What is remarkable when we read Paul's words in Romans 6 is how he describes Christ's resurrection as a new start for Christ as well. It is difficult to fully appreciate the significance of what this means for an eternal unchanging God, to undergo change!

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, **in order that**, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:4, ESVUK

Jesus was raised from the dead and given a name above every other name Paul tells the Philippians, which referred to a rank conferred upon Christ. He had laid aside His claim as the Son of God and became nothing and from that nothingness God promoted Him to the highest place. It was like the boss' son starting from the shop floor and earning his way to the top. Although we are dealing in timeless eternal concepts, we can still say that Christ did not return to what He was before, the pre-incarnate Son. The life He took on was forever. Again the significance of this very fact is beyond our present understanding.

However the point is this, just the new life to which Jesus was 'resurrected to' goes on into eternity, so does the new life that we are 'resurrected' out of the baptismal waters to live. The **power** of His resurrection is the **same** as the power of our own 'resurrection' ... it is all in these words of Paul - *"... just as Christ ... we too might"*

So the Apostle John could describe our post resurrection life thus, *"as he is so also are we in this world."*¹²

This is the truth of Scripture which we have to both accept and embrace or else we shall fight against it by employing our own efforts in our righteous standing before God. We have to **give up** trying to please God by effort instead of by our faith.

¹² 1 John 4:17

So many Christians spend their lives *trying* to be something that God has already made them to be. **They need to understand by faith who they are in Christ.**

3.3 The Future – ‘Laying Hold’

Baptism is not only about our past and present, but also about our future.

- **Instrumental in us Laying Hold of Christ**

Peter says that the waters of baptism do not cleanse us but is an instrumental act in laying hold of the saving work of Christ for ourselves¹³. In the same way that the bread and the wine does not cleanse us from sin, but as we take them applying our faith, we proclaim His death and *lay hold* of the power of the Holy Spirit to work in us and through us. We lay hold of the blessings of this New Covenant. In the process of salvation we are baptised into **His death** and in so doing all that is His becomes ours.

So when we are baptised we are sealing our decision to follow Christ and in this act we are making a proclamation to ourselves, to the world and the unseen realm of the **existing reality** of our salvation.

Let us make no mistake, the water does not cleanse us, nor does it hold any power for the power alone lies in our union with Christ Jesus.

- **Instrumental in Christ Laying Hold of us**

As we have said, the foundation stones all have a part to play in our union with Christ. **Faith** and **Repentance** move us from one kingdom to another. As a result of them we are no longer in Adam but in Christ.

So what role does baptism have for us? As we have just said it enables us to lay hold of the work of Christ which is *already* accomplished in us, but also through this act of laying down, letting go and giving up all our own efforts, the work of allowing (*the Spirit of*) **Christ to lay hold of us starts to unfold**. Many Christians testify often how something in them changed when they were baptised. They felt a cutting off from the old and a laying hold of the new, freedom from the accusations of the past and hope for their future in Christ.

Baptism is only part of this great salvation and just as repentance needs to be accompanied by faith, so baptism in water needs to be accompanied by a baptism in the Holy Spirit. As Paul said, Israel was *‘baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea’*¹⁴. Moses represented Jesus in this picture and their joining to Moses was not only in the water of baptism but also in the cloud of the Spirit who led them from the water to the Promised Land. So next we shall turn our attention to

¹³ 1 Peter 3:20-22

¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 10:2

the impartation of the power of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands.



4 Baptism in The Holy Spirit

After me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptise [immerse] you in the Holy Spirit and fire.

Matthew 3:11

In a few days you will be baptised [immersed] in the Holy Spirit...You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.

Acts 1:5,8

They were all filled to the maximum by the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them to do so.

Acts 2:4

4.1 What is the Baptism in the Holy Spirit?

Distinct from being born of the Spirit or being born again (**John 3:2-3**). You must be born again first before being baptised in the Holy Spirit. When we are born again the Holy Spirit comes to live in us - in our spirits - to make us new creations. We receive all of the Holy Spirit at that point. Once we are born again/born of the Spirit, we are saved from sin and guaranteed a place in heaven.

NB: In your new birth you received all of the Holy Spirit; there is no more of him to receive. He lives in you from the moment you are born again (**Romans 8:11**).

We are born of the Spirit for our salvation; it guarantees us heaven. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is for our life on earth before we go to heaven. The risen life of Christ is released through the baptism in the Holy Spirit. We are not only ready for heaven, we have to live on earth now as new creations. That's where the baptism in the Holy Spirit comes in.

- **An Explosive River**

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is a subsequent experience to new birth in which the Holy Spirit, who is in you at new birth, fills or controls you thoroughly, affecting the way you think, speak, act, and behave.

NB: *You will receive power:* dunamis (dynamite) - **divine ability**. Not just 'power' or the power of your personality or an extra shove to help you. The divine ability that created the universe begins to explode from within you. The Power is a Person - the Holy Spirit.

Jesus likened this to a continuous river that flows from within us:

On the last and most important day of the festival, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone is thirsty, he should come to Me and drink! The one who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, will have rivers of living water flowing **from deep within him.**" He said this about the Spirit. Those who believed in Jesus were going to receive the Spirit, for the Spirit had not yet been received because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

John 7:37-39 (Context - harvest rain)

NB: The Holy Spirit flows from within us - at baptism in the Holy Spirit he doesn't come into us again to give us more of himself. He flows and explodes from within us, with the resurrection life of Jesus. The Holy Spirit isn't like petrol or fuel that we use up and then have to get filled up again. He is an eternal river flowing from within us all the time.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit begins that flow.

The Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead so that Jesus could send the Holy Spirit to fill us with the life of Jesus!

NB: Jesus baptises us in the Holy Spirit - **Matthew 3:11.**

Released through speaking

Christianity is a speaking faith - **Romans 10:9-10** - we believe and confess. We have faith and we speak. Baptism in the Holy Spirit is experienced when we begin to speak to God in unknown supernatural languages or tongues - **Acts 2:4; Acts 10:44-46; Acts 19:1-5.** (Note time span between these events - many years).

Languages - tongues - the doorway to the supernatural. These are complete languages unknown to your mind that you've never learned. You receive this when you are baptised in the Holy Spirit.

Such a manifestation doesn't originate in the mind or flow from the mind - it comes from the Holy Spirit in your spirit.

4.2 Why do we speak in unknown languages/tongues? Tongues and the mind:

Until the moment you speak in tongues every word you've ever spoken has been under the control of your mind.

NB: Your mind is not born again; it has to be renewed, which is a lifelong transforming process:

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Romans 12:2

Our minds are important, they are not our enemies. We use our minds; with them we:

- Think;
- Learn;
- Understand;
- Reason;
- Communicate (we listen and speak);
- Process information;
- Imagine;
- Remember - we have memories.

When you are born again your mind is not wiped clean; for example, you know who you are, you have memory.

NB: But your memories are of a different person, one who is now dead and buried, who no longer exists. You're a different person - a new creation. Your mind has to come in line with that reality. Therefore, your mind has to be renewed/transformed. It has to come under the control of the Holy Spirit. Your mind can no longer be your master; it has to know its rightful place.

As you speak in tongues to God you realise that your mind has to give way to the Holy Spirit. This is important: your mind still matters, but you have now begun to live in a new way - by the Holy Spirit. Your mind is not your enemy.

When you speak in tongues you speak from your spirit to God; you are not babbling or speaking into the air, or just making up sounds. You're speaking a language you don't understand!

Pray with your mind - pray with your spirit. When you speak to God in tongues, you speak mysteries to God (**1 Corinthians 14:2**). A biblical mystery is something hidden that is revealed. It literally means to be illumined by the Holy Spirit to spiritual realities.

NB: You have the mind of Christ - **1 Corinthians 2:10-16** - not in your mind/brain but in your spirit. Speaking in tongues is one of the ways the mind of Christ - WHICH YOU ALREADY HAVE - transforms your mind.

Speaking in tongues builds you up in your faith. It builds up your spiritual strength and perception (**Jude 20**). Every time you speak in tongues your mind is renewed - it's a lifelong process of being controlled by the Holy Spirit. Your thinking patterns change.

NB: Practical application: speak in tongues to the Lord regularly, every day.

4.3 Everyday Application

Baptism in the Spirit is the explosion of the Holy Spirit with the 'dynamite' of his power. The Holy Spirit now gives us a real power, a genuine ability, the same ability that was at work in Jesus. Jesus promised us this:

I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.

Luke 24:49

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you.

Acts 1:8

Consequently, the baptism in the Holy Spirit empowers or enables the Christian in many areas:

- **Ability to be a witness**

Both in **Luke 24:48** and **Acts 1:8** Jesus promised that the evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit in us would be that of being witnesses. This is not just being able to tell other people what Jesus has done for you, although it certainly must include that. Instead your whole life - in actions and words - is proof to the fact that Jesus is the risen and ascended Lord of all. Just as in court, where the witnesses have to be reliable, our lives stand up as evidence that we really are Christians.

The Holy Spirit empowers us to live this life. In fact, only the Holy Spirit can live the Christian life.

- **Ability to praise and be thankful to God**

In **Acts 2**, when the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, they praised God in other languages. Their hearers remarked:

We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!

Acts 2:11

The same happened later when Peter visited the home of Cornelius:

While Peter was still speaking these words the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message...they spoke in tongues and praised God.

Acts 10:44, 46

Baptism in the Holy Spirit begins a life of thanksgiving and constant praise.

- **Ability to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit**

See **1 Corinthians 12:8-10** and **Romans 12:6-8**. These gifts of the Spirit are absolutely vital for us all to use as Christians. To not use the gifts is like having a gun with no bullets. The gifts of the Spirit are to be used by all to build up all.

- **Ability to produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit**

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.

Galatians 5:22-23

This is a list of personal characteristics – those of Jesus Christ. As Christians we exhibit the life of Jesus because he actually lives in us through the Holy Spirit.

- **Ability to do the greater works**

I tell you the truth, anyone who had faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do greater things than these because I am going to the Father.

John 14:12

These signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.

Mark 16:17-18

4.4 The Greater Works

NB: All the ability it took to create the universe is now present inside you!

- **Mark 16:**
 - They will -
 - Drive out demons;
 - Speak in new languages (tongues); speaking in tongues an exercise of authority;
 - Be kept free from harm - authority over danger and attack;
 - Lay hands on sick people - they will get well!
 - This is the kingdom of God in action!

- **John 14:**

Amen, Amen, I say to you, the one who has faith in me, the works I do they will also do; and they will do greater works than these because I go to the Father.

John 14:12

Amen, Amen

Amen = the word of agreement = creative

It's done. Jesus said it; then agreed with what he said – twice! Matters are established by two or three witnesses. (Matthew 18:16). This truth is established – it's a fact.

'I am going to the Father' = The key – I will send the Holy Spirit to dwell in you.

I will come and live in you and do these works in you, through you and with you.

The Holy Spirit will enable you to live like this.

It's an established fact – AMEN – AMEN

Question: Who will do these things? Anyone who has faith in me!

Faith = God said it – I believe it – that settles it.

Anyone who believes

Only disqualification – no faith

Only the non-Christian has no faith

If you are a Christian you have faith

Don't disqualify yourself: Me do the works of Jesus?! He raised the dead! I can't do that. Therefore I can't do the works of Jesus... NO No No!

I've not raised the dead, but I'm not disqualifying myself: I'm involved in the greater works of Jesus! I'm anyone! And I believe... I'm in on this!

Jesus did many works besides raising the dead! And he raised the dead!

NB: don't think raising the dead is the only or the greatest work. The greatest work at any moment is what that moment demands.

Greater works than these. Not greater than Jesus. He's doing them!

Greater in number or in measure? YES!

It's Jesus who is at work – he's doing the greater things.

Jesus is alive today and on the loose! Don't limit his works to the Gospels.

He's at work in us, at work through us, and at work with us in a greater dimension and in greater numbers than when he was physically present. He is present here now today – the kingdom of God is here now. the power of the kingdom of God is here now.

How? He's working through the Holy Spirit. He's spread himself everywhere he's gone global!

Today: Jesus is doing even more now on an industrial worldwide scale – new things in us; through us; with us! Millions of us – all doing the greater works; we're

all involved. Jesus is not confined to first century Israel; he's all over the place. Anyone who has faith in Jesus is designed to be involved in the greater works!

The Key - John 5:19-20

19 Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth [Amen Amen], the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. **20** For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these.

John 5:19-20

Just see what the Father is doing and do it - listening to the Father is the key to seeing what he's doing. Not peering into heaven - but fellowship with the Spirit; sharing life with the Holy Spirit.

Then Jesus replied, "I assure you: The Son is not able to do anything on His own, but only what He sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, the Son also does these things in the same way.

John 5:19

The greater works today - here - healing - miracles - signs and wonders. If you're a believer - then be ready to be used in the greater works - at your hands!

The Gospel of the Kingdom is the ability to minister at the point of human need.
(John Wimber)

We are able to do all that Jesus did, and even greater things, because he has gone to heaven and has sent the Holy Spirit. The same Holy Spirit who was at work in Jesus is now at work in us. If we have faith, we will do incredible things, just like Jesus! That takes faith; and God gives us all the faith we need.