



REASONING FROM THE SCRIPTURES

Private Time With God

Water Baptism, Belief, and the Holy Spirit

Key Verse: Acts 8:15

I. Philip Baptized Believers and Unbelievers with Water.

There are some denominations within Christendom that subscribe to the belief that one must be baptized with water in order to be saved. I personally find this to be very unscriptural, and riding very close to the heresy or better yet, that other Gospel Paul mentioned in Galatians; (1:6-7).

In the book Acts (the early Church history) we have a story about how the Gospel of Jesus Christ begun to spread to the four corners of the earth. This story can be found in Acts 8: 4 – 24, it involved Samaria.

Now, many in Samaria were baptized after hearing Philip preach about Christ and believing "the things concerning the kingdom of God" (Acts 8:12).

Among them was Simon the magician who had been influencing the people in that region with his magic. Although Simon claimed to be a believer, his heart had not yet been enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

II. The Apostles Responded to the Situation

After hearing "that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John" (Acts 8:14). The Apostles' concern was that the believers

receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:15,17), the sign of true acceptance by God (Matt 3:11; Acts 10:44-48).

III. Water Baptism Is Invalid without the Holy Spirit

The believers' faith was confirmed and their salvation made sure when they received the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17; 2 Cor 1:21,22; Eph 1:13,14).

However, Simon, who observed the proceedings, completely misunderstood their significance. He thought the Holy Spirit was some kind of magical power that could be purchased with money (Acts 8:18,19).

The Apostles rebuked Simon and said that he was still "in the bond of iniquity" and needed to "repent" (Acts 8:22,23) despite his previous confession and water baptism (Acts 8:13).

Jesus had promised that the Holy Spirit would direct His followers into "all truth" (John 16:13). Simon's ignorance of the truth was proof that his heart had not yet been changed by the Holy Spirit and was "not right in the sight of God" (Acts 8:21); water baptism alone had not saved him. Only the Holy Spirit can truly join us to the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13).

So, you said all that to say what Preacher, well as the old saying go – You can go down a dry Sinner and come up a wet one.

"...For by one *Spirit* we are all baptized into one body..." Take notice, it is not by one spirit, but by one *Spirit* (the *Spirit* of God).