



RESURRECTION CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

300 Eagles Nest Farm Road, Hawk Point, Missouri 63349 • Ph: 636-597-3755 • FAX: 636-597-3743

Paul and Gretel Haglin

EVANGELIZING THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER

September 2006

Letters of Faith

**John answered their questions by saying, “I baptize with water;
but someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—
so much greater that I am not even worthy to be his slave.
He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.**

Luke 3:16 (NLT)

Dear Beloved,

For the last two months we have shared how much Jesus’ last words to His disciples mean to us and how much we think they should mean to the whole Body of Christ. Last month we emphasized: **“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth...make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them...teaching them to observe all that I commanded you...”** (ref. Matt. 28:18-20 NASB).

These phrases in Jesus’ spiritual valediction to His disciples were so important to opening their hearts and minds and wills to the worldwide renewal that they released after they received the Holy Spirit’s “fire-power” at Pentecost, that they call for further discussion—especially the phrase regarding baptism: **“...baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit...”**

The Church has become accustomed to using this scripture as a mantra in a ceremony of baptism according to various traditions. However, the NASB shows the literal translation of the word “in” is really “into”—baptize them into the Father and into the Son and into the Holy Spirit. We think the Lord is saying here that we should literally immerse ourselves and our disciples into the whole Triune Godhead!

We think the Lord is saying to the whole Church today that our immersion into the Father, into the Son, and into the Holy Spirit—the whole Triune God—is important for our survival as well as for revival!

Declarations of our faith are important! But they can fall short if we don’t actually press in to being immersed (baptized) into the very personhood of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit! If we don’t know that is Jesus’ command we won’t be stirred to pursue it experientially and we risk not being ignited with God’s consuming fire!

We are hearing God’s call to the whole Church to: **“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you...”** This is the inspirational command and promise of God through Jesus’ natural half brother James (James 4:8). We think it is a call to intimacy with the whole of the Triune God, not just the Father or just the Son, or just the Holy Spirit. Such intimacy requires our being immersed in all of Him and filled with all of Him if it is to become experiential to us instead of merely being an intellectual truth we confess to believe!

“Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16) God’s throne is the place we receive mercy and grace! **“...God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the**

heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” (Eph. 2:4-7)

God’s Word is exhorting us to appropriate the truth of being seated with Christ in the heavenlies so that we can really receive the enabling power of the Holy Spirit (that’s the grace) to re-present (to witness with our actions, not just our words) Jesus here on this earth. That is the only way God can answer the prayer Jesus instructed us to pray; **“May Your will be done here on earth, just as it is in heaven.”** (Matt. 6:10 NLT)

In our lead verse, John the Baptist declares that the coming Lord (Jesus) was going to baptize us with the Holy Spirit and with fire—two different events. This is also the translation in the King James, the American Standard Version, and Young’s, and is borne out by the context of the Scripture.

On the very night Jesus came forth from the grave, he appeared to the disciples to commission them and to impart His peace and the Holy Spirit to them by His breath. **“When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst, and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples therefore rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.’ And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit...”** (John 20:17-22 NASB)

Then, just before He ascended to the right hand of the Father in Heaven, He instructed them to await the empowering of the Holy Spirit which we know came on the fiftieth day after His resurrection. We now call that day Pentecost, which means fifty. When the Holy Spirit blew into the upper room, He kindled a tongue of fire on each of the disciple’s heads! They literally experienced receiving the Holy Spirit from Jesus (on Day One of His resurrection life) and then being ignited by His fire (on Day Fifty)—thus they were baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Should we not also expect both of these two impartations?

We receive the Holy Spirit, and He receives us—that’s full immersion—and then He ignites us to burn for the Gospel and set the firestorm of God’s love that will turn the whole world right-side up!

That’s the “fire-power” of God! Sons and daughters filled with and immersed in and on fire for the living, loving, almighty God and re-presenting His Son, Jesus, here on this earth in word and in deed—emboldened by Jesus’ peace and His command: **“...As the Father has sent Me, so I send you.”** (John 20:21 NLT)

We all know some ministers who really set us ablaze with their preaching, teaching, prayers, and ministry. We say: “They are on fire for God!” Beloved, they really are on fire for God because they received the Holy Spirit and then kept pressing into God until they received His “fire-power”—until He ignited them!

Let us all seek that same igniting of God! Jesus said we are to do what He is doing, and declare what He is saying, and hear what the Father is saying, because that is how the Father sent Him and He said: “As the Father has sent Me, so I send you.”

Believe that the Jesus in you has all power and authority. Go in Him with His power and make Him disciples. Make sure they are fully baptized into the whole Godhead and into His “fire-power.” And then commission them with the same commission that Jesus commissioned His disciples: go and do what I did!

“Let this [Letter of Faith] encourage [you] God’s holy people to endure persecution patiently and remain firm to the end, obeying his commands and trusting in Jesus.”

(Rev. 14:12)

Hugs,

