

THE FATAL FLAWS OF CHARISMANIA – Fatal Flaw #7: Failing to Distinguish the Critical Difference Between Water Baptism and Spirit Baptism (Part Four of Eight)

There are times in considering a particular issue, when the details can become complex to the point where they cause confusion rather than bringing about the desired clarity. It then becomes necessary to set forth the bottom-line first, so that the details which follow can clarify rather than confuse the subject at hand. We have reached such a point in our current study. Therefore, there is a bottom-line which can help create a fairly strong measure of understanding for all the many apparent disparities which arise throughout the book of Acts. The connective thread that ties much of it together consists of the prophetic promise of John the Baptist, in Matthew 3:11-12 – **“As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”**

John provided a baptism of repentance in order to prepare the way for faith in Israel’s Messiah. The result was three-fold. First, not everyone who received John’s baptism ended up believing in Jesus Christ (Mark 1:5). Second, there were those who did believe in Jesus, and did not participate in the baptism of John (Acts 2:5-42). But there was a third group which fulfilled the purpose of John’s ministry in its entirety. They submitted to the baptism of John and placed their trust in Jesus Christ when presented with the opportunity (Acts 1:1-14). It is this third group who fulfilled the two-fold prerequisite for John’s baptism of repentance and belief in Jesus Christ. As a result, they became “eligible” for experiencing the Pentecostal phenomenon of being baptized with the Holy Spirit and speaking in other tongues. Those who did not meet this two-fold requirement, did not experience the Pentecostal baptism in fulfillment of John’s prophetic promise. With such a premise in place, the events in the book of Acts connect with one another in a manner which provides us with the necessary resolutions to make reasonable sense of much that took place.

This bottom-line perspective is supported by the example of an event that occurred after our Savior’s ascension into heaven and prior to Pentecost. The apostles and other disciples were waiting and deliberating in regard to their future. Peter stood up in the midst of a gathering of approximately 120 fellow believers and announced the necessity of appointing an apostolic replacement for Judas Iscariot, who had betrayed their Lord, recorded for us in Acts 1:21-22 –

“Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us – beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us – one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection.”

Peter and the other apostles understood the importance of the apostolic replacement for Judas meeting the requirement of submission to the baptism of John, in addition to belief in the Lord Jesus. Unfortunately, the proponents of Pentecostal/Charismatic teaching have demonstrated time and again, that they are willfully lacking in such an understanding, in order to maintain and uphold their cherished central dogma and most egregious **FATAL FLAW**. And that **FALSEHOOD** is this: In order to function as a Christian at the highest possible spiritual level, one must seek after and experience the second blessing of being baptized with the Holy Spirit, while speaking in other tongues, just as the apostles and early disciples did on the day of Pentecost.