

**Acts 19:1-7 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup>While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples <sup>2</sup>and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” They answered, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” <sup>3</sup>So Paul asked, “Then what baptism did you receive?” “John’s baptism,” they replied. <sup>4</sup>Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” <sup>5</sup>On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup>When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. <sup>7</sup>There were about twelve men in all.

## 44-19-01-Baptism in Jesus

discipleship, means of grace, baptism, Holy Spirit, Pentecost  
Acts 19:1-7

Success in Christian discipleship comes by immersion in Christ.

**INTRODUCTION:**

–*Baptism is a public display of a decision to immerse our whole being [“spirit, soul, and body”] into Jesus. Submersion in water is an act of faith that says, “I bury my old life in Christ’s death.” Emerging from the water testifies, “I am united with Christ’s resurrection life.”*

–*Baptism is not just a ritual but a real spiritual transaction– **Rom 6:4**, 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. *Pouring and sprinkling are legitimate forms of baptism only by using water to symbolize the original faith-act of being immersed in Christ, because the **focus** is on the source of our salvation, not on the action of water itself– **1 Pet 3:21**, and this water symbolizes baptism [*immersion*] that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.**

–*This understanding helps us see what transpired in our **text**, when “some disciples” from Ephesus “were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.” Before this, they were *incomplete disciples*, because **HOM.idea**.*

**I. How Do We Recognize an *Incomplete Disciple*?**

- A. Jesus mentions this kind of person in **Mark 9:38-40**, “Teacher,” said John [*the disciple, not John the Baptist*], “we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us.” “Do not stop him,” Jesus said. “No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, for whoever is not against us is for us.”
1. He didn’t mind that they were “*outside the group*,” (His criteria was that they were *truth-friendly* by being *Jesus-friendly*.)
  2. We may, as John did, try stopping those who use the teachings of Jesus without fully following Him. (But Jesus had a better plan: *let go and let God*.... When their hearts are ready, they’ll follow.)
- B. In Acts 18:24-26 is the example of Apollos: Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and

explained to him the way of God more adequately. (Apollos was ready.)

1. As John the Baptist's disciple, he knew and taught that Jesus was *the Christ*. (But when "Priscilla and Aquila" realized that "he knew only the baptism of John," they weren't hasty in correcting him....)
2. Sensitive to him and to the Holy Spirit, "they invited him to their home" privately, discovered his readiness to grow as a disciple, and only then "explained to him the way of God more adequately."

### **TRANS: Success in Christian discipleship comes by immersion in Christ.**

Apollos had "a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures... and taught about Jesus accurately." What John the Baptist gave him started him off right but left him *incomplete*. He lacked what John spoke about... something that could only come by immersion in Christ—baptism in Jesus....

## **II. What Is Lacking in an *Incomplete Disciple*?**

- A. Here's where our **text** comes in: at Ephesus, Paul "*found some disciples*" who were *incomplete* in their discipleship— v.2 and asked them, "*Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?*" They answered, "*No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.*"
  1. Under John's incomplete teaching, they were like Apollos was, not knowing Jesus' death, resurrection, ascension and outpouring of the "Holy Spirit." Who immerses us into a new life in Christ.
  2. Past growth should make us ready for more— v.3-4, So Paul asked, "*Then what baptism did you receive?*" "*John's baptism,*" they replied. Paul said, "*John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.*" (They knew this!)
  3. John taught in Mat 3:11, "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." (This was an "Aha!" moment, preparing them *for the next step!*)
- B. How that next step manifested is *outside the theological box* of many churches— v.5-6, *On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.*
  1. *Christ's baptism*, as predicted by John, has two dimensions:
    - a. First, the Holy Spirit immerses us into Jesus for a *new birth*.
    - b. Next, Jesus immerses us into the Holy Spirit for serving God.
  2. Jesus Himself exemplified this dual action of the Holy Spirit:
    - a. First, He was conceived for human birth by the Holy Spirit.

- b. Next, at His baptism, the Spirit empowered Him for ministry.
3. Christ's disciples experienced this same double process:
  - a. In Gen 2:7, God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." (After His resurrection, Jesus echoed this 1<sup>st</sup> human birth with a *new birth*: starting with His disciples in John 20:22, "he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'")
  - b. Next, after their new birth, they were to wait for the Spirit to empower them for service— Acts 1:8, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

**TRANS:** Why such *unpredictability* in how things are done in Acts? Jesus is *King of serendipity*, is free from *our* theological rules, and is still *not done yet!* When this group "*spoke in tongues and prophesied,*" it partly repeated Pentecost, but I believe both these pointed to the way...

## **III. Completeness in Christ Is an Ongoing Process**

- A. In Eph 4:13, Paul urged us to grow in this completeness, "until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to **the whole measure of the fullness** of Christ."
- B. What occurred on this occasion aren't the earmarks of how the Holy Spirit is manifested but indications of our growth process:
  1. They "*spoke in tongues*"—the only spiritual gift described as *a way of self-edification* (indicating the ongoing need for our growth).
  2. They "*prophesied*"— speaking from God and for God (indicating both a sign of personal growth and a means for further growth).

### **CONCLUSION:**

—**Success in Christian discipleship is a result of our immersion in Christ.** How water baptism is done isn't the point, just as what gifts are received at *Spirit baptism* isn't the point. Both *baptisms* are about *our lives being immersed in Christ*, the way He was *immersed* in the Father. —**Baptism in Jesus** makes us *complete disciples*. But just as He's *not done yet* working in this world, He's not done completing Himself in us. *Immersion in Jesus* is a daily choice. Pentecost is a daily possibility. The question encouraged by all these stories we've been studying in Acts is: "*Will I immerse myself in Jesus today, this hour, this moment?*"