

## The Mind of Christ Class -Class 13

April 24, 2019

Let's pick up in Luke **Chapter 3:7-14**

We're toward the end of where John the Baptist is teaching about repentance and baptism and he gets into some detail here in Luke.

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup> Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. <sup>9</sup> The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

<sup>10</sup> "What should we do then?" the crowd asked.

<sup>11</sup> John answered, "Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same."

<sup>12</sup> Even *tax collectors came to be baptized*. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?"

<sup>13</sup> "Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them.

<sup>14</sup> Then some *soldiers* asked him, "And what should we do?"

He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay."

Let's talk a little bit more about the idea of repentance from John the Baptist. He called them to things that were very appropriate to the life of the person. There are negative acts that we *shouldn't* do and positive aspects that we *should* do.

Luke continues with the response of the people. They wanted to know what they needed to do. We compare that with the question that was asked in Acts 2:37 when those people were convicted after Peter told the crowd that they had crucified the Messiah. They also asked what they needed to do. <sup>37</sup> *When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"* Peter didn't go into detail about repentance, he just told them to repent and be baptized.

These are the exact questions the preaching of Jesus and John the Baptist were designed to take people to. They needed to bring people to that place of repentance. Peter's answer was, "Repent and be baptized." John the Baptist had the same answer, but he goes on to explain the nature of repentance in practical ways.

We have three groups: the crowds, the tax collectors and the soldiers. So to all, he tells them to share their clothes, and share their food. "What do you have", he wants to know. Begin with what is in your hand. That's where it starts. It doesn't begin with what you don't have. It begins with what you "do" have.

Everybody comes to Christ with a certain something in their hand ... and that's not *just* material goods. They have something that they bring to the relationship with Christ, or any relationship. In marriage, the husband brings something to the relationship; the wife brings something as well. It is the same with friends, co-workers, bosses etc.

The rule, here, is if you have more than enough, you let go of it and you give. Now, define, 'what is more than enough.' That may be difficult. How do we know when we have more than enough?

**Jean:** I think if you see someone with less than you have, you can give because you have more.

**Rod:** Okay

**Jean:** You'll have less, they'll have more and you'll be equal.

**Rod:** We'll find that principle in Acts 4:33 b-34 where Luke says, "And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all <sup>34</sup> *that there were no needy persons among them.*" This demonstrates that repentance is a letting go of possessions. That is fruit. Fruit may be what you let go of.

The Tax Collectors were there and they came to be baptized, (v. 4) and they wanted to know what specifically *they* needed to do. John's answer was, "Collect no more than you are ordered to or appointed to. The word means they had a certain quota by Rome and that was what they had to collect. They had a tax code that they were supposed to follow. It was probably a pretty onerous tax code. These tax collectors were obligated to their employer to collect what they were told to collect. But they're told to collect no more than they were ordered to.

Jesus has Matthew and Zacchaeus, people who collected taxes. Repentance is not only letting go of what one has, but it is *not taking* from others more than one has a right to. That also is involved in repentance. Do not demand from somebody something that you don't have a right to. Now that could cover a whole bunch of things. You have to understand what you have a 'right to'. That's why even in the 10 Commandments, He says, "Do not covet your neighbors ox" or "your neighbor's wife" because you do not have a right to their ox. You don't have a right to their wife. Do not take, or try to gain, what you do not have a right to. That would cover stealing, obviously. You don't take something from somebody that you don't own. But if you think of that principle, if everybody would abide by that principle of repentance, we would stop ourselves before we cross the line into an area where we don't have the right to be.

Sin is called **Trespassing**. When you enter into an area where you have no right to be, then you trespass. So repentance is "Stay in your lane." "Stay in your yard." "Mind your business." "Earn your own bread." You can then *share* with people who have. That is the good part of it. But don't take from people who you don't have a right to.

**Jean:** I have an example of this. I had a friend who wanted to **give** a car to another friend and he wouldn't do it. She was moving and wasn't taking the car with her, but he wouldn't accept the car. He looked up the blue book price and paid for it. But she wanted to give it.

**Rod:** Well, in 2 Samuel 24:22-3, an example we used a couple of Sunday's ago, was when David, at the threshing floor of Araunah, wanted to buy the threshing floor to build an altar to the Lord to stop the plague that was killing his people. In verse 22, Araunah said, "Let my lord the king take whatever he wishes and offer it up. Here are oxen for the burnt offering, and here are threshing sledges and ox yokes for the wood. <sup>23</sup> Your Majesty, Araunah gives all this to the king." Araunah also said to him, "May the Lord your God accept you."

<sup>24</sup> But the king replied to Araunah, "No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing." David said that he would not offer something to the Lord that cost him nothing. I will pay for it. Don't give it to me.

**Rod:** You can look at that and think that there is an element of pride in that, or whatever. There's one thing to be able to accept a gift graciously from somebody, but there's a time when you say, "I don't want you to do that. I want to be able to pay my way."

This happens very rarely, but I remember when my kids got a little bit older and they were earning some money and we would go out. And I thought it was really great when they would just insist on paying for their **own** hamburger. But occasionally they would say, "I got this dad. I'll pay for yours". I would think, 'man. Okay. I really like this.' This actually happened last Sunday Tim called and said, "We want to take you and mom out to lunch." Well, it didn't take me long to accept that. I said, "Yes sir" and I didn't fight over the check at all. I wanted to teach him 'how to give.' (giggles)

So it's a little tricky sometimes, trying to figure out what you have a right to and what you don't have a right to. Some things are easy, but others are a bit more difficult. In the area of "what is your business, ... what business is it of yours to do x, y, z.?" Of course, if somebody looked at you and said, "Mind your own business, maybe you'd get out of there pretty quickly".

Now to the soldiers, John tells them two things. I don't know if it identifies them as Roman soldiers or of the Temple Guard, but it probably wouldn't matter either way. The Roman Soldiers would have more authority over the population.

***The Soldiers are told three things:***

1. Do not take money by force.
2. Make no false accusations. Don't accuse people of things they didn't do.
3. Be content with your wages.

So, here are people who have the power of the sword. They are law-enforcement, if you will. They can hurt you. They can hurt you in many different ways. They can hurt you physically, by physical force, or they can make you do things that you don't want to do. They can put you in jail for things you didn't do. They have power over you.

He is telling them that they have a higher burden here to bear. They need to learn how to control this power that they have. Jesus was a good example of that as He had more power than anybody. He had the ability to do all kinds of things...anything He wanted to do. But He had power under Control. He used His power for good and not for harm.

So the abuse of power is being addressed in this. I would say that this one Scripture alone would kill a lot of the abuses in this whole world. This abuse of power is world-wide. People get into a place where they have control over lives of other people, and they are not very benevolent rulers.

So the common denominator of these instructions is that *it hits at the heart of the person*. It asks, “Where is your treasure? What are your values? What is important to you? Is clothes, or food, or money, or power over other people ... is that more important to you than the person themselves? And when those things become more important to you than the person, you are probably going to sin. You are probably going to do something wrong.

**Jean:** Did he talk about being content with your wages?

**Rod:** Well, obviously, it is the same for the tax collector. When the tax collector exacts more tax than he has a right to, he gets paid twice. He gets paid the salary that came out of the taxes, but then he also gets a cut off the top. He takes something to ‘pocket’.

**Jean:** Was the soldier taking something more than he was supposed to?

**Rod:** He could. He was told ‘don’t take money by force.’ And if you accuse somebody of something, what is the person going to do? He could say, “Okay. I’ll let you off.”

**Brian:** We discovered that with the customs officials in Nigeria. That was very common.

**Jean:** Is that the same as if you have a job and ask for a raise? Must you always be content with what you have?

**Rod:** No, I don’t think that has anything to do with that. A man is worthy of his hire. You must treat your laborers appropriately. It’s a just thing to do. If you’re in a job, and you contract for that job at a certain wage, then don’t go out there through evil means to try to increase your paycheck. Now, if you could go back by legitimate means to negotiate a raise, that you have been there a certain amount of time ... that’s fine.

**Jean:** But it also says that we are to be content.

**Rod:** Yes. Godliness with contentment is great gain. (1 Timothy 6:6)

**Brian H.:** Isn’t there an application where he’s telling these soldiers to be content with their pay **because** it was a fairly common practice for soldiers to get more money from people if they could. I personally don’t see any correlation there. There the soldiers were robbing people.

**Rod:** Exactly. And it can work in any kind of business. People can get really creative about how they sell something and end up with a whole lot more than you had any idea you would be paying just because of the way the deal was structured. We need the “Full Disclosure Laws” written in ways that we can understand them. Sometimes they are too complicated with ‘legalese’ that no one can understand them ... with the fine print.

The heart of this is greed or covetousness. There are so many things that are being addressed in these words. I think the ‘take-away’ from all of this is “The life that Jesus is calling us to live is a life of letting go of things, and grabbing hold of what is true in life... what is real and what is important.” And we can get so caught up holding on to stuff, holding on to power, or to control, that it becomes the antithesis of what He was calling us to do. We’re supposed to be giving up our lives. We let go of our lives to follow Christ. And that means the things *pertaining to* our lives. It’s not *just* about material goods.

So let’s look a little deeper into the actions expected by John the Baptist. The man who has two tunics or food should give to the one who has none. The verb means “to give a part”, to “share” or μεταδοτω. In Romans 1:11-12 Paul says, “I long to see you so that I may *impart* to you some spiritual gift to make you strong— that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith.” Paul wants to go to Rome to share a spiritual gift. He is not “holding on” to his spiritual gifts but wants to share them with others. Romans 12:8 “If [your gift] is giving, then give generously”. Give with liberality.

The ‘*haves*’ and the ‘*have-nots*’ are addressed here. This does not mean that the ‘*have-nots*’ have no obligation of repentance. In other words, you might read this and say, “Well, if I have nothing, I’m not obligated to repent.” He’s addressing those who *do* have something. The soldiers *did* have something. That does not mean that the *have-nots* do not have an obligation to repent as well. John just doesn’t get into that here. So the guy who doesn’t have a tunic, what is he supposed to do? Well, he might quit being lazy and could get up and get a job. That might be *his* repentance. John just doesn’t get into all the circumstances as to why the man doesn’t have a tunic. But we know that if a man doesn’t work, the Bible says he shouldn’t eat. 2 Thess. 3:10 says, *For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: “The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.”* So there are other considerations here than just what is said.

**Jean:** We might have abilities that we could share with people.

**Rod:** Well, what you might need to give somebody without a tunic; you might just need to help them to be more industrious. They may not want that, but... In the long run, it might help them the most. It gets complicated. If everybody who has comes across those who have less than you do, eventually everybody will have less and nobody will have more. There has to be more to it than ‘if I see one in need I give him some of what have’. There has to be more to the story than that. I’m not saying that that’s not a good rule of thumb. I’m just simply saying there is more to it than what is written here—and the Bible has a lot more to say about that.

This does not mean that the ‘*have-nots*’ have more obligation to repentance. If they are in this place because of laziness, then they must work. To share with one who refuses to work is forbidden. But there are many social settings where ‘analysis’ is not necessary before we share. Let’s not get legalistic here. We don’t need every person here to fill out twenty pages of forms in triplicate before I give them something to eat or a shirt to wear. But I do need to use some wisdom in how I help people.

Notice that it says in verse 12, **even tax collectors came to be baptized**. “Teacher,” they asked, “**what should we do?**” That often gets lost when we read this. We don’t know about the soldiers, but the tax collectors had the *intention* of being baptized. They showed up **wanting** baptism and it was John who said, “Wait a minute ... Before you are baptized, I want to see a sign of repentance. And that’s why John suggests all these *evidences of repentance*.”

So John the Baptist’s instructions to them were actually two-fold. First, they were sent by their employers to collect a certain amount of money. Second, they are sent to their clients.

Many of the people felt as though the taxes they are collecting are too much. They believe Rome wanted too much in Taxes. Well, what do the tax collectors do? How do they deal with the “clients” of Rome? It’s not the tax collector’s business. So John tells them that it’s not up to them to determine how much tax to collect. Now, our IRS agent may look at our tax code and say, “the government is taking too much.” But that’s not his job. Congress sets tax codes. It becomes the law of the land. The person working at IRS who doesn’t like collecting so much in taxes should get another job.

The Tax Collector **works for the government** who sets the tax rate. It is not his job to decide if the rate is fair. He must do what he is told. He is only an agent. He cannot legally change an order. He **can** choose not to be a tax collector. His **obligation is also to his client**. He may not add additional fees on top of the tax. This would be corruption. This corruption goes on in governments all around the world. Especially in third world countries, there may be all kinds of extra fees to pay. Give me a dollar and I’ll take this paper to the office or whatever ... and I understand it. They’re probably not getting paid much anyway for their regular job so this may be how he is subsidizing his income. He may consider these “tips”. The paper may never get to that other office unless you pay the \$1 to get it there. The word “διασεισητε” in verse 14 is the idea of extorting or intimidating. The word really means to shake thoroughly or violently. It’s really a shakedown. That’s what a shakedown is – to shake somebody down until their money falls from their pockets. If you shake someone long enough, the money will fall out of their pocket if they have any in there. John the Baptist said to the soldiers **stop doing that**. It means **to take advantage**, and rape is just a **much more personal form** of this. It is exacting power over another person to get what you want. So, be content with what you have. Don’t want more. Do the service you are supposed to do.

The second long word here, συκοφαντησητε', means to accuse falsely. The injustice of false accusations cannot be overestimated. How is a person treated if they **didn’t** do something? If I accuse you of something, how do you prove you didn’t do it? If you didn’t do it, how do you prove that? If I say that you committed such and such crime on this day, at this hour at this place, can you prove you didn’t do it? If you have a good enough alibi, you **might** be able to prove you didn’t do it. But if there are a lot of accusations, how can I prove I didn’t do them? Once accusations are made, it’s almost impossible to {I couldn’t hear - erase them?}.

I thought it was interesting that one of the aspects of the Mueller report that was supposed to be redacted was – people who were perhaps investigated, but who were never charged with a crime, how do they redact {remove-obscure} those people’s names so that no one would get the idea that they somehow were guilty just because they were under investigation? Well, that doesn’t seem fair. They investigate them, but they don’t indict. They didn’t do anything to them. Why reveal that they were even under investigation? So that should have been redacted out.

The burden of proof should be on the accuser, not the person being accused.

Justice is turned into injustice. This distorts truth and reality. John the Baptist warns them against this. That’s repentance. It’s really very simple. If something is wrong, **Stop it!** And if you are not doing something that is right, **start doing it.** That’s the basis of repentance. This is a great primer on repentance.

Okay, let’s open up another section here and we’ll do a little reading. Does anyone have:

**Mark 1:7-8** “And this was his message: “After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

#### **Matthew 3:11-12**

“I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

#### **Luke 3:15-18**

The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable **fire.**” And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news to them.

Beginning in Luke that was Just read, it says that the people were in a state of expectation. They were looking for something. They were expecting something. In John 11:3 John calls him the expectant one. NIV 11:22-32 “When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples <sup>3</sup> to ask him, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?’”

One of the reasons the people were coming out to the Judean Countryside and coming out to John, was their expectations had been off a bit - distorted. But when John started preaching, it was about the Kingdom life. And now their expectations were really, really mounting. They probably did that a lot in the course of time. The Messiah was the expectation of the ages. For 2,000 years the people had been **wondering** in their hearts. The word means to **deliberate** by reflecting in their hearts, and in their minds. They not only had expectation; but were **pondering** over this, seeking and discussing it.

They were probably searching the Old Testament Scriptures that pointed to the Christ's coming, but also maybe reflecting on other people who has claimed to be Christ and turned out not to be...where they got their expectations up but it didn't work out so well. So I imagine them were debating with themselves a lot, trying to figure out what really was the truth. They wanted to believe it, but if they let themselves, they just might get hurt again.

This is the same word that was used for Mary when she *pondered* these things in her heart (Luke 2:19). You can tell a lot about a person if you know what they ponder on and who they ponder on. But they wondered if John might be the Christ, or Messiah. That's what they were wondering. "Maybe John is it". They were eager to latch on to the charismatic figure.

This is brought out in **Acts 5:33-39**

<sup>33</sup> When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death. <sup>34</sup> But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honored by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while. <sup>35</sup> Then he addressed the Sanhedrin: "Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men. <sup>36</sup> Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, all his followers were dispersed, and it all came to nothing. <sup>37</sup> After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered. <sup>38</sup> Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. <sup>39</sup> But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God."

This is when Gamaliel was asked by the Pharisees what they should do about this Christian movement that was going on. Gamaliel reminds them that if it is not of God, it will come to nothing. It will fizzle out. But if it IS of God, you won't be able to stop it. So, there were expectations here, but they had seen people come and go before.

In thinking about Jesus, what does it do to a person when they know that there are many people thinking about you and putting hope in you, building a case of what you are going to do? I had recently experienced this in a small way (back in June 24, 2010) regarding the chaplaincy of the Fire Department. I had just become the Chaplain of the Fire Dept.

There was an expectation, and I thought a lot and hard about what everybody expected of me as a Chaplain. I had never been a chaplain. I had never had this kind of position or role before and I questioned myself, "Could I do this job"? (Do I even know what I am supposed to do in this job?)

One of the first things that happened within a couple of weeks of taking this job was a first death. It was a suicide in the department. I got thrust into the middle of a lot of grief from this suicide in this unit. There was a funeral. No more than two weeks later another of our fireman died of cancer. We had another funeral for that. So, in the first six weeks, I had two funerals. One was a suicide and one from cancer.

I remember thinking back then, what is expected of me? I had roles in each of those deaths. So being in that position, all these people were coming out, and they were expecting something.

I just can help but think that John the Baptist is sitting there and watching all the crowds of people coming out and thinking, “I didn’t know there would be such a surge of people. I didn’t know all these people were going to come out here.” He’s in the spotlight. Some of them are thinking he is the messiah. So, this is the climate in which all this is happening.

**First**, John wanted to correct their thinking quickly. He did not want to *feed* their expectation. Maybe a lesser man would have, and said, “Yeah, I’m great. I’m great. Come out and hear me. I have a good sermon today.” But John didn’t feed into that. He wanted to correct their expectation as quickly as possible. He did not seek a following for himself. So how does he redirect their thinking? He states his own mission as baptism. He says that this is what I came to do. I have come to baptize.

The **second** thing he did was compare Jesus mission of Baptism with his. I will baptize you, but He, the One who comes after me, He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. In other words, my baptism may be a big deal in a certain context here, but I don’t do Holy Spirit and Fire baptism. I do water baptism. That’s left to the one coming after me. And that begins to put it into perspective.

**Third**, John put things into perspective regarding his greatness by saying, ‘I am not worthy of even reaching down and unlatching his sandals. The One who is coming after me is so far above me, that I don’t even deserve to do that.’ That kind of puts it in perspective.

Then the **fourth** thing he does is he paints an awesome picture of the Messiah’s work with a winnowing fork. A winnowing fork is in his hand.

Those are the four things that John does to confront the expectations that people have toward him.

John’s baptism was merely a baptism with water. Matthew adds that it is for repentance. He was not minimizing his work of preparation; he merely wants to show that it is not complete until the Messiah Baptizes.

Secondly, John the Baptist says that Jesus, the Messiah, will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with Fire. And this is referenced by Jesus in Acts 1 to show that baptism by the Spirit is coming, and it did come in Acts chapter 2. Jesus spoke of this in John 14-16 saying that it is necessary that Jesus return to the Father in order to pour out the spirit to His own as prophesied in Joel 2:28-32.

We won’t get into a lot of detail here about baptizing in the Holy Spirit and fire but that baptism requires the death of Jesus, the resurrection of Jesus, the ascension of Jesus in order to be able to pour out the Holy Spirit on all mankind.

**Sandra:** John said that someone was coming who would baptize in the Holy Spirit. Was the concept of the Holy Spirit known to the Jews before this time – prior to Jesus?

**Rod:** Well, the Holy Spirit is not a stranger in the Old Testament. The teaching about him is there although it may not be as prevalent as in the New Testament. Acts says that **Joel prophesied** that the Holy Spirit would be poured out on all flesh. Also, **Isaiah 61** says, *The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,...*

The concept of the Holy Spirit was in the Old Testament but it got fleshed out a lot more in the New Testament.

{A question was asked but I couldn't hear it}

There was a discussion on the baptism of the Apollos in Acts 18 (who knew only the baptism of John) and rebaptism of some disciples in Acts 19 (who also received John's baptism). Paul made the men get rebaptized so it must have been very important to him even though both baptisms were for the forgiveness of sin. {trouble hearing the recorder}

**Jean:** There's no forgiveness without the shedding of Blood, right? Jesus hadn't shed his blood if John baptised them...

**Rod:** That's true but the forgiveness of sins on the cross reaches forward and backwards. There is no "time" with God, so even Abraham, according to Genesis 15:6, 2,000 years before Christ, received the righteousness of God. {See also Romans 4:9, 4:22, Gal. 3:6, and James 2:23}

**Jean:** I was baptized when I was 12 years old. I had always heard that the Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost but now I believe that everyone is baptized by the Holy Spirit when they are baptized because Jesus ... {died}?

**Rod:** This is a big subject. The way I think about it is that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is "the wholesale" and "not the retail". The wholesale is that Jesus poured out the spirit as he said He would when He ascended back into heaven. It fulfilled that prophecy. He did it in a wholesale way pouring it out on all. The Holy Spirit was now available. It was now able to be given individually – "retail". I believe when we're baptized into Christ we receive the Holy Spirit, but the Holy Spirit was already available to us because He has already been secured by Christ. So if you think about it, you get these pictures. But it's more than 'Jesus secured the blessing of being able to give the indwelling Spirit to every person'. He did that to everyone on the day on Pentecost, but then he reaffirmed it to every Gentile in Acts 10:44-48. To me, it demonstrated perfectly that all the Jews have the right to the gospel and all of the gentiles have a right to the gospel.

But the **retail** receiving of the Holy Spirit comes in baptism. 1 Cor. 12:13 says, *"For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. <sup>14</sup> Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many. We are baptized into that one body by one Spirit.*

There is also the idea that the Spirit is active in baptism; not simply to be received as a gift for that. **He** is doing the spiritual part of the baptism. The man has his part, ‘my’ part in it doesn’t mean very much, but the Spiritual part is being done by God. So that’s how I see it.

The wholesale is the pouring out on all, (and I can’t even say on two occasions...it’s all in the mind of God and I just make it clear to myself that ‘this covers everybody’. This is for the Jews; this is for the Gentiles). So I am baptizing in the Holy Spirit. I am pouring Him out. And now, each one of you, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. That’s just the way it makes sense to me.

We try to use accommodative language when it comes to God. The Holy Spirit is God. How do you pour God out? There has to be some kind of accommodating language to give us a vision of something, but to take it so literally and put it in time frames, I think we get ourselves into all kinds of theological problems by doing that. One of those questions that are brought up is, ‘if the Holy Spirit is just hanging out in Heaven until Jesus went back and poured Him out...’ Well, He was very active throughout the whole Old Testament, and maybe even from the indwelling standpoint. Remember when David sinned, in Psalm 51:10-11 he begged God not to take His Holy Spirit from him. He said, “[Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.](#) <sup>11</sup> [Do not cast me from your presence or \*take your Holy Spirit from me.\*](#) Why would David say this? That’s a big deal to David if you lose His Holy Spirit.

This idea that only Jesus has the authority and power to baptize in the Spirit...we may ask a lot about what is that. But the point John the Baptist is making is not a detailed explanation for it. He’s just simply saying that you need to know that there’s a certain thing that I’m called to do, but this baptism ‘in the Spirit’ is a big deal, and only Jesus can do this ... only the Messiah can do this. And even the baptism in fire that we’ll get to next week

These concepts that we know a whole lot more about are being introduced at the very, very early days of John the Baptist and Jesus. Jesus will talk about how God loves to give good gifts to His children, and that He will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him. So Jesus even talks about the giving of the Holy Spirit and what a good thing that is!

Sometimes in different Christian circles, there are some people who try to pit Paul against Jesus. They say that here are Jesus’ words, and we ought to read only the red letters of Jesus. They feel that that’s all they need, and Paul, Peter and the others are simply giving their own opinion about what Jesus said and taught. That is just their opinion. We need to see that concepts that are introduced by Jesus and John and others in the four gospels are the same concepts fleshed out in the writings of Peter and Paul. And they are not contradictory. The Apostles never contradict the words of Jesus. They are completely compatible.