Baptize Me Jesus

Acts 1:1-5

1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,
2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:
3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:
4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.
5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

Intro: What does it mean to be Apostolic?

• From theological viewpoint it means that we believe
  o in the restoration of the original apostolic church
    ▪ as it lived and breathed in the first century.
• We believe that the church
  o as it is presented in the Book of Acts
    ▪ is the what the church is supposed to be.
• We don’t believe
  o that the church is subject
    ▪ to the culture
    • or the political atmosphere of the day.
• We believe that the church
  o that Jesus established
    ▪ when he said, UPON THIS ROCK, I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH,
      • is the church that he intended for us to be.
• What caused our forefathers
  o to begin to seek the outpouring of the Holy Ghost
    ▪ was a desire for the church
      • to become what the church was meant to be.
• Not an evolved church,
  o not a progressively better church,
    ▪ not church based on vain philosophies
      • and political reasoning.
• But, rather, a church patterned after the book of Acts.

• What does it mean to be Apostolic?
  o It means that we believe
that the church is suppose to have the power  
  • and the anointing of the Holy Ghost  
    o operating in it  
      ▪ and flowing through it.  
    o This church has a heritage of Holy Ghost power.  
      ▪ This church has a history  
        • of turning governments upside down  
          o and of seeing entire regions break out in revival.  
      ▪ This church has a history  
        • of seeing the Lord add to it daily.  
    o This church has a history that is filled  
      ▪ with the power and demonstration  
        • of the spirit of God!
  • There came a point in history  
    o where hungry men and women  
      ▪ got tired of business as usual.  
    o Somebody said let the church be the church.  
      ▪ Let us get back to the things that make us the church.  
    o That’s how the restoration  
      ▪ of the Pentecostal experience  
        • began to break out in the beginning of the 20th century.  
    o Because men and women were sick and tired  
      ▪ of the status quo  
        • and they desired something real.  
  • I believe that it is high time  
    o that we joined our voice with theirs:  
      ▪ Let the church be the church!  
  • I believe it is high time we let a desperate world know  
    o that the church of the living God is alive and well!

Wait For The Promise
  • The disciples were hand picked by Jesus Christ.  
    o They were personally taught,  
      ▪ trained and empowered by Jesus Christ.  
  • They were more than just spectators  
    o to the glory and power of God.  
  • Luke 10 tells of a time when Jesus  
    o selected 70 of his closest followers  
      ▪ and sent them out 2x2  
        • as evangelists of the kingdom of God.  
  • He charged them to preach the good news  
    o of the coming of the kingdom  
      ▪ and to heal the sick.  
  • They did that and more.
Luke 10:17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

- These were men who had already discovered
  - that there was power, in the name of Jesus,
    - to heal the sick
    - and to cast out demons.
- These were men who knew from experience
  - that the powers and principalities of hell
    - are subject to the name of Jesus.
- These are the men that Jesus chose to establish his church.
  - After his death and before his ascension into heaven,
    - He commissioned them to evangelize their world.
  - He instructed them to go
    - and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ,
      - making disciples of all nations,
        - and baptizing them in his name.
- But, on the last day that he was with them, just before He was caught up into heaven, he gave them one final instruction.
  - He told them to WAIT FOR THE PROMISE!
- He didn’t tell the to go immediately and change the world.
  - He didn’t tell them to start preaching straight away.
- No! He told them to wait.
  - He told them there was something more that they needed!
- The disciples, despite their years of walking with Jesus,
  - despite the miracles
    - that they have already been a part of,
  - despite the wonderful truth
    - that they have already received,
- were not qualified to go reach their world
  - with the gospel of Jesus Christ
    - until they were baptized with the power of the Holy Ghost!
- Listen, their names are engraved on the foundations of heaven.
  - But they did not have what it takes
    - to reach the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ
      - without being baptized in the Holy Ghost!

**Baptism means immersion.**
- To be baptized is to be totally immersed.
  - To be baptized is to be completely
    - under the influence of the water.
  - It is to be fully submerged,
• To entirely lose yourself in the water.
  • Baptism is the image
    o of total and absolute submission to God.
  • Jesus told his disciples John baptized with water.
    o But you will be baptized with the Holy Ghost!

• There is no way to overstate the importance
  o of what happened in that upper room.
    ▪ A spiritual transformation took place.
  o When they were baptized in the Holy Ghost,
    ▪ they completely lost themselves
      • in the presence of God.
  o They were filled with the Spirit of God!

• It changed them.
  o They didn’t leave that upper room
    ▪ the way they came in.
  o Every part of them
    ▪ was completely and utterly submitted
      • to the influence of the divine power of God.

• God took over.
  o When you get baptized,
    ▪ every part of you gets wet.
  o Every part of you is affected.

• Why do you think they stumbled about like they were drunk?
  o A drunk stumbles
    ▪ because he has lost control of his facilities.
      • He is under the influence of something else!

• This is what it means to be baptized in the Holy Ghost.
  o It means to lose control of yourself.
    ▪ To come under the influence of the Holy Ghost.
      • When you speak in tongues,
        o that is the Holy Ghost taking over.
  o When you lose yourself
    ▪ and just get carried away
      • in the presence of God,
        o it impacts everything.
  o It touches every part of your life.
    ▪ You can’t hold anything back when you are completely immersed!

• Just as sure as I’m standing here right now,
  o The Holy Ghost moved on me Wednesday afternoon
    ▪ With a simple yet powerful directive.
• We need to go back to the beginning,
  o back to the upper room,
    ▪ and remember what it means t
    ▪ o be baptized in the Holy Ghost!
  o We need to lose control!
    ▪ We need to lose ourselves.
    ▪ We need to lose our limitations.
    ▪ We need to lose our memory of our past lives.
  o We need to be completely lost
    ▪ in the power of the Holy Ghost!
• It is time to lose control.
  o It is time to come under the influence of the Spirit of God.

• The problem we have is a control problem.
  o We want a little Holy Ghost power,
    ▪ but we don’t want to yield control.
  o You want to feel good
    ▪ and get them little dodads
      ▪ to run up and down your spine.
  o But then you want to keep living like the world,
    ▪ dressing like the world,
    ▪ talking like the world,
      ▪ acting like the world.
• We want a relationship with God that is all one-sided.
  o We want the parts that make us feel good
    ▪ without surrendering to the part that makes us change!

• When it comes to the Holy Ghost and power
  o we might as well trade our baptismal tank
    ▪ for a wading pool.
  o Because we’ve become all together too comfortable
    ▪ with just a little Holy Ghost,
      ▪ just a little yielding to God,
      ▪ just enough that we feel OK.
• Let me tell you something,
  o try all you want,
    ▪ but you can’t baptize a man
      ▪ in ankle deep water!
  o The Holy Ghost is beckoning us,
    ▪ wade out a little deeper.
      ▪ Get out here
        ▪ where the water is deep.
      ▪ Get out here
        ▪ where the power of the Holy Ghost is real.
• Get out here
  o where the spirit of God
    ▪ can put you under its influence!

**Ezekiel’s Vision**

• The prophet had a vision in Ezekiel 47
  o of waters flowing out of the house of God.
• In the vision, the angel of the Lord
  o kept taking him further and further
    ▪ out into the flow of that water.
• He started out in water that was ankle deep,
  o but that wasn’t where the Lord wanted him.
• He waded on out until it got a bit deeper, knee deep,
  o but that wasn’t deep enough.
• After a bit it got thigh deep
  o but still the angel beckoned him,
    ▪ come on out a little further.
• Finally the prophet said,
  o “It was a river I could not pass over ... waters to swim in!”

• I feel like God is calling this church
  o to wade in a whole lot deeper.
    ▪ You’ve been in the kiddie pool long enough.
      • God can’t baptize you down here
        o on the shallow end of the pool!
  o You are never going to get lost
    ▪ under the influence of the Holy Ghost
      • as long as you aren’t willing
        o to surrender yourself to God
          ▪ and wade out a whole lot deeper!

• Medieval Baptism:
  o The soldier would hold his sword arm,
    ▪ with his sword,
      • out of the water when he was baptized.
  o It was a symbolic way of saying
    ▪ that I pledge to be a Christian
      • with everything except my sword.
  o It was a way of acknowledging
    ▪ that the warrior who may die in combat
      • needed to be saved
    ▪ but at the same time recognizing
      • that war is brutal
        o and that the things he would do with that sword
were not Christian.

- It was a vain attempt
  - to segregate part of his life and say I
    - 'm giving God everything
      - BUT THIS ONE THING.

**That doesn't work!**

- Either he's God of everything
  - or he is God of nothing.
    - He won't share the throne of your life.
- He won't just be the God of the things
  - that you want him to be Lord over!
    - Either he is Lord of it all
      - Or He is not Lord AT ALL!

- The problem is that we want to hang on to
  - our humanity and carnality.
    - We want to maintain our selfishness
      - and self-centeredness.

- Our society and our world
  - have conditioned us to believe
    - that God should conform to us
      - instead of us conforming to God.
  - It is the spirit of the age!

- But I come to tell you that the power of the church
  - is not found in men's abilities,
    - in talents or in education.
  - The power of the church is not found
    - in great music,
      - or good programs.

- The power of the church comes
  - from being baptized in the Holy Ghost!

- If we think we can serve God
  - and the things of this world at the same time
    - We are as ignorant
      - as the knight who thinks
        - he can be mostly baptized.

- That's the problem, we want to be MOSTLY BAPTIZED.
  - MOSTLY SURRENDERED
    - MOSTLY YIELDED
      - MOSTLY DEVOTED

- Let me tell you what that makes us.
  - Mostly baptized
    - is completely useless to God.
Mostly surrendered
  ▪ is complete rebellion against God.

Mostly Christian
  ▪ is not Christian at all!

If they could not, then we cannot!

• If the disciples of Jesus Christ,
  o Those who walked with him
  o Talked with him
  o Operated in the absolute authority of his name.
  o Saw sickness healed.
  o Saw demons flee.
  o Not by their power but by the power of the name of Jesus.

• If those men and women needed
  o the baptism of the Holy Ghost
    ▪ before they were qualified to reach their world.

• What makes us think that we can half way surrender to God and still expect to see the same power and demonstration that they had?

• If they needed the baptism of the Holy ghost to empower them, to prepare them to reach their world,

• What makes us think that we can half way serve God and have the kind of revival that we talk about?

• You want a church with power when your kid is sick.
• You want a church with power when your loved one is lost?
• You want a church with power when your life is on the line?
• We can't have that kind of power as long as we are wading around on the shallow end of the pool!
• That power comes from a baptism of the Holy Ghost!

• God is calling this church to lose every vestige of our identity.

• To surrender our selfish wants and needs.

• We need a fresh anointing, Fresh experience. Fresh baptism of the Holy Ghost.