

<i>In Search of</i> Truth and Right		
<i>Tim Henderson, Editor</i>		
Vol. 01 No. 15 11/12/ 2006	<i>"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things."</i> Phil. 4:8 (NASB-U)	A publication of the Wellsburg church of Christ

Cornelius and the Reception of the Holy Spirit

By Donny V. Rader

The conversion of Cornelius has been the center of much discussion with our denominational friends. He and his household have been cited as proof that one can be saved without baptism and that believers today can receive Holy Spirit baptism. The story of Cornelius is recorded in Acts 10, 11 and reference is made to it in Acts 15.

Was He Saved Before Baptism?

Some contend that since Cornelius received the Holy Spirit before he was baptized, that proves he was saved before he was baptized.

Let's notice when the Spirit fell on the household of Cornelius. In Acts 11 Peter is recounting the event "in order" (v. 4). Thus, Acts 11 gives us a chronology that Acts 10 does not. Peter said that the Spirit came "as I began to speak" (Acts 11:15). Thus, Peter had not preached his message about Jesus yet (Acts 10:36-43). Since faith comes from the preaching of the word, Cornelius did not yet have faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:17). Thus, if the reception of the Holy Spirit proves salvation before baptism, it proves salvation before faith. That which proves too much proves nothing.

What Did Cornelius And His Household Receive?

God gives the Holy Spirit by measure (John 3:34). Thus, there are different measures of receiving the Spirit. There is (1) Holy Spirit baptism (Acts 1:5), (2) Spiritual gifts received by the laying on of the apostles' hands (Acts 8; 1 Cor. 12), and (3) The indwelling of the Spirit in the heart of the Christian (Rom. 8:11).

Cornelius and his household received Holy Spirit baptism like the apostles did on the day of Pentecost. Consider the evidence:

1. What Cornelius received was like what the apostles received. Peter said they received the Spirit "just as we have" (Acts 10:47). He also said it fell on them "as upon us

TIMES OF SERVICES	
SUNDAY	
Bible Classes*	10:00 AM
AM Worship	10:45 AM
PM Worship	6:30 PM
WEDNESDAY	
Bible Classes*	7:00 PM
(* Bible Classes for All Ages)	

This Bulletin is published by the:

Wellsburg
church of Christ

which meets at:

112 Sunset Ave.
Wellsburg, WV 26070
304-737-1422

at the beginning" (Acts 11:15). He called it the "same gift" as he "gave us" (Acts 11:17). Later he said God gave them the Spirit "just as he did to us" (Acts 15:8).

2. When Peter saw what was happening, he was reminded of the promise of Holy Spirit baptism (Acts 11:16).

What Was Its Purpose And What Does It Prove?

Our Pentecostal friends claim that it proves believers today can receive Holy Spirit baptism.

After this event, Paul said there is "one baptism" (Eph. 4:5). Water baptism is one and Holy Spirit baptism is another. Both are found in Acts 10. However, one of them has ceased. It must be the baptism of the Spirit since baptism in water is essential to salvation (Acts 2:38).

The conclusion that Peter drew was that the Gentiles could now be baptized into the kingdom just like Jews (Acts 10:47). When Peter related the story in Jerusalem, the Jews concluded that the Gentiles are now gospel subjects (Acts 11:18).

Thus, its purpose was to prove that the Gentiles are now gospel subjects (can be allowed in the kingdom of God). Neither Peter, those with him nor the brethren in Jerusalem concluded that it meant believers in all ages can receive Holy Spirit baptism.

Call it what it is
By Arthur M. Ogden

Someone said to me once, "If you call a dog's tail a leg, how many legs would he have?" This is one time I bit the dog. I answered, "five." After the laughter had subsided and I felt utterly ridiculous, I was reminded it does not matter what you call a dog's tail, it will always be a tail. I learned a good lesson from that incident, a lesson everyone needs to learn.

I suppose there is no area where people are guilty of calling a thing something it is not, more than in religious circles. I have observed a number of things practiced in religion which are not what they are said to be. Perhaps it would be worthwhile to mention a few of them.

One of the more familiar cases of this is the denominational practice of *sprinkling* and *pouring* which they call "baptism." Does calling sprinkling and pouring "baptism" make them such? Not at all. Paul says, "*we are buried with him by baptism*" (Rom.6:4). Baptism is a *burial*. Sprinkling nor pouring fit into this meaning, and to call them "baptism" does not make it so. Sprinkling is still sprinkling, and pouring is still pouring, and baptism is still baptism (a burial).

Most religious bodies today call Sunday "the Sabbath Day," but that does not make it so. The Sabbath was the seventh day of the week (Ex.20:8-11), and Sunday is the first day of the week. To call the first day "the Sabbath" will not change it in the least.

The Catholic counts his beads and calls it "prayer;" the Mormon uses water in the Lord's Supper and calls it "the fruit of the vine;" the Holiness jabber and call it "speaking in tongues;" they lay their hands on the sick and pray, and call it "divine healing;" and nearly all of the denominational churches use mechanical instruments and call it "singing." Why not call it what it is? Or, are we afraid we can-

not find scriptural authority for our practices if we call them what they really are?

Brethren are not immune to the use of this type of justification for their practices. They attend one hour of services a week and call it "faithful;" some take a little drink now and then and call it "being sociable;" and some dance and let their children dance, and call it "being graceful." Many congregations have built places to eat and to play with the Lord's money, and they call it "fellowship;" and they have built and maintained Super Organizations for the purpose of doing the work of the church and called them "methods." Brethren, it makes no difference what we call these things for which we have no Bible authority. To call them something other than what they are will not change them from what they are. A dog's tail is still a tail regardless of what you call it. Call it what it is, and you will not be deceived by it.

The apostles Paul said of those who received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, that *"God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness"* (2 Thess.2:10-12). *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting"* (Gal.6:7,8). Call it what it is. If you don't, the Lord will (Matt.7:21-23).



"...But exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." (Heb. 3:13)

"We must stay in constant contact with brethren and encourage one another daily. Sin is the agent that hardens man's heart. Sin is deceitful because it promises us pleasures and happiness, but its rewards are misery and death. If not careful, we can begin to believe the lies of Satan and refuse to hear the voice of God, thus our spiritual arteries become hardened." (From **Hebrews** by Robert Harkrider, p. 21)

Indeed, sin appears fair, but it is vile. It appears pleasant, but it's destructive. It promises much, but it performs nothing. Let us encourage one another daily lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Via, Brief Exhortations by David Riggs

News N Notes

Sick:

- Cindy North is in Cleveland, OH continuing rehabilitation after her surgery
- Blake Headen, Alberta's husband
- Marie Roberts continues at home recovering
- Ed Roberts father
- Grace Lancaster

Nursing Home:

- Hazel Carroll, Ethel Mahan, Pauline Sellers

Shut-ins:

- Josephine Clow, Mabel Fleming, Rhea Henthorn, Pauline Midcap
- A card, phone call or a visit can really brighten their days.

Meetings in the area:

Nov. 12-17

- **Pleasant Valley church of Christ** with **Aaron Veyon**
- **Middlebourne church of Christ** with **Dan Allen**