Do We Seek the Baptism of the Holy Spirit Part 1
By Charles Feinberg

This study is message number five in the series on truth and error about the holy spirit by dr. Charles Lee Feinberg, dean emeritus and professor of old testament and Semitic languages at Talbot theological seminary. The subject of our fifth study is a very vital one. Question is do we seek our believers today to seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I want to repeat that because here’s an area where we must be very exact and very precise. The subject is do we seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In spite of the clear testimony of the word of god on the different phases of the work of the Holy Spirit which we’ve already seen, to which we’ve given our attention at length. In spite of all that testimony of the bible on the work of the spirit, there is hopeless confusion in many quarters on these vital significant matters. Why? Well there’s a constant seeking for experiences not warranted by the scripture. They’re not based on the actual specific teaching of the word of god. Further, there is a baseless confusing of terms. Using expressions which means something entirely different from what the users intend. At the beginning of this series you remember we indicated how vital it is that we use only biblical language and adhere only to biblical terminology and mean what the bible says and not inject some meaning of our own. That’s another difficulty then, a confusing of terms. Using expressions that mean something entirely different from what the users intend. And then there’s a constant accusation that someone is trying to rob us of our god given privileges. We hear them say I want all that god has for me in this area. We must be sure it is something that god really does have and really had indicated that he wants for us to have in this specific area. So we hear so much today about seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In fact, some practically specialize
in the area apart from other ministries of the Holy Spirit it would seem. Seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Is this a scriptural procedure? Is there warrant for this in the word of God? What does the baptism of the Holy Spirit mean? What does it do for the one who has it? Should we all seek as believers should we seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Well we want to treat this important subject from 3 angles. First of all, the claim for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. What is the claim? Its claimed that just as the disciples who were saved already needed to tarry and we read of it in Acts 1 and 2, they needed to tarry to receive the baptism of the holy spirit so do all believers now? Well we ought to stop long enough to state that the reason the disciples tarried in Jerusalem and did that in that first century is because they were told specifically to do that by the holy son of God. The Lord Jesus Christ. The risen one from the dead. And notice they were told to tarry in Jerusalem. Its interesting that those who claim we ought to tarry also I don’t believe I’ve ever heard them say that we must tarry for the baptism of the Holy Spirit and go right to the literal earthly Jerusalem over there in the Middle East. But that’s exactly what they did in that first century. They didn’t take it to mean that they could tarry just anywhere or at some altar. That’s the first thing we have to recall and keep vividly in mind. Along this line a passage is often used, for instance James chapter 5 verses 7 and 8. That passage is supposed to teach that we are to have a second Pentecost at the end of the church age. Well let’s see what those verses say. Says the sacred writer through the spirit of God, be patient therefore brethren. Until the coming of the Lord. Behold the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil being patient about it until it gets the early and later rains or the early and the latter rains as it’s often called. You too be patient. Strengthen your hearts for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Notice he’s talking in the very first place until the coming of the Lord. He’s not talking about the Holy Spirit, he’s talking about being patient to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. And then at the end
strengthen your hearts for the coming of the lord that’s the lord Jesus. His coming as it’s indicated throughout the New Testament even after Pentecost. The coming of the lord is at hand. Then notice the wording, the farmer waits for the produce of the soil. He’s patient about it until the soil gets the early and the later rains. Why that’s a figure from nature in Palestine. Every farmer there from time or memorial has realized that in order to get the crop into a proper condition, there must be the early rains. They come in the fall in the land of Palestine. And then in order for the crop to come to a bountiful condition, for there to be a plenteous harvest there’s the need to bring it to full maturity. The crop must be brought to a full maturity and for that there is needed the latter rain. And in the Hebrew language of the Old Testament we have 2 specific technical names for these rains. yoreah [sp?] and malcosh [sp?]. yoreah is the early rain and malcosh is the latter rain. So this is not talking about the Holy Spirit at all. It’s a figure from nature in Palestine. the apostle is trying to say and he does say clearly enough that we believers in our Christian life and service are to be as those waiting for their lords servants waiting for the coming master and that type of patience that we need is the kind that a farmer has to exercise all the time. He can’t have a crop when he wants it just on his say so, or on his desire. He has to produce it from the soil. He has to do certain things by way of readying the soil. He has to do certain things by way of sowing the seed. And he has to do a great deal by way of being patient in order to get the proper balance of rain to make the proper crop. That’s all he’s speaking of there. There’s no, there’s not even an indomation [sp?] that there is baptism involved there. The baptism of the Holy Spirit. That is an unwarranted usage of scripture which means something entirely different. And then they say well look at acts 19 verses 1 to 7. Alright we'll look at it. What is that supposed to indicate? Well it’s supposed to indicate the normal experience for believers who are saved then receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Alright well look at acts 19
verses 1 to 7. I trust you have your bible with you in front of you. And if you do, this is the best way to get the most advantage out of these studies. Let’s look at acts 19:1-7 and it came about that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus notice where this is. Ephesus. And found some disciples and he said to them did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? And they said to him no we have not even heard whether there is a holy spirit. And he said into what then were you baptized? And they said into john’s baptism. And Paul said john baptized with a baptism of repentance telling people to believe in him who was coming after him that is in Jesus. In other words john’s baptism was a preparatory baptism. It was that which was intended to get them into the right position spiritually to receive the lord Jesus Christ when he came. so we read and when they heard this these disciples at Ephesus and when they heard this we might right be called them johns disciples found some disciples because they were baptized into johns baptism. And so we read when they heard this they were baptized in the name of the lord Jesus. And may I stop long enough to indicate what the meaning of the name of the lord Jesus we baptize in the name of the father the son and of the Holy Spirit. And some have wondered whether we shouldn’t baptize in the name of the lord Jesus. Baptizing in the name of means more than just mentioning an apolation [sp?] or a name or a nomer. No my dear friends baptizing in the name of the lord Jesus means into the authority of the lord Jesus. That was the question at issue in the first century AD among the Jews and others. It was whether Jesus of Nazareth was [inaudible] the messiah of Israel. The messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth was the crucial question among them as it is today. So they were when they did receive him, knew he had come. They heard this they were baptized in the name of the lord Jesus. and when Paul had laid his hands upon them the holy spirit came on them and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying and there were in all about 12 men who
as some folk talk this happened again and again and again with different ones who were baptized into johns baptism no there were only about 12 men. Now, what do we make of this passage? Will you please notice that in that passage the expression baptism of the Holy Spirit doesn’t even occur. No. these folk had not gone on from the preparatory stage. Actually they had not gone on from the ministry of john the forerunner. John the Baptist. They had received that. They were alright on that score. But somehow they had stopped at that point. They had not heard further. They had not had any communication evidently. They had not kept in touch with the events and that’s all the growth they had. All the preparation they had. As though there had been no [inaudible]. There had been no death on Calvary, there’d been no entombment, there’d been no resurrection and no ascension of our lord Jesus Christ to heaven. So they were in a very very preliminary stage to say the least. No that can’t be the norm for us. Some speak of the baptism with the Holy Spirit as the so called second blessing. Salvation itself they say should be considered as the first or basic blessing. And so this is supposed to be a second blessing a second definite experience. The only trouble here is that there is no such wording in all of the New Testament. It’s found neither in the old nor in the New Testament. And again, please if you want to be biblical in your speaking, in your thinking, in your believing, please adhere very closely, cleave to biblical designations and terminology. Use the wording of scripture. Well some point to deeper experiences of godly Christians through the centuries. They say look at this is told about this dear man of god. This missionary or this evangelist. He was a believer for a certain length of time. Longer or shorter. And one day he had they say the baptism of the Holy Spirit long after he was saved. Or a short while after he was saved. And oh how god mightily used him. My dear friends. There may be no question about the experience of that godly Christian. I’m sure such experiences have happened in Christian growth where one comes into a deeper realization of
what Christ is and a deeper commitment. A deeper surrender to God and to the spirit of God. To do in him or in her what God alone can do. But remember, that deeper experiences comes more under the heading and comes rightly under the heading of commitment as in Romans 12:1 and 2 surrendering ourselves, giving our bodies wholly acceptable as a sacrifice unto God. That may not be please that cannot be interpreted to mean second definite experiences after regeneration in the sense of a baptism of the Holy Spirit. It can mean a refreshing experience and it must be repeated. These surrenders. It can be as were going to see, that which better comes under the heading of filling of the Holy Spirit. And if we mean the filling of the Holy Spirit as we’ve seen it in our fourth tape. Then we ought to keep the word filling where it belongs and baptism where it belongs. Have you noticed that the advocates of this second experience which they call a very definite edition to the first basic blessing of salvation. Have you noticed that they do not build on the epistles. That’s where Christian life is built. That’s where the spirit of God wants us to go. He wants us to go to Romans. First and second Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians first and second Thessalonians first and second Timothy Titus Philemon Hebrews James first and second Peter first and second Third John and Jude. He wants us to go into those areas and in the revelation they don’t build on the epistles these men don’t. They build on the gospels and acts. Which are purposefully done of the spirit of God they are full of diverse elements. What do you mean by that? Well some relate to the period then present. Remember when our Lord Jesus said you’re going I’m sending you out. Don’t take any money in your wallet, don’t take any additional supplies. This that and the other. Because he expected them to be provided for in a special way in that interim period of service. But when he was getting ready to go on to glory, he said now take this and take that and the other. You see some things in the gospel relate to the period immediately present. Some of them to the time just ahead.
of them in the age of the church. And still others far in the future in the time of the kingdom. Some things in the age of the church yes when he said I will build my church and when he said this is the way there should be order in the church. where there’s a problem you are to have one individual speak to the other individual that is involved and if that doesn’t come out, then let him get another or a few others in the church. And then if there’s no success there, let them tell it to the whole church and if there’s the wrong reaction there, then let the church discipline. You see, things there are indicated concerning the time and the age of the church in which we live after Pentecost. And then there’s still other things in the gospel and acts far in the future in the time of the kingdom Matthew 24 and 25. In johns gospel too Christ says I finished the work in john 17. He hadn’t even gone to Calvary yet. Yet he said I finished the work thou gavest me to do. He was looking at Calvary as already finished. Because with god time is just an element. God lives in the eternal present. So there are things of diverse character. Don’t build on gospel and acts. Build on the epistles. Because in the epistles we are in the age of the church. In the gospels and in acts they were going from one period to another. For instance the disciples who were there at Pentecost had been believing in Christ in the age before the church. They were living in the law age and went on into the church age. They were living in the mosaic age and then went on into the church age. Now none of us today has been in the law age. we’ve never lived in the law age before Calvary or before the Pentecost and go over so you must realize that acts of its very nature is spanning two great ages or eras or epics or periods of gods marvelous dealing. So let’s be careful. Let’s be careful. Were told to be seeking the Holy Spirit to be tarrying for Pentecost. Notice how this disrupts churches. It often ruins pastures ministry. When the pastor doesn’t conceded to this wrong exhortation folks say well he’s not spiritual enough. He just doesn’t want a spiritual minister. Oh some acts are never to be repeated in gods program. These folk the say
tarry for Pentecost. And often times they'll say Pentecost means plenty of cost. Let’s not play around with words friends. Pentecost does not mean plenty of cost. Pentecost is from Pentecost in Greek which means 50. 50 days after Passover came the feast of weeks or Pentecost. Let’s not play with words. If you keep saying that Pentecost means plenty of cost somebody's going to say that asparagus means spare grass. And the same person may tell you that vermicelli is wormy celery. No no. let’s not play with words. Some acts I say are never to be repeated in gods program. Thank god there was only one guesenemy [sp?] and remember the disciples there were told to tarry and watch with the lord too. Do folk want to tarry for a guesenemy experience? No no. Only one guesenemy. One Calvary thank god there was one. There needed to be only one. Once in the end of the age he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself we read in Hebrews. Once for all. Oh believe it. Receive it. And thank god in similar fashion. There’s going to be only one Pentecost. Some things, some acts, some events, some episodes in gods program are never to be repeated. You were born again. But that doesn’t mean you are to be born again and again and again. Only one regeneration. Only one Calvary. Only one Pentecost. That’s a special mark of this second blessing. Some groups not all of them I admit insist on a supernatural speaking in tongues. We’re going to be dealing with that in a future study. They say tongues are evidence of the baptism of the spirit. Others insist that a mark of baptism with the Holy Spirit is perfect holiness. What’s that mean? Sinless perfection. That the believer in this life becomes perfectly holy. Not that he doesn’t sin but he can’t sin. Perfectly holy. And he’s sinlessly perfect. Well let’s look at first john 1:8 to 10 and 2 1 and 2 to see if this is a right claim. If this is a right promise to hold out before people of god. First john 1:8 to 10. If we say and that’s believer’s john the apostle is talking about believers. If we say that we have no sin, that means the sin nature, were deceiving ourselves. You just don’t know yourself. You have that sin
nature as well as Adam got it after he sinned and eve got it. And all his children have received it. They were born. Genesis 5 tells us in his image after his likeness. If we say we have not sin no sin nature singular we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins.

The root brings forth fruit. If we confess our sins he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned. If we say that root has not brought forth acts of sin. It has not brought forth fruit if we say that we make him god a liar. And god will not hold any man guiltless who calls him a liar. What else we may know. We know gods not a liar that goes contrary to our own conscious. And his word is not in us. We don’t know enough about what he has told us. Or we have purposely closed our eyes.

We’re not walking according to the clear explicit teaching of the word of god. So these who keep telling us, who claim that we should be getting the baptism of the Holy Spirit, they say that we should seek for perfect holiness. Sinless perfection. And the apostle john is talking specifically to believers. And he says there is no such thing. In fact in the very next chapter first john, first john 2:1 and 2 he says my little children. The little bearns the born ones. Those are children of god.

I’m writing these things to you that you may not sin that you may not go on sinning as the tenor of your life. As the pattern of your living. And if anyone sins. See in spite of the fact that were not to live in sins all the time, a believer can sin. And if anyone sins, commits an act of sin, Christian man or woman young man or young woman. We believers have an advocate we have an attorney with the father. He doesn’t cease to be our father. He doesn’t become our judge. We have an advocate with the father Jesus Christ the righteous. And he himself is the propitiation.

What does that mean? He himself is the all sufficient satisfying sacrifice for our sins and not for ours only. But also for those of the world. Oh then folk talk about eradicationism. One lady once boasted that of course she was sinlessly perfect. Of course she was perfectly holy and one of my
professors in seminary said my dear lady do you mean to tell me that the living god before whom the seraphim with veiled faces cry holy holy holy is the lord god of hosts. All the earth is full of his glory. Do you mean to tell me that that triune god has had and is having now a rival a competitor in you? He is sinless and you are sinless also. You are perfectly holy as he is perfectly holy. And that dear soul said oh I just mean that for the last number of years I haven’t wanted to sin. Oh my dear friends. Not wanting to sin and not sinning are two different things. Not wanting to sin is a mark of a believer who doesn’t want to offend his or her kind gracious holy heavenly father. That’s one thing. Not wanting to sin. But saying that you haven’t sinned. That’s sin eradicated. well then why are all those [inaudible] passages in the new testament there to tell us how god gets along with his children who do misbehave and who do sin sometimes voluntarily sometimes, most of the time we trust involuntarily. Oh my dear friends, god does not disown us he doesn’t inherit us because we sin after were saved. He has a way of getting along with us, of convicting us, of bringing us to himself. Did we disinherit our children, did we throw them out in the cold when they misbehave? No. there is a way in discipline to get along with them. And god gets along with his erring children too. these dear ones who make these claims don’t realize what aspersions these views cast on the work of grace as though we have to look for some added way, some added method way and beyond and other than god has given us. Please let us speak correctly. Do we seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit. No. this claim for the baptism of the Holy Spirit we see is erroneous. We cannot follow it. We dare not follow it. It is a way that is all together wrong.