

SEALED BY THE SPIRIT

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Ephesians 1:13 (asv) In whom (Christ) you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom, having also believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Note the sequence:

1. *having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation,*
2. *in whom, having also believed,*
3. *you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise*

How it happened

Acts 19:1-7 And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. 2: And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" 3: And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." 4: And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." 5: On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord

Jesus. 6: And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. 7: There were about twelve men in all.

A significant question

Acts 19:2 And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

This question assumes the possibility of believing and not receiving. It is pointless otherwise.

They become disciples

Acts 19:3-5 And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." 4: And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." 5: On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

What baptism means

Romans 6:3-4 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4: We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life

Identification with Christ in his

- *Death*
- *Burial*
- *Resurrection*
- *Walking in newness of life.*

The Holy Spirit came on them...

Act 19:6 And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and (so) they began speaking in tongues and prophesying.

- *'Hands' -- not all at once!*
- *'On' not 'in'*
- *'And' = 'and so'*
- *'Speaking' = ongoing*
- *'Tongues' = new languages*
- *'All' = 'all'!*

See *Acts 2:4; 10:44*

On them all...

There was a clear distinction between conversion, baptism and receiving the Spirit.

Back to *Ephesians 1:13*

Here is the same sequence:

In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the Good News of your salvation - in whom, having also believed (and been baptised), you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise

A seal of confirmation

2 Corinthians 1:22 He has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee

A seal was:

- *a confirmation*
- *an authentication*
- *a guarantee of a future entitlement (e.g. an engagement ring)*
- *not the same thing as it seals*

So, the Holy Spirit 'seals' us in our faith.

The question

NOT: Did you accept the creed? Join a church?
Start reading the Bible? Give up
swearing? Burn your idols?

But...

Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?

What is your answer? Yes? No? Now!