

# Conversion, the Gift of the Holy Spirit, and New Testament Religious Practices

By Clinton Wahlen

The question of conversion and its relationship to the gift of the Holy Spirit and the practice of water baptism is an important one. In some Christian denominations they are virtually inseparable, while in others they are related but clearly separate. In a few places, the New Testament also seems to associate the gift of the Holy Spirit with the laying on of hands. The question naturally arises as to whether one or both of these practices are necessary in order to receive the Holy Spirit. To answer this and related questions, we will look briefly at New Testament religious practices connected with the gift of the Holy Spirit, although a thorough examination of these subjects would require a much more detailed study than is contemplated here.<sup>1</sup>

## The Meaning and Necessity of Christian Baptism

Christian baptism has its origins in John's "baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Mark 1:4; Acts 13:24).<sup>2</sup> Being baptized by John signaled the people's repentance in response to John's preaching (Matt 3:1–2; Luke 3:1–14). This compares closely with Jesus' own proclamation (Mark 1:14–15; Luke 5:32) and the work of His disciples in baptizing those who followed Him (John 3:22–4:3), as well as the later Christian proclamation calling people "to repent and be baptized . . . for the forgiveness of your sins" (Acts 2:38; cf. 22:16). John's announcement that one was coming after him who would baptize not just "with water for repentance" but also "with the Holy Spirit" (Matt 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 11:16) may say more about Jesus as John's successor (John 3:27 (31)—than about the difference between the two baptisms themselves. After all, it was the descent of the Spirit in the form of a dove at Jesus' baptism that identified Him as the Coming One who would baptize with the Holy Spirit (John 1:29).<sup>34</sup>—Also, Jesus' submitting to John's baptism, together with His affirmation that by so doing they would "fulfill all righteousness" (Matt 3:15), shows that Christian baptism should not be distinguished too sharply from that of John<sup>3</sup>.

On the other hand, Jesus' own baptism is clearly unique in several respects. First, Jesus needed no repentance, which helps to explain John's reluctance to baptize Him (Matt 3:14). Second, Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit for His unique messianic role in fulfillment of prophecy (Luke 4:18–21; Acts 10:38). Third, judging from other actions of Jesus as prophetic "signs," ranging from miraculous healings and casting out demons to cleansing the temple,<sup>4</sup> His baptism may prefigure His death and resurrection, as His references to a future "baptism" (Mark 10:38; Luke 12:50) and "the sign of Jonah" suggest (Matt 12:39–41).

Nevertheless, as with other aspects of His life, the very fact that Jesus was baptized seems designed to set an example for believers in Him to follow, because both His positive teaching and His practice highlight baptism (being "born of water") as a necessary qualification for entering the kingdom of God (John 3:5). Soon after being baptized, Jesus authorized His disciples to baptize (John 3:26; 4:1–3) and, after His resurrection, He commanded the apostles to baptize His followers (Matt 28:19). Baptism even seems to be a condition of salvation (Mark 16:16).<sup>5</sup> These are some of the reasons why understanding and accepting Jesus' teaching and choosing to be baptized is necessary for church membership (1 Cor 12:13).

Christ's baptism is also instructive for believers in another way. It shows the close connection that exists between Christian baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus places the need to be born of the Spirit on the same level as water baptism (John 3:5)—both are essential, but they are also distinct.<sup>6</sup> Receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit

marks such an important change in a person's life that Jesus describes it as being "born again" (John 3:3) and turning "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God" (Acts 26:18). However, He also distinguishes water baptism from being born of the Spirit and seems not to have equated the two, in agreement with His prioritization of inner righteousness over external religious practices (e.g., Mark 7:1–23; Matt 6:1–18; 23:16–26). Paul explicitly identifies baptism as symbolic of the death and resurrection of Jesus *and* a life-changing experience. It marks one's death to sin, burial with Christ, and resurrection to a new life (Rom 6:1–7; Col 2:12–13). It is a vivid picture of "the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5), and the means whereby a person is united to the body of Christ, which is His church (1 Cor 12:12–14; Gal 3:27–28; Eph 1:22–23; 2:16).<sup>7</sup>

While water baptism and a changed life are closely associated with each other, nowhere in the New Testament is baptism said to *cause* this inner change. As we have seen, John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles called people to repentance as the initial step in turning (or returning) to God. And they apparently refused to baptize those whose lives showed no outward evidence of repentance (Matt 3:7–9; Luke 3:7–14; Acts 10:47). Baptism by immersion in water<sup>8</sup> vividly depicts the change in a person's life wrought by the Holy Spirit as they respond to this call. It is the outward sign of an inwardly repentant heart (1 Pet 3:21; Col 2:11–12), an inward change that is also described as being "sealed" by the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13; 4:30; cf. Rom 4:11). Thus, the apostles urged people to repent, be baptized, and promised them: "you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). All who receive the Holy Spirit receive it as a *gift*—a gift that can only be given by God Himself. Human beings are simply the means God uses to communicate the good news of salvation by faith to people—which leads to their repentance, baptism, and receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. These elements belong together in the process of salvation. Important as the outward act of baptism is, it cannot *by itself* be efficacious for salvation. Rather, it is the seal of and public witness to the Holy Spirit's work in the believer's life (Acts 10:47–48).

At the same time, although the biblical ordinance of baptism is as necessary now as circumcision was for a previous era of believers, it is important to remind ourselves that the outward sign of baptism is of little value without the inward change it is supposed to represent (1 Cor 7:19; Gal 5:6; 6:15).<sup>9</sup> Both John the Baptist and Jesus condemned a focus on forms of religious practice without the corresponding heart change that these practices represented (e.g., Matt 3:7–10; 6:5, 16; 23:25–28).<sup>10</sup> Just as unrepentant Jews could be "uncircumcised in heart" (Lev 26:41; Jer 9:26; Acts 7:51), so baptized Christians could in reality be "*false brothers*" (Gal 2:4) and even "enemies of the cross of Christ" (Phil 3:18).

### **The Laying on of Hands and the Gift of the Spirit**

Turning to another New Testament religious practice, both Jesus and the apostles are described as laying their hands on people in various settings and for a variety of reasons. Often it had no necessary connection with inward change or obvious relation to the gift of the Holy Spirit:

Jesus sometimes laid hands on people to heal them (Mark 6:5; 8:23, 25; Luke 4:40), as would His followers (Mark 16:18; Acts 28:8).

Jesus laid His hands on children to bless them (Matt 19:13–15).

The apostles appointed seven individuals by means of prayer and the laying on of hands for the work of ministering to people's material needs (Acts 6:1–6).<sup>11</sup>

After fasting and prayer, the church in Antioch appointed Paul and Barnabas as missionaries by the laying on of hands, and sent them on their missionary journey (Acts 13:1–3).

Paul instructs Timothy regarding the selection of elders not to lay hands on anyone hastily (1 Tim 5:22).

Only three New Testament passages explicitly refer to the Holy Spirit being given in connection with the laying on of hands (Acts 8:17–18; 9:17; 19:6). As a close examination of the larger context of these verses will make clear, these were unique, exceptional, and unrepeatable cases that necessitated the laying on of hands and should not be used as a model for ministry today.<sup>12</sup> As one seasoned New Testament researcher has observed, “there should be little doubt that it is normal in Luke’s eyes for all believers to receive the gift of the Spirit at conversion and that it is considered anomalous when this does not happen.”<sup>13</sup>

### **Acts 8:17–18**

Philip’s preaching of the gospel in the city of Samaria led many to believe and be baptized, including Simon Magus (Acts 8:5–13). When word reached Jerusalem that “Samaria had received the word of God,” Peter and John were sent there to help and follow up the work being done by Philip (Acts 8:14).<sup>14</sup> As the text indicates, the Samaritans had not yet received the Holy Spirit when they were baptized (Acts 8:16). It underscores the exceptional nature of this situation with the words “not yet” (*oudepō*) and “only” (*monon*). So the apostles “laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit” (Acts 8:17).<sup>15</sup> No explanation for this action is given but there are some hints as to the reason.

First of all, it is important to recognize that the preaching of the gospel in Samaria represents a major mission advance by the early church in harmony with the instructions given them by Jesus before His ascension to heaven (Acts 1:8).<sup>16</sup> In addition, and more significantly, the text uses an unusual expression in describing the fact that the Samaritans had not received the Holy Spirit: “for he [the Spirit] *had not yet fallen* on any of them” (Acts 8:17, emphasis supplied). The Greek word translated “fallen” (*epiptō*) refers to the giving of the Holy Spirit on only three occasions. This is the first of the three. The second is in reference to the Holy Spirit falling on the Gentiles who gathered at Cornelius’ house to hear Peter’s preaching (Acts 10:44). The third and final reference is contained in Peter’s description of this event to some in the Jerusalem church—that “the Holy Spirit fell on them *just as on us at the beginning*” (Acts 11:15, emphasis supplied)—referring to the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:1–8). In other words, the three stages in preaching the gospel to the world indicated in Acts 1:8—first to Jews, then to Samaritans, and, finally, to the Gentiles—is marked by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.<sup>17</sup> This outpouring on the Samaritans occurred sometime after they were baptized. In the case of the Gentiles, however, the Holy Spirit was poured out beforehand (Acts 10:44). In both cases the sanction of the church through the apostles on the expanding mission features prominently.<sup>18</sup> It is important to notice that there is no clear pattern in the gift of the Holy Spirit in relation to baptism and the laying on of hands. The situations are unique and exceptional in their own way.

### **Acts 9:17**

Following his dramatic conversion on the road to Damascus, Paul (who prior to Acts 13:9 is referred to by his Jewish name “Saul”), was brought into connection with the early church through the ministry of Ananias, who had been instructed in a vision to go to him (Acts 9:10–16). As with the Samaritans’ conversion, the seal of Christ’s church was to be placed on the conversion and baptism of Saul.<sup>19</sup> The text describes Ananias “laying his hands on him” (*epitheis ep’ auton tas cheiras*) and saying, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 9:17). As a result, “something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized” (Acts

9:18). The text is not clear as to whether the act of Ananias in laying his hands on Saul effected the regaining of sight, being filled with the Holy Spirit, or both. From verse 12, it might be concluded that only healing was accomplished by this. However, the Greek text makes no distinction between Saul regaining his sight and being filled with the Spirit. In fact, the syntactical parallelism of the two verbs (*anablepēs kai plēsthēs*) following a conjunction of purpose (*hopōs*) suggests that both results stemmed from Ananias laying his hands on him. Note this vivid description given by Ellen G. White: “In Christ’s stead Ananias touches the eyes of Saul, that they may receive sight. In Christ’s stead he places his hands upon him, and, as he prays in Christ’s name, Saul receives the Holy Ghost.”<sup>20</sup> Even though the reception of the Spirit coincides with the laying on of hands, it apparently came in response to prayer rather than being caused by the physical act itself of Ananias’ hands being laid on Saul.

### **Acts 19:1–7**

Acts 19 describes the gospel being brought by Paul to Ephesus, where he stayed more than two years during his third missionary journey (Acts 19:8, 10). Almost immediately, it seems, he met “some disciples” (*tinās mathētas*, Acts 19:1), about twelve in number (Acts 19:7). Most often, when not further qualified, Luke uses the term “disciples” for baptized Christian believers, especially in Acts.<sup>21</sup> However, he does not always use it this way, sometimes referring specifically to disciples of John the Baptist.<sup>22</sup> In view of the context, and the very general phraseology,<sup>23</sup> these Ephesians were, at best, “believers with partial knowledge,”<sup>24</sup> similar perhaps to Apollos (Acts 18:25).<sup>25</sup> Paul seems to recognize that their instruction and/or experience had been inadequate, because he asks: “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” (Acts 19:2). As we have seen, ordinarily reception of the Holy Spirit coincides with believing,<sup>26</sup> so this should have been assumed. But their reply—that they had not yet “so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit” (Acts 19:2)—is hardly reassuring.<sup>27</sup> Although John the Baptist had pointed to Jesus as the one who would come and baptize with the Holy Spirit (Mark 1:7–8), these disciples from Ephesus may not have been present to hear this remark, as they were completely uninformed about Jesus. Thus Paul proceeds to explain how John had urged people to believe in “the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus” (Acts 19:4). It is not necessary to postulate the continuing existence of some first-century sect of Baptist followers in order to suppose that many who had been baptized by John, including these disciples, continued to value the religious instruction and experience thus gained without becoming followers of Jesus.<sup>28</sup>

Clearly, the Spirit had led these men up to this point; Paul carried the work further by bringing them to a fuller understanding of the gospel of Christ. Their rebaptism by Paul “in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 19:5) sets a seal on their Christian commitment. It also provides an important example for believers today in two different ways. First of all, it is important to remember that baptism into Christ constitutes one’s formal acceptance of and entry into the new covenant. Normally, this should not be repeated just as a couple who enter into marriage would never think to repeat the wedding ceremony.<sup>29</sup> But if a person has had a serious moral fall by walking away from one or more baptismal vows and living a life out of harmony with the new covenant, rebaptism would be appropriate. In such a case, the person by rebaptism makes a public confession that, subsequent to their baptism there had been a rejection of Christ, making necessary this return and reconsecration of one’s life to Him. A second reason that a person may want to consider rebaptism is when seeing and embracing a whole new paradigm of truth, as the disciples of John did, leads to such a dramatic life change that rebaptism is deemed appropriate to mark this “new life.”<sup>30</sup>

Acts 19 also indicates that “when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them” (Acts 19:6). This concrete manifestation of the Spirit, similar to what the apostles experienced at Pentecost (Acts 2:4, 11) and what the Gentiles experienced through Peter’s preaching (Acts 10:46), was for the purpose of building up the church by preaching the gospel, because Luke immediately adds that “they began speaking in tongues and prophesying” (Acts 19:6). The apostles on the day of Pentecost had received these same gifts in order to evangelize the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Acts 2:1–8, 16–21) and, later, the Gentiles (Acts 10:44–48; 11:15, 16)—all in fulfillment of prophecy (Joel 2:28–32).<sup>31</sup> This further impartation of the gifts of the Spirit was likewise strategic. The gospel could now be spread more rapidly in Ephesus—which, as a major Roman port and center of trade for both East and West, constituted the most important city of Asia Minor.<sup>32</sup> White indicates that, through the gift of the Spirit, these believers “were enabled to speak the languages of other nations and to prophesy. Thus they were qualified to labor as missionaries in Ephesus and its vicinity and also to go forth to proclaim the gospel in Asia Minor.”<sup>33</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The New Testament consistently associates the gift or work of the Holy Spirit with repentance, conversion, and baptism. As Paul teaches, the Spirit is received through “the hearing of faith” (Gal 3:2). This is evident in the conversion of Paul, of the Samaritans, of Cornelius and his household, and of other Gentile believers, all of whom gave evidence of having already received the Spirit before they were baptized. While the Holy Spirit empowers individuals for specific ministries, this is distinct from the work of the Spirit at conversion. The apostles, for example, seem to have received successive endowments of the Spirit for different purposes. Before His ascension, Jesus imparts to them the Spirit and instructs them regarding their future duties in establishing and solidifying the young church (John 20:21–23).<sup>34</sup> At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was poured out for preaching the gospel to all nations in fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matt 28:18; Acts 1:8). In Acts 4 it was to preach more boldly in the face of persecution.<sup>35</sup>

Acts describes a similar outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Samaritans through prayer and the laying on of hands by Peter and John. In the case of Paul, he not only regained his sight through the laying on of hands by Ananias, but it was also an important step in his being accepted into Christian fellowship and his reception of the Holy Spirit for the Gentile ministry to which God had called him (Acts 9:15; cf. 22:21; 26:17). This was true, too, of the Ephesian believers who responded to Paul’s teaching about Jesus by being rebaptized. Their deepening experience and reception of the Spirit’s gifts through the laying on of hands opened doors for them to have a more effective witness in the important city of Ephesus.

In summary, while the gift of the Spirit is closely linked with baptism, which is the outward sign of its reception, this gift is always bestowed by God Himself. Also, with regard to the outpouring of the Spirit, there is no clear pattern as to whether it precedes or follows baptism. On the three occasions when the Holy Spirit was poured out on human beings through the laying on of hands, we have found that these were unique, exceptional instances. Textual indicators point to the uniqueness of each occasion and the unrepeatable nature of the event. Therefore, we should not think that through the laying on of hands, whether before or after their baptism, the Holy Spirit can be given. To the contrary, the Spirit is normally at work in a person as soon as he or she understands and believes the gospel, and is willing to receive this gift, independent of the action of other human beings. Finally, as this study indicates, before Seventh-day Adventist ministers present individuals to the congregation as candidates for baptism and church membership, care should be taken to ensure that they have been thoroughly instructed and show evidence of

conversion and the gift of the Spirit in their lives (see Matt 7:18–20; 2 Tim 4:1–5).<sup>36</sup> It is the Spirit who apportions gifts “to each one individually as *He* wills” (1 Cor 12:11, emphasis supplied). Ministers are simply God’s instruments to facilitate this work.

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Oscar Cullmann, *Baptism in the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1950); G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Baptism in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1962); James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* (London: SCM, 1970); Everett Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 83–198; Craig S. Keener, *The Spirit in the Gospels and Acts: Divine Purity and Power* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997); Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, “Baptismal Instruction in the New Testament and Other Related Issues,” <https://adventistbiblicalresearch.org/materials/church/baptismal-instruction-new-testament-and-other-related-issues> (accessed January 11, 2018).

<sup>2</sup> All Bible quotations are from the English Standard Version. Debate concerning the nature and significance of the baptism administered by John, present already in the time of Jesus (Mark 11:30–33), continues unabated, on which see Bruce Chilton, “Yohanan the Purifier and His Immersion,” *Toronto Journal of Theology* 14 (1998): 197–212; also Werner Bieder, “βαπτίζω, βάπτισμα, etc.” *The Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, eds. Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 1:193.

<sup>3</sup> See Wilson Paroschi, “Acts 19:1–7 Reconsidered in Light of Paul’s Theology of Baptism,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 47/1 (2009): 94–95, describing the distinctiveness of the post-Pentecost Christian baptism as introducing “an important ecclesiological emphasis” that includes “baptism in the name of Jesus and the gift of the Holy Spirit” (p. 95).

<sup>4</sup> See Morna D. Hooker, *The Signs of a Prophet: The Prophetic Actions of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1997); also Clinton Wahlen, “Healing,” *DJG*<sup>2</sup>, 362–370; idem, “The Temple in Mark and Contested Authority,” *Biblical Interpretation* 15 (2007): 248–267.

<sup>5</sup> This is not to say that salvation is impossible without being baptized. Some, like the thief on the cross (Luke 23:40–43), would undoubtedly have been baptized had they had the possibility; others would be baptized if only they could hear the gospel and be called upon to do so (Rom 10:14; cf. 2:14–16).

<sup>6</sup> Jesus refers to being born (lit. “begotten”) “out of [ex] water” (baptism) and being begotten “of the Spirit” (conversion) as two separate but essential events (John 3:5).

<sup>7</sup> Further on the meaning of Christian baptism, see Rolf J. Pöhler, “Die theologische Bedeutung der Taufe und ihre Implikationen nach dem Zeugnis des Neuen Testaments,” in *Die Taufe: Theologie und Praxis*, ed. Roberto Badenas (Hamburg: Advent-Verlag, 2002), 165–176.

<sup>8</sup> This is what the Greek word *baptō* means, from which “baptize” and “baptism” derive (Albrecht Oepke, “βάπτω, βαπτίζω κτλ.,” *TDNT* 1:529–546).

<sup>9</sup> Like baptism for New Testament believers, the “sign of circumcision” (Rom 4:11) was, for Old Testament believers, to be an outward indication of an inward “circumcision of the heart” (Deut 10:16; 30:6; Jer 4:4; Rom 2:29) or “seal” of the gift of righteousness that one receives “by faith” (Rom 4:11).

<sup>10</sup> See Clinton Wahlen, “Lessons from Matthew 3,” in this issue of *Reflections*.

<sup>11</sup> It is natural to connect the actions of praying and laying hands on the seven with the nearest subject, namely, “the apostles,” thereby providing confirmation by the leadership of the seven chosen by the congregation, though the Greek allows for the possibility of their having been set apart by the whole congregation (see, e.g., Mikeal C. Parsons, *Acts Paideia* [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008], 84). However, in addition to the grammatical considerations already mentioned, the larger context of the chapter (esp. vv. 2–3) and the authority Luke consistently ascribes to the apostles also makes this suggestion unlikely.

<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Rodríguez, “Baptismal Instruction”: “The few cases where it was performed are very peculiar and should not be used to universalize the practice.”

<sup>13</sup> I. Howard Marshall, *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 177.

<sup>14</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 106.

<sup>15</sup> Simon’s perception of this phenomenon as indicative of some special power or ability to impart the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands that could be purchased with money (v. 18) need not detain us as his understanding was clearly misguided (vv. 20–23).

<sup>16</sup> G. W. H. Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit: A Study in the Doctrine of Baptism and Confirmation in the New Testament and in the Fathers* (London: Longmans, 1951), 70.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, ed. Donald A. Hagner, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 383: “We may say that there is a Jewish Pentecost, a Samaritan Pentecost, and a Gentile Pentecost.” The absence of the Greek article in Acts 8:15, 17 (*pneuma hagion*) is unremarkable as it is regularly absent following a preposition (e.g., Acts 1:2, 5), when describing the Spirit coming upon human beings (e.g., Acts 2:4; 4:8; 9:17), or when assimilated to an anarthrous noun (e.g., Rom 15:13, 19). See *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, eds. Friedrich Blass, Albert Debrunner, and Friedrich Rehkopf, 14th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976), §257 and n. 4.

<sup>18</sup> Udo Schnelle, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. M. Eugene Boring (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2009), 515.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 122: “Thus Jesus gave sanction to the authority of His organized church and placed Saul in connection with His appointed agencies on earth. Christ had now a church as His representative on earth, and to it belonged the work of directing the repentant sinner in the way of life.”

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> E.g., Acts 6:1, 2, 7; 9:10, 19.

<sup>22</sup> It is used in Luke’s Gospel for disciples of John the Baptist (5:33; 7:18; 11:1), the Pharisees (5:33), pre-Christian followers of Jesus (6:1, 13, 17, 20), and generically of any teacher’s pupil (6:40). In Acts 9:25, “his disciples” refers to Paul’s “sympathizers” (F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Book of Acts: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1954], 204), while in Acts 20:29–30, Paul warns of “fierce wolves” and men from among the Ephesian believers themselves “speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.”

<sup>23</sup> The indefinite pronoun *tis* (some) approximates the force of an indefinite article (H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, [Toronto, Ontario: The MacMillan Company, 1955], §145) and “is used to introduce a member of a class without further identification” (Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996], 347).

<sup>24</sup> Gerhard F. Hasel, *Speaking in Tongues: Biblical Speaking in Tongues and Contemporary Glossolalia* (Berrien Springs, MI: Adventist Theological Society, 1991), 99.

<sup>25</sup> This would help to explain why Luke interrupts Paul’s travel narrative at this point. On the connection of Acts 18:24–28 with 19:1–7, see Paroschi, “Acts 19:1–7 Reconsidered,” 93–94. There is no necessity, however, as Paroschi supposes (following the suggestion of C. K. Barrett), that Paul’s understanding of the necessity of rebaptism was substantially different from that of Aquila and Priscilla since they obviously worked closely together over an extended period of time (Acts 18:18; Rom 16:3; 1 Cor 16:19; 2 Tim 4:19).

<sup>26</sup> The syntax of this question in Greek suggests the same. A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1934), 861, 1113, identifies this usage as “the aorist participle of simultaneous action,” indicating that it almost always occurs when the verb comes first (as in 19:2, *elabete pisteusantes*).

<sup>27</sup> The difficulty is not with the question itself because these disciples were clearly already deficient or Paul would not have questioned them as he did. A variant reading eliminating the problem and, therefore, clearly secondary appears in a few Western manuscripts (P<sup>38, 41</sup> D) and versions: “We have not even heard that some are receiving the Holy Spirit.”

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Paroschi, “Acts 19:1–7 Reconsidered,” 86, who admits the possibility but dismisses it in the case of Apollos and these disciples, choosing to suppose that “at some point in Jesus’ lifetime” they became Christians but then “lost contact with the Jesus movement in Palestine and missed out on the Good Friday/Easter events” (p. 92).

<sup>29</sup> *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, 19th ed. (2016), 50: “A member whose spiritual experience has become cold needs a spirit of repentance which leads to revival and reformation. This experience will be followed by participation in the communion service to signify renewed cleansing and fellowship in the body of Christ, making rebaptism unnecessary.”

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 49. Rebaptism in no way impugns the significance of one’s prior baptism.

<sup>31</sup> Hasel, *Speaking in Tongues* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Adventist Theological Society, 1991).

<sup>32</sup> Recognizing its strategic importance for the spread of the gospel, Paul spent three years in Ephesus (Acts 20:31). By the time John wrote the book of Revelation there were churches well established throughout the western part of Asia Minor (see Rev 2–3).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 283.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6; Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA, Pacific Press, 1940), 805.

<sup>35</sup> Further, see Clinton Wahlen, “Pentecostal Power: Basic Lessons in Spirit-Driven Growth,” November 18, 2010, 14–16, <http://archives.adventistreview.org/article/3913/archives/issue-2010-1537/pentecostal-power> (accessed January 22, 2018).

<sup>36</sup> See *Church Manual*, 44.