Pastor Michael O'Neill. October 18, 2026

Resurrection Reality
Part Two

Acts 8:9-40, 18:23-19:7

1. Two baptisms
   - *Matthew 3:11; Acts 3:19, 2:38*

   - The first baptism
     - Simon the sorcerer
     - Samaritans
     - Apollos
     - Ephesians
       - *Acts 19:2*

   - The second baptism
     - Simon the sorcerer
     - Samaritans
     - Apollos
     - Ephesians

2. What is the second baptism?
   - *Galatians 2:20; Acts 1:8; Jeremiah 29:13*

The focus is always directed toward introducing people to Jesus!

3. How do I receive the second baptism?
   - *Matthew 5:6; Psalm 42:1-2; Luke 11:5-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24*

   - Be thirsty
   - Be humble
   - Be persistent

love.learn.live.
westvalleychurch.com

West Valley Church
10/18/2026
Michael O'Neill

Resurrection Reality, Part Two:
Spirit Baptism

Years ago we went on a family vacation to Virginia when the boys were young, and we spent the day at a big amusement park. Our son Ryan, who was ten years old at the time, and I sat together on a rollercoaster. It was his first time on a big one, so I wanted to ride it with him. Halfway through the ride, we went up a high hill and then raced down a high steep ramp and into a series of dips, turns, and corkscrews. When we got to the top of that first hill, Ryan said, "Oh great." (His enthusiasm had greatly diminished!) Then, as we started down fast he said, "Okay, Smile!" I asked him why he said that, and he told: "Because when you smile, you can't throw up!" I don't where he heard that, but it's actually true! It apparently suppresses your gag reflex and eases mild nausea.

We finished the ride and got off, and then we waited for Sean, our oldest who was twelve at the time. He was in the train behind us because he wanted to ride in the last car of a train – that was supposed to be the most fun place to ride. So Ryan and I watched and waited for Sean to finish. But while Sean was on the ride, there was some mechanical trouble and the train stopped with Sean still on it – his car was just six feet from the platform. For a half hour he sat in the car, hanging in mid-air, waiting for people to either fix the ride or get him down. They finally took a ladder out to him so he could climb off. There was another train, though, that was stuck at the very beginning of the ride, waiting. They had just pulled out away from the loading zone and were stuck there hanging at the *beginning* of the ride. Think about how that would be – to anticipate an exciting roller coaster ride, to get on it, but then how disappointing it would be to get stuck right at the beginning and miss all the best parts of the ride.

That is very similar to what happens to a whole lot of believers in Jesus: they get on this great adventure ride called the Christian life, but are stuck at the beginning and never get to the exciting part. Christian, there is a thrilling life in Christ that you might be missing out on; getting saved is only the *start.* You could be living in the reality of Resurrection life. We're going to see about that life today from some examples in the Book of Acts.

By Acts chapter eight, the newborn Church has been facing persecution, and the believers are beginning to scatter. Phillip, one of the disciples, has gone to Samaria and is telling the Samaritans about Jesus. Would you stand with me while I read this to us?

We'll pick it up in verse 9:

> "Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, "This man is the divine power known as the Great Power." They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his magic. But when they believed Philip as he

preached the Good News of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw. When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the Word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." Peter answered: "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin." Then Simon answered, "Pray to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me." When they had testified and proclaimed the Word of the Lord, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, preaching the Gospel in many Samaritan villages." (Acts 8:9-25, niv)

Let's jump forward in time a little now to chapters 18 & 19. Saul has become a Christian (Paul) and is now on his third missionary journey in the town of Ephesus. We'll pick up this part of the story in 18:23, listen to the story:

After spending some time in Antioch, Paul set out from there and traveled from place to place throughout the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers and sisters encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. When he arrived, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed…

While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"

They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?"

"John's baptism," they replied.

Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized in

> the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve men in all. (Acts 18:23-19:7, niv)

Thank you for standing; you can be seated. Could you tell what these three-chapter segments have in common? They are talking about…

1. Two baptisms

What are the two baptisms that are mentioned? The first one is water baptism, or the baptism of John, or in other words a baptism of repentance. According to Matthew 3:11, this is what you do when you become a Christian. John the Baptist said:

> "I baptize with water those who repent of their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I'm not worthy even to be His slave and carry His sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." (Matthew 3:11, nlt)

Remember what Peter said in Acts 2:38 – that to become a Christian you must repent and be baptized:

> "Now repent of your sins and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away." (Acts 3:19, nlt)

Peter also said in Acts:

> "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38, nlt)

So this *first* baptism refers to becoming a Christian. The second is the baptism of the Holy Spirit – when the Holy Spirit fills you with Himself. This distinction is important for you to understand if you are going to live the resurrection reality. Many people in the church in the US today, maybe even some of us in this church, only know about and live in the *first* baptism.

If your Christian life is without power, if it is without joy, if you are continually struggling with sin or just not growing in your faith, if you are not introducing people to Jesus and you haven't seen anyone else around you coming to know him, then more than likely you too have yet to understand this second baptism. But that is where the power is living the resurrection reality.

Let's start then by looking at the examples in these passages of…

The first baptism

There are four people or groups of people listed in these passages; two individuals and two groups of people.

Let's look at each of them, starting with…

Simon the Sorcerer

Simon was the first century version of the psychic hotline. He had a lot of notoriety and had quite a bit of influence and power because of his magical abilities. But then it says in verse 13 of chapter 8 that Simon himself believed and was baptized. Simon got saved. Pretty clear.

Next then is the…

Samaritans

You can see in verse 12 that men and women believed in Jesus and were baptized. Again in verse 14 it says that the Apostles heard that the Samaritans accepted, or they believed and obeyed the Word of God. The original Greek indicates that they were in a continual state of being baptized with water, meaning that they were living the repentant life; that they had become Christians. This in itself is an amazing thing, because the Samaritans were hated by the Jews – the Jews considered Samaritans illegitimate children, and not deserving of God's blessings. And yet here they are becoming Christians! Listen: It doesn't matter what anybody else thinks of you; God loves you as if you were the only person in all the world to love! Ignore those self-righteous judgmental people: Jesus died for YOU!

Now, skipping ahead to Chapter 18, we see that it was also…

Apollos

…who had become a Christian and received the *first* baptism. He even taught very accurately about Jesus, although he still didn't know about the second baptism yet.

Finally, see that it was also the people of the town of Ephesus, or the…

Ephesians

…who were Christians. Notice that the passage says that they were disciples – this is a word that is used exclusively for disciples of Christ. Clearly they'd experienced the first baptism. But then Paul asked them a critical question:

> "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed" (Acts 19:2, niv)

In other words, now that you are Christians, have you received the Holy Spirit? Their answer was "no."

Clearly, the idea of becoming a Christian in all four of these examples is associated with repentance, or water baptism, or John's baptism, and that is distinct from the second baptism. First of all, that's why we baptize with water – it's so very important because it represents that we have been saved by Jesus, we've asked him to save us, and we are now Christians. Have you been baptized? We are having a service next week and it's not too late for you to join us! You need to tell us today so we can help you prepare for it.

If you have not become a Christian, before you can ever think about living fully in the resurrection reality of the Spirit, *you must first have this baptism of repentance*. (Be saved, which baptism reps). Keep that in mind as we continue.

Then comes…

The second baptism

Let's again look at each of our four examples to see how they are doing with this second baptism, starting with…

Simon the Sorcerer

Simon has a little problem with this idea of the second baptism. Even though he is a Christian, there is still a whole lot of sin nature in him. He does not want to die to himself. When Peter and John arrive, and lay hands on people and they receive the Holy Spirit, Simon watches this and is selfishly greedy for power and tells Peter he'll pay him if he'll give him the Holy Spirit. But *the Holy Spirit is not a power to be manipulated – He is a power that must be obeyed. He is not a genie that we command, He is God who commands us. Simon thought that the Spirit came to Samaria in obedience to the Apostles, but it was the Apostles who came to Samaria in obedience to the Spirit.* Peter tells Simon that if he doesn't wise up and confess and repent of his selfish ways, he will go the way of his money – straight to Hell. He's been saved, but if he doesn't submit himself to God he'll forfeit that salvation.

So what did Simon decide to do? Remember, he didn't even take responsibility for his sin by praying for himself – he asked Peter to pray for him. So what did he do? The Bible doesn't tell us what Simon decided, although tradition says he became the leader of the cult called Gnosticism, which is a false teaching that became the biggest threat to the church. It still continues today in the form of some major world cults. So even though Simon was saved and *saw* the second baptism, as far as we know he never received it himself, and in fact may have even forfeited his own salvation and exchanged it for a lie. (Today the word *simony* means to buy or sell a position for power. Politicians do it all the time.)

In contrast to Simon, look at the**…**

Samaritans

In verse 16 it says that they had not yet been filled with the Spirit. So John and Peter pray and lay hands on them, and they become filled with the Spirit. Clearly, they experienced *both distinct baptisms*. Do you see that?

Now let's jump ahead again and look at…

Apollos

In verse 27 of chapter 18 it says that he only knew about the first baptism, then a Christian married couple, Priscilla and Aquilla (Priscilla was a pastor), they take Apollos aside and they "explain the way of God more accurately," (18:26) or literally, more perfectly – they explain the baptism of the Holy Spirit – just like I'm doing for you today. What Apollos lacked was the Holy Spirit. We know that Apollos went on to become a prominent and effective preacher and teacher and leader in the church. Judging by the fruit of his life, we can again assume he got the second baptism, thanks to that Spirit-filled couple!

See, too, how the believers in Ephesus, or the**…**

Ephesians

…do with the second baptism. Paul readily accepts that they are Christians, but asks them if they have received the Holy Spirit. They say they haven't even heard of the Holy Spirit. Paul explains to them the difference between the baptisms of repentance and the baptism of the Spirit, and then he lays his hands on them to pray, and they receive the Holy Spirit.

I hope I've made my case: *there is another baptism for you if you are a Christian.* Honestly, many of us live as if we've never heard of the Holy Spirit. But the Spirit wants to fill you too! So let's see…

2. What is the second baptism?

Put simply, second baptism is the time when the Holy Spirit is allowed to move into your life, and you willingly give Him full control. It means your life is not your own; you now live for Him. Paul said:

> "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20, niv)

When Jesus talked about the power of the Holy Spirit, He also gave important truths as to what we can expect. The Spirit is the Spirit of truth (John 14:7). The Spirit will guide you into truth (John 16:3). The Spirit will point you to Christ (John 15:26). The Spirit will glorify Christ (John 16:14). This is what the Spirit will do in and through your life when he fills you.

There are some who say that Spirit baptism involves a lot of emotion and ecstatic experiences. But the purpose of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus Christ and to testify to His truth and His authority, and he will do that through our lives. The Spirit does that by freeing us from the power and pull of sin and shaping our character more and more like Christ. What does that look like?

A Christian's call is to (1) serve and to glorify Christ and (2) to proclaim the truth of God's Holy Word to people – in other words, to introduce people to Jesus. If you look at *any* example in the Bible, you see an immediate focus on introducing people to Jesus; proclaiming the Word of God. When someone is baptized by the Spirit, they will recognize that this filling is not for themselves alone, not for their own "blessing"; the Spirit equips

and empowers them to *do God's will*, which is to tell others the truth about Jesus. The apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit and immediately had the power to preach and the boldness to stand before their enemies and proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ. Each time we see the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the Bible, the *immediate* response is to go out and live this Christ-like life and tell others about Jesus. It is never centered around us, but is always centered around Jesus Christ.

The focus is always directed toward introducing people to Jesus!

Remember what Jesus said the Holy Spirit would give the disciples (and us) the power to do? To be his witnesses:

> "What you'll get is the Holy Spirit. And when the Holy Spirit comes on you, you will be able to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, all over Judea and Samaria, even to the ends of the world." (Acts 1:8, tmt)

The whole book of Acts is about the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers, empowering them to go out and tell others about Jesus Christ. That is the kind of life we are talking about.

By the way, if you want to learn how to better introduce Jesus to others, in a week and a half our church is hosting a regional, one evening conference called "The Power of One – being disciples that make disciples." It's no cost to you. It's from 6:30-9pm, Tuesday evening October 27. It's a way to learn how to direct the power of the Spirit as you introduce people to Jesus.

The point is that second baptism is available and that *every Christian* must seek it. God transforms ordinary men and women into extraordinary people of faith. The lack of power in the church today isn't because God's power is diminished, but because we no longer seek God with all our heart.

Jeremiah 29:13 says:

> "And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:13, niv)

So…

3. How do I receive the Second Baptism?

There are three key postures to receiving the Holy Spirit, or the second baptism.

The first is to…

Be thirsty

You must have a hunger and thirst for God above all else. Jesus said that you should be happy if you hunger and thirst for this, because you will be filled!

> "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled." (Matthew 5:6, niv)

Every leader in the history of the church with this testimony has one thing in common – they all had that hunger for God. They thirsted after God and could not be satisfied with anything less than God. King David had this desire for God when he wrote:

> "As the deer pants for water, so my soul longs for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I see Him?" (Psalm 42:1-2, niv)

It is also a thirst to do God's work. Every testimony of great men and women who received this power from God has had the same direction and focus. They all wanted to do God's will. They didn't want glory; they wanted to glorify God. They wanted special power to *serve God and others*, not for themselves. They wanted to lose their lives for the sake of being completely used for God's will. And the evidence of the Holy Spirit is seen in their lives. They lived like Christians; they proclaimed the truth of God's Word; they introduced people to Jesus Christ.

Second is to…

Be humble

Humble does not mean polite, or shy, it means a brokenness before God; letting Him be God in every way in your life. Without brokenness, we will not find God. Listen to the following passages:

James 4:9-10. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

Psalm 10:17. LORD, You have heard the desire of the humble; You will prepare their heart; You will cause Your ear to hear.

Psalm 25:9. The humble He guides in justice, and the humble He teaches His way.

Isaiah 29:19. The humble also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah 57:15. For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

There are so many passages that apply here, these are just a few that communicate this point. We must humble ourselves before God before we can expect Him to lift us up.

When we humble ourselves and are broken before God, we are given several promises. He will lift up those who make themselves low, He will hear their desire; He will prepare their heart; He will cause His ear to hear their prayer; He will guide them in justice and teach them His ways. God also promises that those who humble themselves will not be sorrowful because the Lord will increase their joy and cause them to rejoice. We humble our spirit, but God gives us his Spirit.

God's Spirit dwells with the humble and contrite. Until I humble myself, *I* am all the power behind my Christian life – and that is not much at all. When I humble myself before God, he exalts me to reflect His glory and point others to Christ through my life.

Last, you must…

Be persistent

In Luke 11:5-13 Jesus teaches the importance of this if we are going to receive the Holy Spirit:

> "Suppose you went to a friend's house at midnight, wanting to borrow three loaves of bread. You say to him, 'A friend of mine has just arrived for a visit, and I have nothing for him to eat.' And suppose he calls out from his bedroom, 'Don't bother me. The door is locked for the night, and my family and I are all in bed. I can't help you.' But I tell you this—though he won't do it for friendship's sake, if you keep knocking long enough, he will get up and give you whatever you need because of your shameless persistence. "And so I tell you, keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. "You fathers—if your children ask for bread, do you give them a stone? Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake instead? Or if they ask for an egg, do you give them a scorpion? Of course not! So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him." (Luke 11:5-13, nlt)

This teaching ties together how we ask for the promise of the Holy Spirit. What was the purpose of the neighbor asking for bread? Not to serve himself, but to meet the need of someone else. He did not seek for himself alone. He humbled himself and asked, and he also showed persistence. Those who successfully seek God are always persistent. If you are serious and truly hungry and thirsty for God, your only satisfaction is to be filled with God's Spirit. You will find God "When you seek for Him with all your heart." Saying one prayer is not seeking Him with all your heart. In the original language, Jesus tells us to *keep on* seeking, *keep on* knocking and *keep on* asking. Don't ever stop. The person who is not persistent, does not hunger and thirst after God, is not truly serious.

We know for a fact that God wants to give us His Spirit; so what's the hold up? Why don't more of us have the Holy Spirit? God is not the barrier; we are. Don't give up until God gives you what He has promised. Don't be content with getting on the ride and never getting to the thrilling parts!

This is resurrection reality. This is the life Jesus died and rose from the dead to give us!

Prayer: thirst, humble, persistent.

One other thing about the differences between the two baptisms: in the baptism of repentance, you go under the water and come back up. In the baptism of the Spirit, you go

under and you stay under. Keep thirsting, keep humble, keep persistent. Keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking. It is a life posture of submission to the Holy Spirit.

> May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you *(fill you with his Spirit)* through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it. *(God will do this in you!)* (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, niv)

Benediction:

> May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it. (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, niv)

Life Group Questions
Resurrection Reality Part Two
Week of October 18, 2026

1. If someone asked you, "What is the Holy Spirit and what does it do?" how would you answer? Is the Holy Spirit an "it"?
2. John the Baptist got his title because he baptized people. Read Matthew 3:1-2. Why did he baptize people? Read Matthew 3:11. Why did John say that Jesus had a different baptism for people? What is the difference between John's and Jesus'?
3. Read Acts 2:38. What must take place first, before we can receive the gift of the Holy Spirit?
4. Read Acts 8:1-24. What baptism did Simon have? What did he get wrong about the Holy Spirit? What was his motive for wanting the Holy Spirit? How are people today sometimes like him? Did he ever get the second baptism?
5. Read Acts 8:14-17. Why didn't the people have the Holy Spirit yet? What did it take for them to receive Him? Do you think that most Christians, a) don't have the Holy Spirit, b) don't even know about the Holy Spirit, c) assume they have the Holy Spirit, d) already have the Holy Spirit baptism? Explain your answer(s).
6. Read Acts 19:1-12. How does this relate to the previous verses? Some Christians believe that you receive the Holy Spirit's filling the moment you are saved. Does this passage support that thought, or does it challenge it? In what ways?
7. What are some of the results of Spirit baptism?
8. Read Acts 1:8. According to Jesus, what is the purpose of Spirit baptism? If this were the only measure of Spirit baptism, would you say most Christians are, or are not, filled with the Spirit? What would be said about you?
9. We learned from Simon how *not* to try and get the Spirit. So how does one go about it? Read Jeremiah 29:13. How does this apply?
10. Read Jesus' words in Matthew 5:6. How does this apply?
11. Read Isaiah 57:15. What does it mean to be humble? Why is it important to be humble in order to receive the Holy Spirit?
12. Read Psalm 42:1-2. In what ways are you "thirsty" are you for God?
13. Read Jesus' teaching about how to receive the Holy Spirit in Luke 11:5-13. What is Jesus telling us to do to receive the Holy Spirit? Is there a time we should stop doing it? What is His promise? Why does it sometimes take a long time for this to happen?
14. Evaluate yourself. Are you baptized in the Holy Spirit? Pray together for this.