***What is the Biblical Meaning & Significance of the Word “Baptism”?***

The Greek word for baptism—baptizo—means “to dip” or “to immerse.” This points to the traditional act of baptism, the immersion in water. It can also point to, in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, an “immersion” in the Spirit.

Baptism isn’t required to be saved; passages such as Acts 15 and Romans 4 make it clear that no external act is necessary for salvation. Paul didn’t make baptism a part of his salvation speeches, and he states in 1 Corinthians 1:17 that “Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel,” showing that the gospel and baptism are separate.

Instead, baptism is an outward sign of an inward reality. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is understood to be a second baptism, "in fire" or "power," spoken of by Jesus in Acts 1:8: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (NIV)

Specifically, it refers to the experience of believers on the Day of Pentecost described in the book of Acts. On this day, the Holy Spirit was poured out on the disciples and tongues of fire rested on their heads:

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. (Acts 2:1-4, NIV)

The following verses provide evidence that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a distinct and separate experience from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that occurs at salvation:   
John 7:37-39; Acts 2:37-38; Acts 8:15-16; Acts 10:44-47.

(To be continued.)