**Round Top Church Christian Fellowship**

**Sermon**

***Ekklesia Series***

***God’s Witness Moving Forward***

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**(Unless otherwise noted, CSB17 text is quoted)**

 When we examine the two creeds, the Apostles and the Nicene, we see a progression of items of which the Church leaders were concerned. There is little doubt that these two creeds represent the mainline view of their day. The Apostles creed was most likely produced first, being that it is a briefer statement. The Nicene statement appears to enlarge, expound and further express the beliefs stated in the Apostles creed.

**Review of the Apostles Creed**

 Starting with the Apostles Creed, we are taken by the name which gives the statement automatic authority as coming from those that walked with Jesus the Lord and Savior. This is intended to legitimize the words providing a bedrock foundation of belief.

 The Apostles Creed starts with clarity of what is to be believed about the origins of man. There isn’t any doubt that the Creed holds God high as the Creator. With this declaration, God is tied to Jesus Christ as Son and Lord. Providing detail as to how Jesus is Lord, the Creed declares that the Holy Spirit is the source of Jesus’ conception into Mary. Thus, we have the Tri-Une God described. This laid the foundation for Jesus’ goal of dying on the Cross for all of our sin. Jesus is the suffering servant as prophesied in Isaiah 53.

 More detail is given to the actual death of Jesus and the surrounding events: Jesus’ crucifixion, death, burial, descent into hell, rose on the third day, the ascension, seated at the right hand of God. The creed ends with a summation of who Jesus is and His current status.

God as Jesus was from the beginning, came to earth to be one of us, defeated death on the Cross and now resides in Heaven. With a prophetic O.T. identification as ‘sitteth on the right hand of God’, it doesn’t leave any doubt that God came to be one of us.

**Bible Reference quoted in Creeds**

**Psalm 110:1** A Psalm of David. The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."

**Matthew 22:44** 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I PUT YOUR ENEMIES BENEATH YOUR FEET."'

**Mark 12:36** "David himself said in the Holy Spirit, 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I PUT YOUR ENEMIES BENEATH YOUR FEET."'

**Luke 20:42** "For David himself says in the book of Psalms, 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,

**Acts 2:34** "For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,

**Hebrews 1:13** But to which of the angels has He ever said, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET "?

**John 7:42** Doesn't the Scripture say that the Messiah comes from David's offspring and from the town of Bethlehem, where David lived?"

This leads to the Second Coming to judge all people from the beginning. Then there is a tie to the Church, that being the Holy Spirit, which is promised by God as Jesus to be with the Church until the end of the age as part of the Great Commission.

The last words of the Creed leave the Great Commission that God planted in the Church to be God’s visible orchestration of calling people to worship Him in communion, pointing to the Lord’s Supper that symbolizes the price God paid for sin and God’s forgiveness being extended through His blood spilt on the Cross. This points to the victorious defeat of death as we will be resurrected, as Jesus was, to an eternal life.

 This is the great summation of faith. It is obvious that the intent of the Apostles Creed is to proclaim, to refute, to distance from all other claims that God as Jesus and the Holy Spirit calls people to Him to save them for an eternal life with God.

What a message. Sign me up.

**THE APOSTLES CREED [Before year 200 A.D.]**

I believe in God the Father Almighty,

Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord;

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit; Born of the Virgin Mary;

Suffered under Pontius Pilate;

Was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into Hell;

The third day He rose again from the dead;

He ascended into heaven;

And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;

From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit;

The Holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints;

The Forgiveness of sins;

The Resurrection of the body;

And the life everlasting. Amen.

**THE NICENE CREED** 325 A.D.

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,

begotten of the Father before all ages, God of God, Light of Light,

very God of very God,

begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father,

through Whom all things were made:

Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven,

was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man:

Who for us, too, was crucified under Pontius Pilate,

suffered, and was buried:

the third day He rose according to the Scriptures,

ascended into heaven,

and is seated on the right hand of the Father:

He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life,

Who proceeds from the Father and the Son:

Who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified:

Who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe one holy, Christian, and apostolic Church.

I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins,

and I look for the resurrection of the dead and life of the age to come. Amen.

**Review of Nicene Creed**

So, what happened, why was there a need for an additional creed? Simple, man has more questions. Man is probing; man is not satisfied. So, God, in His great grace, mercy and love, provides more detail. Wait. Is not that detail in the Bible? Yes. However, the Bible is a big book. People want the microwave version. Even back then people wanted quick answers. God’s Holy Spirit applying grace and mercy working through Church leaders gave them another statement. There isn’t any attempt here to place these creeds or any other statement equal to or above the biblical text. The creeds are like reading/listening to a sermon. They assist us in understanding. They are a witness, like someone standing in front of you giving their personal testimony. Notice that all of the content is from Scripture.

These are like notes that you would write after reading the Bible, the cliff note version. Wow, sixty-six books reduced to one statement on one page or half a page. This is why John 3:16 in so impactful. In John 3:16, God’s message is condensed but full.

16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. (NAU)

There are obvious expanded truths provided in the Nicene creed from the Apostles Creed.

 The first point is that God, the Father Almighty, made all things visible and invisible. This is an inclusive statement. God made the angels and the heavens that we cannot see. It is a declaration that there is a spiritual world that operates around us. Today, there are theoretical physicists who postulate that there is another reality in operation around us that we cannot see or detect with normal human perceptions. I read that they come to their observations through mathematics and physics.

 Like John 3:16, there is a direct replica/life ~~of~~ in the flesh to God in Jesus Christ. In fact, the wording here is intended with all the force of language to state that Jesus and God are one and the same who made all things. There are additional words added by 451 A.D. at the Chalcedon conference. The focal point is on the Latin word “homoousios,” meaning of the same substance.

 There is a prerequisite statement leading to the Holy Spirit coming to Mary in declaring this action by God was specifically for our salvation from Heaven. This declared that man cannot save himself. God is the only provider of salvation, and salvation is not original in this fallen world.

 The next addition in the Nicene Creed is to declare that God’s kingdom shall not have any end. This is a statement that announces that there will be an end to this current world of sin and death.

 Then, there is a great expansion concerning the Holy spirit. In the Apostle Creed, there is one sentence “I believe in the Holy Spirit.” Prior to that sentence, the Holy Spirit is noted as being the instrument of conception for Mary as also stated in the Nicene Creed.

Note underlined additions.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life,

Who proceeds from the Father and the Son:

Who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified:

Who spoke by the prophets.

Looking at the first sentence when the Nicene Creed enters into explaining the Holy Spirit, there is a “replica” statement connecting the H.S. to God as the giver of life. Replica meaning that God and the H.S. or one and the same. We gain from this that without God’s Holy Spirit there wouldn’t be any life, because God is the H.S. who gives life. The Hebrew word “ruach” literally means “breath/wind/spirit”. For our benefit, the H.S. is the life-giving breath that makes people breathe. This is part of God bringing life into existence. It is the Spirit of God moving over the surface of the waters, when the earth was formless and void (of life), and darkness (no light of God) was over the surface of the deep (Genesis 1:2.), when the Spirit of God, the breath of God, is present in a precursor to creating life. After this, God brings/creates life. God first creates the environment to contain life then he creates all living things. It does not go without notice that John 1 speaks that Jesus was the Word and the Word was with God in the beginning and all things were created through Jesus. It is all tied together. One God, different functions with the same goal. He creates life as He wants.

We also see in Genesis 6:3 that God’s breath-breathing H.S. has the power to sustain life in the flesh. However, this world will end, and God’s H.S. will not serve this breathing function any longer.

So, we can mathematically formulate from the text that God’s Spirit is the “breath of life” and Adam’s body was ‘breathed into’ by God’s Spirit, (Genesis 2:7) Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being (NAU).

 The point is made that without God’s Spirit breathing life into man, man would not live. So, from the beginning, life is only life if God’s Spirit is involved.

When a baby takes that first breath of air and expands its lungs, it is a miracle. But what starts life? Even before conception, the biology that is joined together cannot be duplicated by man. The biology is a miracle. This is God at work in the creation.

The Nicene Creed elaborates that the H.S. is the Lord and Giver of life. This is what we see in Genesis when Adam is ‘breathed into’. The next point is that the H.S. proceeds from the Father and the Son. Obviously, this is a point of contention or it would not be stated. The Tri-Une God is one. For the Tri-Une God to be one, then all three are the same and cannot be divided. One is present, they all are present. It is the Tri-Une God who is worshiped and glorified. There isn’t any division. The Nicene Creed then makes ~~to~~ a point that the prophets speak of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 61:1; 2 Chronicles 24:20; 1 Samuel 11:6).

Strong’s **07307** רוּחַ *ruach*  **Meaning:** *breath, wind, spirit*

 We know Scripture tells us that the H.S. comes to people to convict them of their sin. God placed the ability in all people to have an awareness of His Spirit. There is always an open portal to God in the psyche/soul of man.

 Adam fell and died spiritually representing what happens to all of us the first time we sin. So, Adam no longer represented life as God designed. He is spiritually dead but biologically alive. I have previously called this state, “The Walking Dead.” God brings forth a plan, which, like the beginning, utilizes His Spirit to bring life, the God-life, into a person. This is what Jesus is telling Nicodemus who has to be reborn of Spirit. Receiving God’s Spirit to eternal life is the same breath-of-life Adam received to make him live in Genesis. Remember, Adam lived a sinless life before the Fall. Adam then died to sin, chronicled in Genesis 3. We die in sin; we are raised with God’s Breath-Spirit to a new life (reborn of Spirit). There isn’t any real life without God. God’s Spirit is the instrument that starts life. There would not be any life on earth if God’s Spirit did not breathe into our mortal bodies.

**Genesis 2:7** Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (See also Genesis 7:22 below)

**Psalm 104:30** When you send your breath, they are created, and you renew the surface of the ground.

 **Job 33:4** The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

**God’s Spirit Presence and function**

The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. (Genesis 1:2)

Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless, his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." (Genesis 6:3)

of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, died. (Genesis 7:22)

Then Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find a man like this, in whom is a divine spirit?" (Genesis 41:38)

"I have filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all *kinds of* craftsmanship, (Exodus 31:3)

Exodus 35:30,31 30 Then Moses said to the sons of Israel, "See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. 31 "And He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding and in knowledge and in all craftsmanship;

**The “Spirit of God”: 23 Verses:**

**O.T.** Gen. 1:2; Exod. 31:3, 35:31; Num. 24:2; 1 Sam. 10:10, 11:6, 19:20, 23; 2 Chr. 15:1,24:20; Job 33:4; Ezek. 11:24,

**N.T.** Matt. 3:16, 12:28, Rom. 8:9, 14, 1 Cor. 2:11, 14, 3:16, 7:40

12:3; Phil. 3:3; 1 Jn. 4:2

**“Holy Spirit”** 92 Verse, Three in O.T. (Psalm 51:11 Isaiah 63:10,11

**Scripture Reference “Upon”**

**41 Verses 27 O.T. 14 N.T.**

Num. 11:17 "Then I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit who is upon you, and will put *Him* upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you will not bear *it* all alone.

Num. 11:25 Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him; and He took of the Spirit who was upon him and placed *Him* upon the seventy elders. And when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do *it* again.

Num. 11:26 But two men had remained in the camp; the name of one was Eldad and the name of the other Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them (now they were among those who had been registered, but had not gone out to the tent), and they prophesied in the camp.

Num. 11:29 But Moses said to him, "Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD'S people were prophets, that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!"

Num. 24:2 And Balaam lifted up his eyes and saw Israel camping tribe by tribe; and the Spirit of God came upon him.

Judges 3:10 The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel. When he went out to war, the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand, so that he prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim.

Jdg. 6:34 So the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon; and he blew a trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called together to follow him.

Jdg. 11:29 Now the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, so that he passed through Gilead and Manasseh; then he passed through Mizpah of Gilead, and from Mizpah of Gilead he went on to the sons of Ammon.

Jdg. 14:6 The Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily, so that he tore him as one tears a young goat though he had nothing in his hand; but he did not tell his father or mother what he had done.

Jdg. 14:19 Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily, and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of them and took their spoil and gave the changes *of clothes* to those who told the riddle. And his anger burned, and he went up to his father's house.

Jdg. 15:14 When he came to Lehi, the Philistines shouted as they met him. And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily so that the ropes that were on his arms were as flax that is burned with fire, and his bonds dropped from his hands.

1 Sam. 10:6 "Then the Spirit of the LORD will come upon you mightily, and you shall prophesy with them and be changed into another man.

1 Sam. 10:10 When they came to the hill there, behold, a group of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him mightily, so that he prophesied among them.

1 Sam. 11:6 Then the Spirit of God came upon Saul mightily when he heard these words, and he became very angry.

1 Sam. 16:13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. And Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

1 Sam. 18:10 Now it came about on the next day that an evil spirit from God came mightily upon Saul, and he raved in the midst of the house, while David was playing *the harp* with his hand, as usual; and a spear *was* in Saul's hand.

1 Sam. 19:20 Then Saul sent messengers to take David, but when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, with Samuel standing *and* presiding over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul; and they also prophesied.

1 Sam. 19:23 He proceeded there to Naioth in Ramah; and the Spirit of God came upon him also, so that he went along prophesying continually until he came to Naioth in Ramah.

2 Ki. 2:9 When they had crossed over, Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for you before I am taken from you." And Elisha said, "Please, let a double portion of your spirit be upon me."

1 Chr. 12:18 Then the Spirit came upon Amasai, who was the chief of the thirty, *and he said*, "*We* are yours, O David, And with you, O son of Jesse! Peace, peace to you, And peace to him who helps you; Indeed, your God helps you!" Then David received them and made them captains of the band.

2 Chr. 20:14 Then in the midst of the assembly the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, the Levite of the sons of Asaph;

Isa. 42:1 "Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one *in whom* My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations.

Isa. 59:21 "As for Me, this is My covenant with them," says the LORD: "My Spirit which is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring's offspring," says the LORD, "from now and forever."

Isa. 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners;

Ezek. 11:5 Then the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and He said to me, "Say, 'Thus says the LORD, "So you think, house of Israel, for I know your thoughts.

Ezek. 37:1 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and He brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; and it was full of bones.

**New Testament “UPON”**

**Matthew 12:18** "BEHOLD, MY SERVANT WHOM I HAVE CHOSEN; MY BELOVED IN WHOM MY SOUL is WELL-PLEASED; I WILL PUT MY SPIRIT UPON HIM, AND HE SHALL PROCLAIM JUSTICE TO THE GENTILES.

**Mark 1:10** Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him;

**Luke 2:25** And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

**Luke 3:22** and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."

 These “upon” verses use the same O.T. description to unite God with a person. The person happens to be Jesus who is actually the incarnation of God in the flesh. One of the main missions of the incarnation is to prove and live a Spirit-life, meaning that God is with us, upon us and in us. All these words with, upon, in, say the same thing, God and a person are joined.

John 1:32 John testified saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him.

John 1:33 "I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.'

Acts 1:8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Acts 10:44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message.

Acts 11:15 "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as *He did* upon us at the beginning.

 Acts 19:6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they *began* speaking with tongues and prophesying.

 It is clear that the announcement that God was with someone in Spirit was classically expressed by the word “upon”. Unfortunately, there are those who had misapplied the context of “upon” in that God’s Spirit did not enter the person but just rested on the outside of their body, thus no indwelling of God’s Holy Spirit life we see in the N.T. This is a very shortsighted view and is not contextual to the verses or accounts depicted in the O.T. or the N.T. People who had the Spirit of God come upon them had their life direction change; their hearts were changed.

**God’s Spirit Upon Mary**

**Luke 1:35** The angel answered and said to her, "**The Holy Spirit will come upon you,** and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.

 For Mary to be with child from the Holy Spirit, there had to be an indwelling. The words used here “upon you” are the same used throughout the O.T. to declare that God’s Holy Spirit is with someone. The idea that the words “upon you” means that God’s Holy Spirit does not come inside a person’s heart is a misunderstanding of the context throughout the Bible.

In Mark 1:10, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you” is directed at Mary. The product of the “Spirit Upon” is that Mary is impregnated with God’s seed. It is obvious that God’s Spirit had to enter into Mary for her to become pregnant. There had to be an internal component to the relationship, be it Spiritual. This could not have happened, if God’s Holy Spirit would have remained outside of Mary.

**Jesus and His Holy Spirit being Upon Him**

Another use of the “Spirit of the Lord is upon” is when Jesus walks into a synagogue in Luke 4 and says, "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,"

Of all persons (Jesus) to apply the word “upon” ~~to~~ and reason that the H.S. just stayed on the outside of His person is preposterous. Jesus is God in the Flesh. Jesus is the Holy Spirit in the Flesh. This puts to rest the idea that God did not indwell people with His Spirit in the O.T. The use of the word “UPON” carries the same identification as God being in a person. God comes upon or into a person is the same as the person has received God’s Holy Spirit. The point being that God operated the same in the O.T. as He did in the N.T. with the use of His Holy Spirit. There isn’t any difference. God does not have two dispensations regarding the use of His Spirit.

**The Disciples the H.S. was UPON**

In Acts 1:8, the words “when the H.S. has come upon you” is preceded by telling the disciples that they will receive power. It must not be overlooked here that in John 20:22 Jesus had already breathed His Spirit into the disciples prior to the events in Acts 1:8. Therefore, the disciples already had an internal presence of Jesus’ Spirit in them. Thus, in Acts, this highlights an additional H.S. power to have a more visibly powerful presence for all of the world to see. In fact, this is what happened at Pentecost.

So, God’s H.S. is manifested in people to establish God’s relationship with them and then the H.S. is functional to carry-out different tasks that God desires. We see this throughout the O.T. in the lives of the prophets as noted in the list (above) including Samuel and David. In the N.T., we see this particularly at the end of the book of John and then all throughout Acts and in many accounts in the rest of the N.T. text. The first citation here in John parallels God’s H.S. breathing life into the creation.

John 20:22 And when He had said this, He **breathed** on them and said to them, "**Receive the Holy Spirit.**

Acts 1:8 but you will **receive power** when the **Holy Spirit has come upon you**; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Acts 2:38 Peter *said* to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will **receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

Acts 8:15 who came down and prayed for them that they might **receive the Holy Spirit.**

Acts 8:19 saying, "Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may **receive the Holy Spirit."**

Acts 19:1-7 1 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." 2 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." 3 And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism." 4 Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus." 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they *began* speaking with tongues and prophesying. 7 There were in all about twelve men. (Acts 19:1-7 NAU)

This last verse sited (Acts 19:2) demonstrates the transition on-going, at the time, in people who believed in God but had not received the full account; like many people who are on their way to understanding God and how to have a relationship with Him. Paul is accurate in that John the Baptist’s baptism had the goal of turning people towards Jesus. The Greek word “metanoia” literally means “changing of the mind”, thus, a turn. Paul, witnessed to them about God’s H.S., laid hands on them, water-baptized them, and they then showed evidence of their true experience by speaking in tongues. Note the difference here as compared to Peter at Caesarea when the people spoke in tongues first before they were water-baptized (Acts 10:42ff).

 There is clarity here that God’s H.S. was working in the hearts of these twelve people before Paul met them. They were maturing in the faith. People make issue that they were not really saved. However, their hearts had already been turned (Baptism of John) because they had been convicted by God’s H.S. or they would not have the spiritual consciousness to listen to Paul. And like those with Peter in Acts 2:37, they looked for what should happen next. “What must we do?” Therefore, God provides that Paul comes along and assists them. There is unfortunately the pressure to identify the exact time a person is saved. From analyzing the accounts in the Bible, it is hard to tell. What we do see are the end results. A person has an encounter with God via His H.S. and a few things happen. It is not always the same order of words. What we do see every time is that there is a humbling to God, a surrendering to God. Then there is transformation proved in time by acts of the H.S. working through a person who is a professing Believer.

 Therefore, and again, what is important in comparing how God’s H.S. works is that there is always a surrendering of the heart (circumcision/cut) as witnessed/evidence in the following water-baptism or life of spiritual gifted works which is applied by the fruits of the Spirit. This is not mathematical in the sense of our modern scientific world. Man cannot control salvation. God’s H.S. does. AMEN