

CHAPTER 7

MIRACULOUS GIFTS

A lot of denominations believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is available to Christians, *today*. This baptism is manifested as miraculous gifts or powers claimed by those having received it.

The expression 'baptism of the Holy Spirit' will be used quite a lot in the following discussion. So, it will be convenient for us to abbreviate the phrase from now on, as 'BHS.'

Even the proponents of BHS teach that it has nothing to do with salvation. They feel that once God's free gift of salvation is received, they can go on to seek BHS. Their converts are also baptized in water usually as a symbol of their having attained salvation.

The main theme here, then, is not related to water baptism. That's discussed in-depth in Chapter-4. It'll be sufficient here, to say that one does indeed receive the Holy Spirit in 'reaching out' for God's free gift through water baptism;

Acts 2:38 (NIV; my underlining)

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

This process of becoming a Christian therefore culminates in reception of the Holy Spirit. The entering and indwelling of the Holy Spirit though, is not BHS. The indwelling Holy Spirit promised in Acts 2:38 enables us to bury our 'old self' and arise from the immersion as a 'new self.' It is this indwelling of the Holy Spirit that enable us to become added to Christ's one saved body.... His church.

Gal. 3:27 (NIV)

..... for all of you who were united with Christ in baptism have been *clothed with Christ*.....

Rom. 6:4 (NIV)

We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life

The Holy Spirit lives within us after we have become Christians. We have direct evidence of His presence;

Gal. 5:22-23 (NIV)

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. Against such things there is no law.

Eph. 3:16-17 (NIV)

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

In this present chapter then, the emphasis is on BHS, as a distinctly different concept from our receiving God's indwelling Spirit through water baptism.

STUDYING BHS

People who are 'faith healers' and who 'prophesy' and who 'speak in tongues' and who display other so-called miraculous gifts are all followers of a false doctrine. To show this, we could take either of the following two paths;

1. Look at each of these claimed miraculous gifts and prove from the authority of the scriptures that these gifts are not granted by God..... *OR,*

2. Just show from the Bible that BHS was terminated by God when its intended purpose was fulfilled. Without the BHS in effect today, no one should now claim possession of these miraculous gifts.

The second approach is easiest to do. Also it's much less adversarial. I have found that people tend to become angry much quicker when piece-by piece, their hopes are made to crumble. It is not my intention to destroy people's desires for these miraculous powers. Instead, my purpose is to reveal to them that whatever they are demonstrating cannot be from the action of God's Holy Spirit. This is a volatile subject among those in the 'charismatic' groups. It's important to proceed judiciously, and support every point with scriptures.

Here then, are the essential portions of a dialogue that actually occurred with a strong defender of miraculous gifts through BHS. He also is a close friend:

VISITOR:

The book of Acts is not the only place in the Bible that speaks of BHS. Acts does however, contain some prominent incidents which have bearing on our claim of BHS for us today. Consider this verse;

Acts 2:4 (KJV)

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

ME:

I don't deny that the New Testament describes instances of BHS. Acts 2:4 certainly does describe such an event. As I carefully read this particular verse, a couple of things stand out. I reviewed all the verses going back to Chapter-1 of Acts. As a result, it's certain that the phrase 'they were all' refers only to the apostles. A crowd subsequently formed, but the individuals in the crowd did not receive BHS at that particular time.

VISITOR:

Well, there's more here. After the crowd gathered, Peter spoke to them;

Acts 2:14-17 (KJV)

But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

But this is that which was spoken by the prophet, Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.....

The two key points in Peter's statement for our discussion are these; the promise of BHS was for 'all flesh'.... meaning for everyone, and the second, BHS was promised in the 'latter days.' Virtually everybody agrees that we are currently in the latter days.

ME:

Let's take your two points, one at a time. First, let's think about the meaning of 'all flesh.' Do you really believe that Peter meant that everyone would receive the BHS? If it really means 'everyone' then the most horrible, demon-like people... Those who delight in their sin, would be entitled to receive BHS.

VISITOR:

Well, I think Peter was talking only about believers. Those who are Christians are the only ones entitled to receive BHS. I'm sure God wouldn't provide BHS to those condemned in their sins.

ME:

Then we both agree that 'all flesh' doesn't mean everybody. The scriptures do show, however, that God provided BHS to non-Christians. But there was always a specific reason for it to have been given. Look at the situation in the following verses. It has some bearing on what 'all flesh' really means;

Acts 10:44-48 (NIV)

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.

The event occurring in these verses, is Peter's ministry to the Roman centurion, Cornelius. These verses show that God had provided BHS even to the Gentiles. And unsaved ones, at that... since they hadn't yet been baptized in water (see Chapter 4; Baptism & Salvation);

Acts 10:46-47 (NIV)

..... Then Peter said, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water?....."

There's a particular reason Cornelius experienced BHS and was subsequently saved. It was so that God could show with certainty, that salvation was available not only to the Jews, but to Gentiles as well;

Acts 10:34-35 (NIV)

Then Peter began to speak: I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.

We both agree that God did not intend 'all flesh' to mean everyone. Besides Christians, the phrase is seen to apply to non-Christians on the verge of

being saved. Consistent with this verse just quoted, 'all flesh' refers to all the nationalities. Salvation was shown to be not only applicable to the Jews, but to the Gentiles as well.

Now let's investigate the second issue of controversy in Acts 2:4-17. The problem centers on what Peter meant there, when he said that BHS would occur in the 'latter days.' If your idea is right, then our current times are the 'latter days' referred to in Acts 2:17. And if that is true, then people would indeed be justified in awaiting BHS to be to be given to them.

However, I think you seriously misunderstand the context in which Acts 2:14-17 was written. Peter wasn't telling them that at some time in *his* future, BHS would be given. He was quoting the ancient prophet Joel. Peter (in Acts 2:14-17) spoke about Joel's prophecy, given about 400 years before Christ. Joel wrote this;

Joel 2:27-28 (KJV)

..... I am the Lord your God.....

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

Peter, in Acts 2:17, was telling the crowd that Joel's prophecy was being fulfilled as he (Peter) was speaking to them;

Acts 2:15-17 (NIV; my underlining)

These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: "in the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions.....

Compare these two passages. Peter surely considered that his current time was the 'latter days' or else his statement wouldn't make sense. So it cannot be correct to apply his statement in Acts 2:17 to our lives today. The time of Peter's speech was the time that Joel's promise of BHS was being fulfilled. It occurred at the time of the Apostles. The fact that Peter identifies Joel's prophecy about the 'latter days' as being fulfilled, is strong confirmation that BHS doesn't apply to us today.

We really need to keep in mind *why* the BHS was given at that place and at that time. As you read through Chapter-2 of Acts, it should become evident that God was establishing His church. The church is Christ's kingdom. He is going to save His body, which is this kingdom (see Chapter-8; The Kingdom). Before Jesus died on the cross He said this;

Mk. 9:1 (NIV)

I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Kingdom of God come with power.

The gathered crowd (in Acts Chapter-2) saw this kingdom coming with power, through the BHS. The crowd believed what Peter said about Jesus and they wanted to know what to do. Peter then told them how to enter God's kingdom;

Acts 2:37-38 (NIV)

..... When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit....."

Acts 2:41 (NIV)

..... Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

The BHS came with power. The beginning of the church was accomplished. There is no other direct or implied purpose for anyone there, receiving the BHS other than the inception of the church.

Before leaving this point though, I need to emphasize one more thing. It's important to ensure no confusion about the nature of the baptism recorded in Acts 2:38 and Acts 2:41. As the word 'baptism' is used in these verses, Thayer points out;

..... administered to those who, impelled by a desire for salvation, sought admission to the benefits of the Messiah's Kingdom..... to obtain the forgiveness of sins.....

This is brought out here, because some groups rely heavily on Acts 2:38 as a justification for BHS in our present day. But the baptism in Acts 2:38 is surely water baptism. Any other interpretation is just misuse of the scriptures.

Here is still another reason Acts 2:38 is not referring to BHS. The baptism designated there, is expressly for the purpose of salvation. It was for the forgiveness of sins. It was for receiving the indwelling of the Holy Spirit... the one given to *all* Christians. The proponents of BHS readily admit that it was not for the purpose of obtaining salvation. One well-known teacher of BHS has a pamphlet that uses part of Acts 2:38 to justify his erroneous doctrine. Here's what he says;

(Reference-7; page 16):

" Misguided Christians who admit tongues were an evidence of Baptism in the Holy Spirit during the apostolic days, say, 'It ended when the last apostle died. It isn't for today.' But what does Scripture say?

In Joel 2:28 (Old Testament) and Acts 2:17-18 (New Testament) Almighty God makes a statement concerning this. He says, 'In the last days On my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in

those days of my Spirit....' And then in Acts 2:38 and 39 our Father further confirms this with these words,

'... ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost for the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.'

This doesn't sound like an offer with an expiration date stamped on it."

At this point, it would be a good idea for anyone reading this, to carefully review Chapter-4; Baptism & Salvation.

The teacher whose pamphlet was just quoted, has taken the baptism of Acts 2:38 out of its intended context. The reason there's no 'expiration date' on the baptism mentioned in that verse, is because its purpose was for salvation. As long as God is willing to wait for more to come to Him, there will continue to be no expiration date on that offer.

VISITOR:

Let's check the stronger language in Luke 3:16. There, John the Baptist declares the intention for God to provide the BHS to us. He doesn't give any time limit to it, so it must be for us, today;

Luke 3:16 (KJV)

John answered, saying to them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

ME:

It is a very direct statement. I think though it's really important to identify to whom the word 'you,' in this passage refers. Investigate the verses in all of Luke Chapter-3. It's evident that John was talking to people contemporary to him. He gives no indication that the statement would be applicable to anyone 2000 years from the time he spoke those words;

Luke 3:7 (NIV; my underlining)

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by
him.....

So, he wasn't making any promise to future generations. It isn't even implied, in any part of the chapter. Clearly many people heard John speak the words of Luke 3:16. Many of them (contemporaries to John) were also available to experience the events surrounding the BHS in Chapter-2 of Acts. Once again, there's no scriptural justification for inferring the availability of BHS in our present time.

VISITOR:

But the apostles could 'lay hands ' on other people. That passed on a measure of the BHS to others. Because of this it's definite that over the generations to the present time, successive 'laying on of hands' leads us to the fact that BHS is still with us, even to this day. One of the best examples is in Acts Chapter-8, where Peter and John 'laid hands' on the believers in Samaria and those people received the BHS;

Acts 8:17 (KJV)

*Then laid they their hands on them, and they received
the Holy Ghost.*

ME:

We need to carefully examine the events occurring in Chapter-8 of Acts. We should be able to see that the conclusion you reached is not correct. In fact, just the opposite conclusion will be reached.... namely, God does not provide for continuation of BHS through "laying on of hands' from one generation to the next. Let's start at the beginning of Acts Chapter-8;

Acts 8:1 (NIV; my underlining)

..... On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria.

Something in this verse could easily escape a casual reading. Because of the persecution of the early church, the evangelists and teachers were scattered throughout the region.... But the apostles weren't. The apostles stayed together.

VISITOR:

It just isn't clear what that has to do with our subject of BHS.

ME:

It is important that the apostles remained together. Among their number is the apostle known as Philip. He should be distinguished from another man, the disciple, Philip. This disciple is among those who were scattered throughout the region;

Acts 8:4-5 (NIV)

Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there.

The disciple (not the apostle) Philip went to Samaria to teach the gospel. The apostles must have laid hands onto Philip because he demonstrated miraculous gifts to confirm his teaching;

Acts 8:6-8 (NIV)

When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many paralytics and cripples were healed. So there was great joy in that city.

VISITOR:

It's still not clear why you're showing me this. I am surprised though, about this disciple Philip. I had always assumed he was the apostle who went to Samaria. But I'll agree now, this was the disciple Philip doing the preaching and performing miraculous healing in Samaria.

ME:

As I proceed through the next few verses, I think it will become evident;

Acts 8:12 & 8:14 (NIV)

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.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had Accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them.

So Philip was successfully helping people to receive God's gift of salvation. They believed him and were water baptized for the forgiveness of sins. The early church however, was continuing to *confirm* the word through use of BHS. Remember, there were no New Testament scriptures at that point. Today, the New Testament guides us to salvation, through the path of belief, faith, repentance, confession, and baptism (see Chapter-4; Baptism & Salvation). In the time of the apostles and the Great Commission though, the gospel was spread by the activities of the apostles and disciples. As they went from one place to another, their verbal message about this early church needed to be confirmed. BHS was used to confirm this word about the early church.

The disciple Philip was able to confirm the Word by performing miracles. But he was unable to use 'laying on of hands' to pass these gifts on, to any of the believers of Samaria. Take a look at how this is documented;

Acts 8:14-17 (NIV)

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.

The apostles found out about the success of the disciple Philip. But notice that this disciple could not pass on BHS through 'laying on of hands.' He had to wait for two of the apostles to arrive, to 'lay hands' onto the people there. It's true, Philip could 'lay on hands' to heal, for example. But he was unable to do what only the apostles could do..... 'lay on hands' to transfer the BHS to others. This, indeed, is why the BHS ended when the last apostle died.

We need to always keep in mind that the BHS had a specific purpose. At the house of the Roman centurion Cornelius. BHS was used to demonstrate that salvation was available for all nationalities- not just the Jews. In Samaria, BHS was used to confirm the spoken word of the gospel. Confirming the spoken gospel with miraculous gifts was essential since the New Testament was not yet completed, and the early church was struggling under the tremendous ordeal of persecution;

Phil. 1:7 (NIV; my underlining)

..... I have you in my heart, for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me.

I Cor. 1:6 (NIV; my underlining)

..... because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you.

Heb. 2:3 & 2:4 (NIV; my underlining)

This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. God also testified to it by signs, wonders, and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

Two things convinced the people of the truth of the Word. One was the verbal preaching of the apostles and disciples. The other was their performing of miracles by the apostles and disciples, to confirm what they had spoken. Acceptance of the Word through faith, had to come later, once the early church was getting established, and the New Testament scriptures were completed. This confirmation of the word through BHS is also consistent with Mark's account;

Mark 16:20 (NIV)

Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that that accompanied it.

Now... today... we don't need proof of the Word. We no longer need confirmation of its legitimacy, by miraculous demonstrations of God's power and authority. That's because we have been given the New Testament scriptures to accept (or reject) on the basis of faith. And that's why BHS ended when the last apostle passed on.

I've been looking through the pamphlet on BHS that you brought along (Reference-7). In it the author attempts to justify why BHS is needed for Christians of any era- even up to today. Here are a couple of his stronger statements concerning those reasons;

Reference-7, Page-2;

"Sending a Christian into the world without the Holy Spirit is tantamount to sending a soldier into battle without a weapon."

And concerning the brand new Christian in particular;

Reference-7, Page-2;

"But the inductee is not ready for battle until he has basic training and has been issued his weapons.....

..... If he isn't encouraged to receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, preparing him for the ever-continuing battle against Satan, he is being sent out onto a battlefield woefully unprepared."

These statements completely disregard the scriptural reasons for God having given the BHS to the people at the time of the church's inception. Furthermore, that author's reason for the current need of BHS as a weapon is erroneous. The scriptures are now complete. They provide the only weapon any Christian (new or seasoned) needs, to stand out from the evil in the world;

Heb. 4:13 (NIV; my underlining)

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Eph. 6:16 & 6:17 (NIV; my underlining)

In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

That author of your pamphlet insists on use of BHS as the weapon to fight the attacks from Satan. But God, through His Word, insists that the complete scriptures are the weapon needed for that task. With this analogy of a weapon to fight against the evil one, I prefer God's word to those of that pamphlet's author.

VISITOR:

Notwithstanding your arguments, I have been shown some very sound scriptures to prove our claim for BHS `s efficacy even today. These scriptures involve Paul`s statements to Timothy, and it`s about BHS;

I Tim. 4:14 (KJV)

Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

I Tim. 5:22 (KJV)

Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men`s sins: keep thyself pure.

ME:

Timothy`s situation here, parallels that of Philip in Chapter-8 of Acts. That is, Timothy was a disciple, supporting the work of the apostles. You can tell this from the way Paul addressed him at the beginning of the letter to Timothy;

I Tim. 1:2 (NIV)

To Timothy my true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Timothy was a disciple. He was sent to various places to preach the good news. To confirm his verbal message, he would have used miraculous gifts. And he would have obtained the gifts through `laying on of hands` from the apostles. The KJV refers to the `presbytery` as the source of Timothy`s gifts. More correctly though, the Interlinear (Reference-10) calls them the `body of elders.` But the only people who would have been in a more authoritative position than Timothy would have been the apostles. So this verse also

doesn't teach the perpetual handing down of gifts through 'laying on of hands' over the generations.

In verse 5:22, Paul's admonition gives us the information that Timothy could 'lay hands' on other people. But Philip, as we saw earlier, could also do that. Their abilities though, were for healing, and other demonstrations to confirm their spoken word. There just isn't any scriptural evidence that disciples like Timothy or Philip could pass on the BHS to others, by the 'laying on of hands.'

The scriptures point to the fact that only the apostles could 'lay on hands' to pass on a measure of BHS to others. The biblical evidence, is that the recipients (like Timothy & Philip) could use BHS to perform miracles, but could not pass this gift on to anyone else.

With the last apostle, then, BHS had to cease. God made sure that the apostles lived long enough to complete the New Testament and to get the church established... despite the excessive persecution of the Christians during that era.

VISITOR:

You're definitely wrong about all this. The scriptures clearly teach that there are apostles among us today! Take a look at this;

I Cor. 12:27 & 12:28 (KJV)

Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

Eph. 4:11 (KJV)

And he gave some, apostles: and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;....

So, as long as we have the church, there will be apostles. And with apostles, we continue to have BHS.

ME:

The two Bible quotes use very similar language and make the same point. What can be said about one, can equally be said about the other. Let's look closer, at the details of I Cor. 12:27 & 12:28. To whom does 'ye' refer in verse 12:27? Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in the church at Corinth. However, its statements apply to Christians everywhere;

I Cor. 1:2 (NIV; my underlining)

To the Church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ- their Lord and ours.

These people represent all the churches that the apostles and disciples helped set up. Naturally then, there was a measure of BHS in members of the body in all the regions where the apostles established churches. So the apostles and those who received 'laying on of hands' from them, still could demonstrate miraculous powers at the time Paul wrote the letter. They were obviously still alive when Paul wrote the letter to the church at Corinth. So, the statements contained therein are naturally valid and applicable to the needs of the church at that time. Paul's emphasis in the letter was for the problems and questions and uncertainties within the church that existed at the time he wrote the letter. Here, for example, is something he said early in his letter;

I Cor. 1:11 (NIV)

My brothers, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you.

Do proponents of BHS for today, believe that some from Chloe's house, told Paul about quarrels among people of today?

The emphasis then, is for the correction of contemporaneous behavior and status of the early church. That status changed, once it was no longer

necessary to confirm God's word with miracles. The word today, is to be accepted only on faith, now that the New Testament is complete. So now, the need to demonstrate miracles is no longer necessary.

The early church did indeed have apostles. Altogether there were twelve;

Matt. 10:2-4 (NIV)

These are the names of the twelve apostles; first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James, son of Zebedee, and his brother, John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

The changes among the apostles were these;

- Separation and death of Judas Iscariot
- Matthias replaced Judas (Acts 1:26)
- Paul is scripturally accepted as an apostle;

Rom. 1:1 (NIV; my underlining)

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, and set apart for the gospel of God.....

It's important to see what a Greek lexicographer like Thayer understood about the meaning and nature of apostleship (Reference-12; #652);

"Specially applied to the twelve disciples whom Christ selected, out of the multitude of his adherents, to be his constant companions and heralds to proclaim to men the kingdom of God..... With these apostles Paul claimed equality, because through a heavenly intervention he had been appointed by the ascended Christ himself to preach the gospel among the Gentiles, and owed his knowledge of the way of salvation not to man's instruction but to direct revelation from Christ himself, and moreover had evinced his apostolic qualifications by many signal

proofs:..."

When Paul describes to us that God gave the church, some to be apostles, he was referring to those specially chosen men just named in Matt. 10:2-4;

Eph. 4:11 (NIV; my underlining)

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets...

There isn't a bit of scriptural indication or implication that because God *gave* the church apostles at the time of its inception, that he continues to give the church apostles all the way to the present time. It's our job to understand the letters to Corinth in light of the other scriptures in the New Testament. Then we can see that once the church was established (and the Word confirmed through the scriptures) there was no longer a need for apostles; and so neither they, nor the BHS they used, are available to us today. Thayer translates 'gave' as 'bestowed' (Reference-12; #1325), and consistent with the KJV, uses the *past tense* in Eph. 4:11. The same is true in Eph. 4:8. Jesus Christ is at the right hand of God. He has control of his body, the church. God's Word tells us He *gave* some to be apostles. In these verses, He could easily have indicated that He *gives* them today if it were true. Remember the lesson of the meaning of words, given in Gal. 3:15 & 3:16.

ONE FINAL POINT

Actually, only one thing needs to be said, to correctly assert that BHS is not available to Christians today. That one thing is a short phrase in Eph. 4:5. Before going into the phrase and its meaning lets first emphasize a couple of important facts about the letter to the Ephesians. The apostle Paul is the author of this letter;

Eph. 1:1 (NIV)

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God. To the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus.

Chronologically, the letter to the Ephesians is one of the last to be written. Blair (Reference-22) estimates the date of the letter to be in the area of 54 - 62 AD. Here's the reason the late date of the letter is so important. Paul

expresses that at that late date,(well after the crucifixion and resurrection, and after the church's beginning), there is only *one* baptism in effect for the church;

Eph. 4:3-6 (NIV; my underlining)

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the Bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit- just as you were called to one hope when you were called- one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all

The Ephesian letter is full of information about the church. And we know that throughout the book of Acts, the apostles & disciples brought people into the church by way of water baptism (see Chapter-4, Baptism & Salvation).

Since the Bible insists that now, there is only baptism in effect, and that is water baptism, then there cannot be another baptism in effect for God's church. So, 'Baptism in the Holy Spirit' is an invalid and false doctrine for Christ's church today.