

1 Corinthians 12:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Analysis

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body—En henī Pneumati hēmeis pantes eis henī sōma ebaptisthēmen (ἐν ἐνὶ Πνεύματι ἡμεῖς πάντες εἰς ἐν σῶμα ἐβαπτίσθημεν)—Spirit-baptism is the basis of church unity. The en ("by/in") is instrumental: the Spirit is the agent/sphere of this baptism. The aorist passive ebaptisthēmen points to the definitive event of conversion when the Spirit incorporates believers into Christ's body. This is not a post-conversion "second blessing" but the initial Spirit-work that constitutes church membership.

Whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free—Spirit-baptism obliterates the ancient world's fundamental divisions: ethnicity (Jew/Gentile), social status (slave/free), later Paul adds gender (Galatians 3:28). In Christ, these identity-markers become secondary to shared incorporation into one body. **And have been all made to drink into one Spirit**—pantes henī Pneuma epotisthēmen (πάντες ἐν Πνεύμα ἐποτίσθημεν, "we were all given one Spirit to drink"). The metaphor shifts from baptism (immersion) to drinking (internalization)—the Spirit is both external environment and internal reality, surrounding and indwelling believers.

Historical Context

Corinth's church included Jewish Christians (synagogue-background), God-fearing Gentiles, and pagan converts; wealthy patrons and poor slaves; educated Greeks

and illiterate laborers. These divisions threatened unity. Paul insists Spirit-baptism creates a new identity transcending all previous social categories.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Spirit-baptism 'into one body' differ from water baptism as a public declaration?
2. What modern identity-markers (political, economic, cultural) threaten church unity like Jew/Gentile or slave/free?
3. What does it mean practically that all believers 'drink of one Spirit'?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	γὰρ	ἐν	ἐν	πνεῦμα	ἡμεῖς	πάντες	εἰς	ἐν	σῶμα
and	For	by	one	Spirit	we	all	into	one	body
G2532	G1063	G1722	G1520	G4151	G2249	G3956	G1519	G1520	G4983
ἐβαπτίσθημεν	εἴτε	Ἰουδαῖοι	εἴτε	Ἐλληνες	εἴτε	δοῦλοι			
are	or	we be Jews	or	Gentiles	or	we be bond			
G907	G1535	G2453	G1535	G1672	G1535	G1401			
εἴτε	ἐλεύθεροι	καὶ	πάντες	εἰς	ἐν	πνεῦμα	ἐποτίσθημεν		
or	free	and	all	into	one	Spirit	have been		
G1535	G1658	G2532	G3956	G1519	G1520	G4151	G4222		

Additional Cross-References

Ephesians 4:5 (Baptism): One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

Colossians 3:11 (Parallel theme): Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

Galatians 3:28 (Parallel theme): There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

1 Peter 3:21 (Baptism): The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

Romans 3:29 (Parallel theme): Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

Acts 1:5 (Spirit): For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

Matthew 3:11 (Spirit): I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

John 4:10 (Parallel theme): Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewst the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

Luke 3:16 (Spirit): John answered, saying unto 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:

Ephesians 5:26 (Parallel theme): That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,