In a recent defence of the classical Pentecostal view of "Spirit-baptism", Harold D. Hunter draws upon not only the arsenal of Scripture, but also quarries material from authors and texts of the history of the Church. In particular, he devotes a lengthy section to a discussion of the Fathers in an attempt to discover possible parallels to this classical Pentecostal doctrine. Among the authors whom he cites is Basil of Caesarea (ca. 330-379). On the basis of a text from Basil's *magnum opus* on the Holy Spirit, *De Spiritu Sancto* (henceforth cited as *Spir.*), Hunter believes that Basil regarded the bestowal of the Spirit upon a believer as an event which occurred immediately following water baptism, possibly, Hunter suggests, at a post-baptismal chrismation. The text in question occurs in *Spir.* 14.31, where Basil is commenting upon 1 Cor 10:2: "They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea".

Yet, Hunter fails to interact with either the immediate or the larger context of this passage and thus misses its true significance for Basil's pneumatology. The following paper seeks to display this passage in its context and thus point the way to a proper interpretation.

The text forms part of Basil's opening argument against his former friend, now embittered foe, Eustathius of Sebaste (ca. 300- ca. 377), who refused to acknowledge that the Holy Spirit is a substantial member of the Godhead. According to Eustathius, the Holy Spirit should not be ranked alongside the Father and the Son because the Spirit's nature is different from theirs and his dignity is lower. Basil's initial reply to this assertion is based upon the baptismal command in
Mt 28:19. If, in this command, the Lord Jesus united the Spirit with himself and the Father, then those who fail to regard the Spirit as on the same level as the Father and the Son are being disobedient to God. Basil supports this answer with a personal testimony:

For if baptism was for me the beginning of life and that day of spiritual rebirth the first of days, then it is clear that the name which was uttered on the occasion of the grace of adoption was the most precious of all. Shall I therefore let myself be misled by the plausible arguments of these men and forsake the tradition which led me to the light, which graciously gave me the knowledge of God, through which I, formerly an enemy [of God] on account of my sin, was welcomed as a child of God? Indeed, for myself I pray that I go to the Lord with this confession. I urge them to preserve the faith inviolate until the day of Christ and to keep the Spirit inseparable from the Father and the Son, [thus] preserving, in the confession of the faith and in the doxology, the teaching [which was taught to them] at their baptism.

The confession of faith to which Basil refers in this text was made by the baptismal candidate in the church of Caesarea prior to his trine immersion in the water. In the light of this confession, the assertion of Eustathius about the status and nature of the Holy Spirit is a violation of the covenant which he made with God at his baptism and a denial of his faith.

In this reply to Eustathius' position, Basil in essence is arguing that the baptismal command given by Christ in Mt 28:19 stands as the immovable foundation of trinitarian theology. Consequently, this word of revelation concerning baptism is binding upon all Christians, and thus baptism is necessary for salvation. Yet, it is only saving if it is administered according to the dominical formula handed down from the Apostles, that is, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. When Scripture records instances of baptism into only the Spirit, as for example in 1 Cor 12:13, then the other two members of the Trinity are to be understood. This reasoning leads Basil to conclude:

Therefore, if in baptism the separation of the Spirit from the Father and the Son is dangerous for the one who baptizes and useless for the one who receives it, how safe is it for us to separate the Spirit from the Father and Son? For faith and baptism are two ways of salvation which are indivisibly united to one another. For faith is perfected by baptism, and baptism is confirmed by faith, and both are fulfilled by the same names. For as we believe in the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, so we are baptized also in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. First of all comes the confession [of faith], which introduces us to salvation, and then follows baptism, which confirms our assent.