

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of being baptized in the Holy Spirit. It is impossible for Christians to meet all the requirements of the day and to walk effectively in their callings unless they are baptized in the Holy Spirit. This is why Jesus said:

LUKE 24:49 . . . behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but wait in the city of Jerusalem, until you are clothed with power from on high.

ACTS 1:8 . . . you shall receive power (ability, efficiency and might) after the Holy Spirit has come upon you: and you shall be (more effective) witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

In these scriptures, Jesus was referring to the mighty baptism in the Holy Spirit. During His ministry He taught that in order to be effectual witnesses for Him, we need the power and the equipment which accompanies the Spirit Baptism.

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT ?

The Book of Acts Ch.5:3-4 and Luke 1:35 tell us clearly that the Holy Spirit is God. He is the third Person of the Godhead and has a personality just as the Father and Jesus have personalities. Therefore the Holy Spirit is much more than a vague religious concept. He is known from the Bible as the Comforter and the Spirit of Truth. The presence of the Holy Spirit brings life and power to those who call upon the Lord - power to save, deliver and heal. (See also John 16:7-14.)

WHAT IS THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT ?

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is “the clothing of power from on high” which equips Christians, potentially, to be used of God in a

greater way.

Upon salvation, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit come and make Their abode with us and we become united with God so that we are able to cry “*Abba Father*”: John 14:23, Galatians 4:6. After regeneration, however, there is a further experience which immerses the Believer in the power of the Holy Spirit. This can enable the Believer, as God wills, to operate in a greater measure of the Spirit’s power: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11.

Just as the disciples were empowered on the day of Pentecost, so too, Christians today can be empowered for witnessing and service. It is the Spirit Baptism can provide us with the power needed to spread the light of the gospel to a world darkened by sin, and to assist in meeting the needs of people who are seeking help from God. The Baptism in the Spirit, as recorded in Acts 2:1-4, changed the timid and fearful disciples to dynamic and courageous messengers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And we continue to need this life-changing experience today. (See also Acts 1:1-8.)

WHO BAPTIZES US IN THE HOLY SPIRIT ?

In the New Testament, the first mention of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is found in Matthew 3:11 where John the Baptist was speaking to the people:

MAT 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that comes 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:

This statement by John the Baptist is recorded in the other three gospels as well (Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, and John 1:33) and tells us that it is Jesus Who baptizes His people in the Holy Spirit.

THE PROMISE

Background Reading: Joel 2:28-29

The Book of Joel Ch.2:28-29 states prophetically that God would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh. This promise began to be

fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, as Acts 2:1-4 tells us:

ACTS 2:1 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.

ACTS 2:2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

ACTS 2:3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.

ACTS 2:4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Since the day of Pentecost, countless numbers of people have been baptized in the Holy Spirit and as a result, there have been many mighty signs, miracles and wonders which have followed the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ.

IS THERE ANY PHYSICAL EVIDENCE OF BEING BAPTIZED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT ?

Yes, scripture clearly shows that there is a physical manifestation which accompanies the Holy Spirit Baptism. Acts 2:4 states: *“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues (in languages unknown to the speaker), as the Spirit gave them utterance.”* There are other instances of this physical manifestation recorded in the New Testament: Mark 16:17, Acts 10:46 and 19:6. The Apostle Paul himself also said that he spoke in (private) tongues: 1 Corinthians 14:18. (See also Acts 10:44-47.)

Some people are uncomfortable with the concept of a “manifestation” accompanying the Spirit Baptism. Scripture states with remarkable clarity, however, that speaking in other tongues is the physical evidence which accompanies the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

WHAT BENEFITS COME FROM BEING BAPTIZED IN THE SPIRIT ?

When Believers are baptized in the Holy Spirit, they gain the potential to operate in the power of God in a greater way. This power comes primarily through the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit outlined in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. These are as follows: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge and the discerning of spirits are known as the revelation gifts, given to assist Christians in ministering effectively to and on behalf of others; “divers” (various) kinds of (public) tongues, interpretation of (public) tongues, and prophecy are the vocal gifts, given to provide direction to the Church on both public and private levels; the gifts of healings, the working of miracles, and the gift of faith are known as the power gifts, and these are used as their titles indicate.

In relation to the benefits which come through the Spirit Baptism, God can potentially reveal His Word in a greater measure to Spirit-filled Believers. This can result in more rapid spiritual growth and a profound increase in spiritual understanding.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit also helps equip us, potentially, to be more effective in our witnessing - to share the Gospel with boldness and wisdom, as we allow God to work through us.

Spirit-filled Believers often experience a greater love for God’s Word and work than ever before. New insights and knowledge can replace former blindness. The reality of Jesus Christ, to the committed Believer, will become greater as the Holy Spirit reveals Him. The result will be that our fellowship with Jesus will become more intense and personal. And a new joy, peace and liberty, plus a heightened desire and ability to praise, often follow the Spirit baptism.

First Corinthians Ch.14 tells us that speaking in tongues is using a prayer language by which we speak mysteries to God. This can edify the speaker and lift up the faith within one’s heart: Jude 1:20. Tongues can also be used as a singing and praise language, and when prayed in faith, can be an effectual spiritual weapon: Ephesians

6:18.

RECEIVING THE GIFT OF THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Like salvation, the Spirit Baptism is a gift from God which is received in the same manner. Jesus said:

LUK 11:9 “So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

LUK 11:10 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

LUK 11:11 Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead?

LUK 11:12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?

LUK 11:13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give (baptism in) the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”

To receive this gift you should ask the Father in Jesus’ name. You cannot receive the gift of the Holy Spirit if Jesus is not involved, for this gift comes through Him and Him alone: Matthew 3:11, Luke 24:49.

Again, in order to receive this gift of God, all preconceived and biased ideas must be set aside. There must be an openness to receive, and a knowledge that it is God’s will for you to have this gift. You need to come prayerfully, really desiring and expecting to receive: John 7:37-39. Quite often the laying on of hands by a mature Christian can help another to receive: Acts 8:14-17.

Note: Whenever hands are laid upon you or you lay hands on another in prayer, always believe and thank God for the spiritual protection He has provided (the blood covering). This will help stop the enemy attacking you while you are in an open state spiritually.

PREPARATION FOR RECEIVING THE SPIRIT BAPTISM

Man's enemy, the devil, will try to prevent Christians receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit because of the potential power that accompanies it. **Anyone who seeks** the Baptism in the Holy Spirit while still having thoughts of doubt concerning the reality of this promise, will have problems receiving - for God requires faith or at least openness in order to fulfill His promises: Hebrews 11:6.

It is God's will that all His children receive the blessed gift of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, for He desires us all to operate in His power and to grow and mature into the people of faith He has called us to be. To be sure of receiving the gift of the Spirit you will need to have:

1. Acknowledged and confessed Jesus as your Lord according to Romans 10:9-10.

2. Repented of sin and renounced any occult involvement in Jesus' name (receiving forgiveness and the cleansing of the results of sin according to 1 John 1:9).

If this has been done then come to God with an open heart, really desiring and expecting to receive.

Concerning speaking in tongues, the Holy Spirit will give the words, BUT IT IS OUR PART TO OPEN OUR MOUTHS AND USE OUR VOICES. You will need, however, to resist any temptation to speak in a language you understand.

It is important to relax and not be tense or nervous. Tension can easily block the Holy Spirit for He will never force Himself on anyone. A simple prayer of asking in faith will be sufficient to bring you through in private tongues. (The laying on of hands by a mature Christian can also be beneficial, if needed).

PRAYER FOR THE SPIRIT BAPTISM

I come before You heavenly Father in Jesus' name. I believe Jesus died for my sins and rose from the dead, and I confess Him as my Lord. I believe that I am born again and that I am Your child. I now ask You Jesus to baptize me in the Holy Spirit, clothing me with power from on high.

According to Your Word, Lord, I believe I have now received this precious gift and that I am baptized in the Holy Spirit. As I begin to praise You now Lord, I fully expect to praise You in tongues as the Holy Spirit gives me the words to do so.

As you begin to praise God, thank Him that you are baptized in the Holy Spirit. Speak out the words of your new heavenly language, even though the syllables may seem a little strange at first. Continue to speak in tongues until the flow of the language becomes fluent - speaking aloud will help you gain confidence and freedom. After this, spend time daily speaking in tongues, communicating with God in the Spirit.

As we have seen, it is God's will for all His children to receive the mighty Baptism in the Holy Spirit. The Spirit Baptism gives the Believer the potential to operate in God's power, as the Spirit wills. It is also a gateway to fellowshiping with the Father on a more intense and personal level, a gateway to developing our relationship with Him. Remember: **Ask, believe and receive, in Jesus' name.**