

BAPTISM IN
THE
HOLY SPIRIT

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Bracketed comments following some scriptures assist the reader in understanding the intended meaning of these verses

We acknowledge the additional works of the various Scholars and Bible Commentaries used in conjunction with the College material. This is not to say that we agree with all their theology, but we certainly value their contribution to the Body of Christ.

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BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Background Reading: John Chapter 17

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

LUKE 24:49 “And behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry (wait) in the city of Jerusalem, until you be endued (clothed) with power from on high.”

Because:

ACTS 1:8 “ . . . you shall receive power (ability, efficiency and might) after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and you shall be (effective) witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part 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 giftings which accompany the Spirit Baptism.

In this teaching we will cover various questions which people often raise concerning the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. There has been much controversy surrounding this subject, and it is important to discover or at least reaffirm what God’s Word really teaches on the matter.

“. . .It is impossible for Christians to meet all the requirements of the day and walk effectively in their callings unless they are baptized in the Holy Spirit. . .”

Like other vital doctrines, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit has been under much attack from the enemy, with Satan trying continually to surround this doctrine with as much confusion, doubt and unbelief as he can. His purpose in this is to discredit the Spirit Baptism so that people are prevented from knowing the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit. Satan knows that if Believers could fully comprehend and take hold of this promise, his reign on earth would be extremely restricted. So he and his forces work tirelessly to instigate much wrong teaching concerning this subject, examples of which are as follows: “This experience is not for today,” “Speaking in tongues is of the devil,” “The Spirit Baptism passed away with the Apostles,” and so on.

As Christians, it is vitally important that we are well versed in the truth of God’s Word so that we can discern truth from error and not be led down a pathway of ignorance, confusion and doubt. Amen.

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. This happens when the Holy Spirit anoints Believers to empower them for Christian service. Also, the enriched spiritual atmosphere which the Spirit Baptism affords, helps the child of God to grow in the graces of God so that they can become more Christ-like in character.

Upon salvation, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit come and make Their abode with us (John 14:23), and we become united with God so that we are able to cry “*Abba Father*” (Romans 8:9; Galatians 4:6). After regeneration, however, there is a further experience which immerses the Believer in the power of God. This, the Spirit Baptism, 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. The Spirit Baptism, along with knowledge of the Word of God, can provide us with the power and direction needed to spread the light of the Gospel to a world darkened by sin, and help us meet the needs of people who are seeking assistance from God. Remember that 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! Instead of hiding away in fear of the Jews, the Disciples came out into the streets and openly preached the Gospel - with amazing results (Acts 2:5-41).

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 Spirit, 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.

WHAT BENEFITS COME FROM BEING BAPTIZED IN THE SPIRIT ?

Background Reading: Acts 10:34-46

Yes, scripture clearly shows that there is a physical manifestation which accompanies the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. This physical manifestation is the God-given ability to speak in tongues, the private prayer language by which the Believer speaks mysteries to God. For Acts 2:4 states:

ACTS 2:4 *And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues (languages*

unknown to the speaker), as the Spirit gave them utterance.

There are other instances of this physical manifestation recorded in the New Testament. For example, in Acts 10:46 Cornelius' household received the word which Peter preached and the Jewish Believers who were with Peter were astonished because *“they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.”* Also, when the Apostle Paul laid hands on the Disciples at Ephesus, *“the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spoke with tongues, and prophesied”* (Acts 19:6). Paul himself also declared in 1 Corinthians 14:18, *“I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all.”* Jesus also stated in Mark 16:17:

MARK 16:17 And these signs shall follow them who believe; In My Name shall they cast out devils (demons); they shall speak with new tongues (the evidence of the Spirit Baptism)

Note: “Private” tongues, which is what we are speaking of here, refers to the devotional tongues given to every Believer baptized in the Spirit. “Private” tongues is to be distinguished from the gift of public tongues which is one of the nine gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7-11). To understand this distinction, however, and indeed any of God's truths, we may need to put aside any bias and any preconceived ideas so that we may approach God's Word with an open heart.

“. . .Just as the Disciples needed the Spirit Baptism to make them bold witnesses for Christ, so every Christian today needs the power and fullness of the Spirit to do the work that they are called to do. . .”

Some people are uncomfortable with the concept of a “manifestation” accompanying the Spirit Baptism. However

scripture states with remarkable clarity 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 ?

Background Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

When Believers are baptized in the Holy Spirit, they gain the potential to operate in the power of God in a greater way - so that God's will can be done on earth. There are two aspects to this power. The Spirit Baptism can provide an enriched atmosphere in which we are better able to be infused with the graces of God's Divine Nature so that, for instance, we can love as God loves. The other aspect of this power is that which becomes available through the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit as outlined in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. These are as follows: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge and the discerning of spirits which 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 which are known as the vocal gifts, given to provide direction to the Church on both corporate and personal levels; the gifts of healings, the working of miracles, and the gift of faith which 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, comparatively speaking, a more profound increase in spiritual understanding. This will of course be dependent upon people studying God's Word properly and yielding to it, being dedicated to God and open to the Spirit. Indeed only as people lead committed Christian lives will they be able to take full advantage of the benefits which the Spirit Baptism offers.

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit also equips us, potentially, to be more effective in our witnessing - to be able, through the gifts, to discern what is needed and when, and to share the Gospel with boldness and in wisdom, allowing God to work through us.

The Holy Spirit not only gives the potential for a greater level of power in witnessing, He can also better help the Believer gain victory in his or her own life as well. Furthermore, Spirit-filled Believers can experience a greater love for God's Word than ever before. New insights and knowledge can replace former blindness. The reality of Jesus Christ and the Word of God usually becomes greater as we allow the Holy Spirit to work with and through us. Also, a new joy, peace and liberty, plus a heightened desire and ability to praise, can accompany the Spirit Baptism or develop quickly after. Our fellowship with Jesus can also become much more intense and personal as we are able to experience His presence in a greater way. And being able to communicate with Him more freely and directly gives us the potential to develop in our relationship with Him.

Also, potentially, worship at a greater depth is possible when a Believer is Spirit-baptized and they are flowing in the graces of God's Divine Nature of which we, in Christ, are now partakers. The enriched spiritual atmosphere provided by the Spirit Baptism gives greater potential to the consecrated worshipper who has proper focus.

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 Believer who does so and lift up the faith within their 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).

HOW TO RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Background Reading: Mark 11:23-26

The Spirit Baptism is a gift from God which is received in the same manner as salvation. In Luke Ch.11, Jesus gave us instructions concerning this:

LUKE 11:9 “And I say unto you, Ask (believing), and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it (the door) shall be opened unto you.

LUKE 11:10 *For every one who asks (believing) receives; and he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks it shall be opened.*

LUKE 11:11 *If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent (snake)?*

LUKE 11:12 *Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?*

LUKE 11:13 *If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children (earthly parents, though sinners, would not respond to their children's requests like this): how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"*

To receive this gift the Christian should ask the Father in Jesus' Name. They 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 the Christian to have this gift. They need to come prayerfully, really desiring and expecting to receive. Quite often the laying on of hands by a mature Christian can help another to receive (Acts 8:14-17).

Primarily it is a matter after salvation of receiving at an experiential level that which is already given to the Christian by inheritance. So the seeker of the Baptism does not have to have hands laid on them, or anyone pray for them. It has been found, however, that the prayer of others is usually a great help in this area to most Christians. In fact most seem not to receive the Spirit Baptism without the help of a servant of God. Indeed we are to come to the table of the Lord with a humble heart and a contrite spirit, and He will give to those who ask that which is already theirs by inheritance.

***“ . . . It is through the fire of Pentecost
burning within that fully consecrated
Christians are given the power to speak
God’s words as He would speak them. . . ”***

Note: We need to remember that whenever hands are laid upon us or we lay hands on another in prayer, we should always believe and thank God for the spiritual protection He has provided through the blood covering. As we have learned, when this form of protection is applied by faith, spiritual problems will be prevented from being transferred from one person to another.

PREPARATION FOR RECEIVING THE SPIRIT BAPTISM

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, people will need to have:

- 1. Acknowledged and confessed Jesus** as their Lord according to Romans 10:9-10.
- 2. Repented of sin** and if needed, 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 seeking Christians need to come to God with an open heart, really desiring and expecting to receive this wonderful gift.

***“ . . . It is God’s will that all His children
receive the blessed gift of the Baptism in
the Holy Spirit. . . ”***

Concerning speaking in tongues, the Holy Spirit will give the words, but **IT IS OUR PART TO OPEN OUR MOUTHS AND USE OUR VOICES**. Christians will need to resist any temptation to speak in a language they understand.

It is also 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 people through in private tongues. Prayer by a mature Christian can also be beneficial, and in most cases will be needed.

PRAYER FOR THE SPIRIT BAPTISM

I come before You Heavenly Father in Jesus' Name. I believe Jesus died for my sins and was raised from the dead by the power of God, and I confess Him as my Lord. I believe that I am born again (Romans 10:9-10), 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 (Luke 11:13; Acts 2:38-39), 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, as I yield to the Holy Spirit, 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 - because scripture said that you would be when you ask this way. Then begin to 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 bring freedom of expression. After this, spend time daily speaking in tongues, communicating with God in the Spirit, knowing that this, a gift from our loving Heavenly Father, is beneficial and effectual.

Some people may need to thank the Lord that they have received the Spirit Baptism before there is any physical evidence. So if you do not appear to have received tongues after you have prayed for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, do not become frustrated or disheartened. Continue to believe that you received the Baptism

when you prayed, and continue to thank the Lord for the ability to speak in tongues. Often people who go away and remain prayerful, believing and expectant, find that during the next 48 hours or so, they are able to speak in the new language which God has given them. Sometimes, too, people may initially receive only a few words in tongues. They need to keep speaking out these words in faith, believing that they will eventually become fluent in their new heavenly language. If you continue to have problems speaking in tongues, however, review the promises in scripture and, if needed, seek out a mature Christian for prayer and whatever other assistance is required.

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.**

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