

THE BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. Introduction

As believers in the Lord Jesus, we have to follow His example and obey everything He commanded His disciples to do (Matt. 28:18-20; John. 14:12 & 20:21). The four Gospels and the Book of Acts teach us how the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus, His disciples and new believers in the New Testament Church. There is a clear pattern that is repeated over and over. The coming of the Holy Spirit upon people always followed salvation and preceded ministry and life in the church as a believer.

The Lord Jesus did not start His earthly ministry before He had received the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist baptized Jesus in water and as He came up out of the water, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him like a dove. Furthermore, the Lord Jesus would not let the church start before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. As He gave His final instructions to the disciples, before He was taken into Heaven, He commanded them to wait in Jerusalem until they had been baptized with the Holy Spirit. (Luke. 24:48-49 & Acts 1:4-8).

We will see in this study that it was a common practice in the early church to make sure that believers were filled with the Holy Spirit after conversion.

In the New Testament the coming of the Holy Spirit into a believer's life is referred to as "receiving the Holy Spirit", "filled with the Holy Spirit" or "the baptism with the Holy Spirit". All of these speak of the same encounter with the Holy Spirit.

Many believers come to a place in their walk with the Lord that they lack the power of God in their lives. Jesus said in Acts 1:8:

"you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you"

Paul wrote in Eph. 5:18:

"Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

We need the infilling of the Spirit so that we can walk in His fullness. It is the Father's desire for us to walk in the power and fullness of the Holy Spirit. Jesus told us in John 14 through 16 that He would send us the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit has come! He is ready to touch you

2. Born Again By The Spirit

We are born again by the Holy Spirit according to John 3:1-7. When we ask the Lord Jesus to come into our hearts, it is the Holy Spirit that creates in us a new heart. He gives us a new spirit by putting in us the new creation, which is the nature of Christ (2 Cor. 5:17-20). At salvation we receive a deposit of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5 & Eph. 1:14). This is what Jesus spoke of when He spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well:

"Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."
- John 4:14

This well of living water is the working of the Holy Spirit in giving us the new birth. In John 7:37-39 Jesus spoke of a subsequent experience with the Holy Spirit after the new birth experience. He takes it to another level, when He said:

On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.
- John 7:37-39

The Lord Jesus is saying to us that the well of living water of the Holy Spirit must become rivers of living water that flows out of our innermost being. This is what happens when you get baptized with the Holy Spirit. So become thirsty for more of the Holy Spirit!

3. The Father's Promise

The Holy Spirit is the Gift the Father promised:

On one occasion, while he (Jesus) was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Acts 1:4-5

The Holy Spirit is the gift of the Father and is received through the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

On the day of Pentecost Peter said these words concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit: "Exalted to the right hand of God, He has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear." - Acts 2:33

Jesus received the Holy Spirit from the Father as part of the prize for his obedience and suffering on the cross. Jesus paid the price that we may be baptized with the Holy Spirit. How precious is the baptism with the Holy Spirit!

4. Jesus - The Baptizer With The Holy Spirit

Let us start at the beginning of the Gospels. John the Baptist was preaching repentance and baptizing those who confessed their sins in the Jordan River by immersion. John said of Jesus:

"I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."
- Matt. 3:11

"I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'"
- John 1:33

John the Baptist clearly tells us that the Lord Jesus is the Baptizer with the Holy Spirit.

Also look at Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16 & John 1:32-33.

The last command of Jesus to the disciples was to wait in Jerusalem for the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

"On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." - Acts 1:4-5

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. - Acts 1: 8 -9

To be baptized with the Holy Spirit is a command of Jesus. Jesus commanded His disciples not to do anything until they were baptized with the Holy Spirit. Later on in the Book of Acts Peter said:

"We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him." Acts 5:32

We love Jesus by obeying His commands:

John 14:15 "If you love me, you will obey what I command."

So let us obey the command of Jesus and receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

Paul also instructs us to:

"Be filled with the Spirit." - Eph. 5:18

Therefore whether you call this experience the Baptism of the Holy Spirit or the infilling of the Holy Spirit, make sure you receive it.

5. The Book of Acts

The Book of Acts shows us that believers in the New Testament experienced the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

On the Day of Pentecost a hundred and twenty believers were together in the Upper Room; "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." Acts 2:4

In Acts 8 Philip goes to Samaria and preaches the Gospel. Many believed the Good News and were baptized by Philip in water. After this Peter and John came from Jerusalem.

"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." Acts 8:15-17

On the road to Damascus Paul encounters the Lord Jesus and gets radically saved.

"Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord - Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here - has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." - Acts 9:17.

Note that Ananias was just a regular believer, not one of the twelve apostles, and he knew to lay hands on Paul for him to receive the Holy Spirit.

Peter went to the house of Cornelius and preached the Gospel to them.

"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. Then Peter said, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have."

Acts 10-44-47.

In Acts 11 Peter returns to Jerusalem and reports to the apostles what happened. In verse 16 he says:

"Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?"

Note that in this passage different terms are used for the baptism with the Holy Spirit, depending on from what viewpoint the experience is described:

The Holy Spirit came on all.

The gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out.

They received the Holy Spirit.

You will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

God (the Father) gave them the gift.

Paul went to Ephesus where he found a group of disciples.

He asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied."

- Acts 19:2 & 6.

These believers received correct teaching about the Holy Spirit long after their conversion, and then received the baptism with the Holy Spirit as Paul laid hands on them. Therefore we see that this was a common experience in the Church that believers encountered everywhere, after they became believers in the Lord Jesus.

6. How Do We Receive The Baptism In The Holy Spirit?

As believers we need to have a desire to receive everything that the Father has for us. We should have an expectation that everything He said in His Word is true. He is a good Father, Who is faithful to fulfill His promises to us. He gives without finding fault and He is no respecter of person. See James 1:5 & 17 & Acts 10:34

1. Be Thirsty

On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those

who believed in Him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

2. Ask

Jesus said: "If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" - Luke 11:13

We must ask the Father to give us the promised Holy Spirit. We must ask the Lord Jesus to baptize us with the Holy Spirit. We must ask the Holy Spirit to come and fill us with His power and give us a new language to worship the Father with.

3. Prayer And Laying On Of Hands

In the Book of Acts we see believers receiving the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands. Read Acts 8:15-17, 9:17 & 19:6.

4. We Must Receive By Faith

In the same way that salvation comes by faith, so also everything else. Paul reminds the Galatians:

"Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard?" - Gal. 3:2

And then tells them:

"...that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit." - Gal. 3:14

Please read Gal. 3:1-14 to get the full understanding of what the Holy Spirit is speaking to us. It is very clear from these verses that we do not receive the Holy Spirit by our good works or striving, but only through faith.

Hebrews 11:6 says:

"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."

Jesus said:

"Have faith in God, Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." - Mark 11:22 & 24

By the Blood of Jesus every believer has been made worthy to receive everything God has for them. Therefore ask Him and He will do it, because He desires to bless you.

Jesus said:

"And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it." - John 14:13-14

And

"I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete." -John 16:23-24

Paul explains to the Galatians that receiving the Holy Spirit does not come by obeying the law, but through faith in Christ:

"Let me ask you this one question: Did you receive the Holy Spirit by trying to keep the Jewish laws? Of course not, for the Holy Spirit came upon you only after you heard about Christ and trusted him to save you. I ask you again, does God give you the power of the Holy Spirit and work miracles among you as a result of your trying to obey the Jewish laws? No, of course not. It is when you believe in Christ and fully trust him. Now God can bless the Gentiles, too, with this same blessing he promised to Abraham; and all of us as Christians can have the promised Holy Spirit through this faith." The Living Bible Gal. 3:2,5 & 14

7. What Happens When You Get Baptized in The Holy Spirit?

1. Power

Jesus said:

"... You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses ..." - Acts 1:8

The Supernatural POWER of the Holy Spirit will come upon you and you will walk as a believer in His power and not your own strength.

2. Tongues

On the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 the Holy Spirit fell and

"All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." - Acts 2:4

This also happened in Caesarea at Cornelius's house (Acts 10:45-46) and in Ephesus (Acts 19:6).

3. You Will Prophecy And See Visions & Dreams

In his sermon on the day of Pentecost Peter quotes from Joel 2:28:

"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, your old men will dream dreams." - Acts 2:17

This happened in Ephesus. - Acts 19:6

You can expect ALL of the above to happen to you!

8. More About Tongues

Let us take a closer look at what the Word of God says about tongues.

HOW TONGUES ARE USED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

There are three distinct usages of tongues in the New Testament.

1. Tongues Are a Sign To Unbelievers.

Paul writes:

"Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; ..." - 1 Cor. 14:22

This is what happened in the day of Pentecost. The disciples started to speak in tongues and the (as yet unsaved) crowd understood what they were saying. - Acts 2:1-12

2. The Gift of Tongues:

In 1 Cor 12:10 Paul lists the gift of tongues as one of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit and in 1 Cor. 14:26-28 he gives instructions on how the gift of tongues should operate in the church, i.e. followed by an interpretation. Here the whole church is addressed through a message of tongues. The understanding of the message is given through an interpretation.

3. A Prayer Language:

This is the most common occurrence of tongues in the life of a believer. Paul talks about 'praying in the Spirit.' Here the believer speaks to God as he prays in tongues. No interpretation is necessary, because God understands tongues perfectly!

"For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind." - 1 Cor. 14:14-15

"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions" - Eph. 6:18

"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will." - Rom. 8:26-27

Jude 20 also encourages us to pray in the Spirit, which is to pray in tongues.

But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.

4. Is This For Everyone?

The answer is YES!

Jesus said:

"And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ... they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." - Mark 16:17-18

This is for every believer. Paul encourages all of us to speak in tongues when he writes:

"I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, ... Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues." - 1 Cor. 14:5 & 39

5. The Purpose Of Tongues As A Prayer Language

- Paul encourages us to pray in the Spirit - 1 Cor.14:14-15 & Eph. 6:18
- You communicate with God when you speak in tongues - 1 Cor. 14:2
- You edify yourself when you pray in tongues - 1 Cor. 14:4
- You can worship the Lord by speaking in tongues - 1 Cor. 14:15
- When we pray in tongues, the Holy Spirit helps us to intercede - Rom. 8:26-27
- You build up your faith by praying in the Spirit - Jude 20

9. Practical Guidelines

1. Pray this Prayer

If you have accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior, ask the Father for the baptism with the Holy Spirit by praying a prayer such as:

Father, I come to you in the Name of Jesus. Thank You for Your promised gift of the Holy Spirit. Lord Jesus, baptize me now with the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit, I receive You now. Fill me with Your power and enable me to speak in tongues. I thank and praise You. Amen.

Lift you hands in a prayerful attitude as someone who is baptized with the Holy Spirit lays hands on you. Receive by faith, expect to speak in tongues.

2. Receiving Tongues

Scripture says "*They spoke in tongues.*" (Acts 19:6) Although the gift of tongues is supernatural, *you* still have to speak. As hands are laid upon you, the Holy Spirit will put strange sounds in your mind. Start mouthing these sounds. At first it may sound like babble or groanings, but as you continue the words and sentences will become more distinct. Some people receive only a few words or sentences, while others gush forth in a more complete language. Be thankful for what the Holy Spirit has given you and use it often. As you use your prayer language, new words often come.

The gift of tongues comes supernaturally; the everyday use of your prayer language is natural. This means that you can speak in tongues at will, wherever you desire to pray in tongues. The more you use your prayer language, you will gain confidence and boldness in your prayer life.

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