

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

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<http://www.christian-faith.com/forjesus/baptism-in-the-Holy-Spirit#intro>

Introduction

It is now time in our series of foundational studies to consider the Holy Spirit, and especially, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, also referred to be some as "the Baptism of the Holy Spirit" although this is not technically correct. This subject forms part of the foundational doctrine of baptisms (see Hebrews 6:2). It is important for every Christian not only to correctly understand what is this baptism in the Holy Spirit so as to be able to explain it to others correctly, but also to actually experience this baptism in the Spirit, and thus enter into a dimension of life full of the power of God. Christians need the power that comes with the Baptism in the Spirit in order to do their part in continuing the supernatural ministry of Jesus Christ. Jesus promised the believers that they would do greater works than He (John 14:12). How can this be done unless the Holy Spirit is with us as He was with Jesus? Truly the church today needs the power that comes through the Holy Spirit and ought to remain in fellowship with the Holy Spirit so as to maintain this power and ability to minister the reality of Christ to a world in trouble.

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

As we have seen before (in [this lesson](#)), the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is God. (Acts 5:3,4). The Holy Spirit is not a power, a force or an energy; He is a person. As a person, He has feelings (Ephesians 4:30), a mind of infinite knowledge (Romans 8:26,27) and a will. He speaks. (Acts 13:2; John 16:13). A force or power does not have these attributes and abilities.

The Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of Truth" (John 16:13). He always speaks truth. He doesn't like lies. He loves to bless people of truth and honesty.

The Holy Spirit is also called "the Comforter" (John 14:26). He communicates the comfort and healing love of the Father to our hearts, giving us encouragement, joy and spiritual pleasure especially in times of trial and difficulty.

Also known as "the Spirit of God" and "the Spirit of the Lord", the Holy Spirit is the one who gives and inspires wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge and the fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11:2).

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

As well as those things mentioned above, the Holy Spirit is at work to do the following:

1. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8). Without this special work of the Holy Spirit people would not be deeply convinced of their sinfulness, God's righteousness or the coming judgment. Therefore in communicating the Word of God to others we must depend on the Holy Spirit to convince people of these truths. We may say what the Word says on these issues but it is the Holy Spirit who will do the convicting.

2. He guides us into all truth (John 16:13). If we allow ourselves to be guided by Him, He will indeed show us what the truths from the Bible we need to understand. Being the author of the Bible, He is best qualified to interpret it to us. He will show us many things both directly from the Word but also through other means. What He shows cannot be the mere product of logic and reason, although it is not illogical. We must realize that the Holy Spirit never guides us in any way contrary to the Holy Scriptures. We must not believe every spirit claiming to be from God, but test the spirits according to the standard of the Holy Scriptures.

3. He regenerates (John 3:5,6). When a person turns to Christ for salvation and trusts Christ from the heart, the Holy Spirit is involved. At this time, the Holy Spirit causes the spirit of that person to be made new. (2 Corinthians 5:17). The human spirit, once dead in sin, is regenerated or made new by the power and working of the Holy Spirit. This is what it means to be born of the Spirit.

4. He glorifies Christ (John 16:14). The Holy Spirit always works to bring glory and honor to Jesus Christ. He does not seek His own glory, but the glory of Jesus. He does this by revealing who Jesus is to us and through us so that all may praise Jesus. He makes Jesus real to people, by bringing the resources and reality of Jesus to the people on earth.

5. He reveals Christ to us and in us (John 16:14,15). Jesus said, "He will take of what is mine and declare it to you". It is the Holy Spirit who communicates to our soul the knowledge of who Jesus is and what He is like. At the same time He works to form the nature of Christ in us also. Being filled with the Holy Spirit in our body and soul, our nature is changed into the nature of the Son of God.

6. He is our leader - willing to lead us (Romans 8:14). "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the [mature] sons of God". The word for son here is the word for a mature son. Indeed, the only way to Christian maturity is to be led by the Spirit. It is not following a path determined by ourselves and our understanding of God's laws that will make us mature Christians, but the path in which He, the Spirit, leads us. We need the Spirit to be mature. Maturity is more than knowledge, it is fruit that comes from relationship with the Spirit of God.

7. He sanctifies. The Holy Spirit is given that we might be holy. It is the Holy Spirit who, working together with the word of God in our minds, sanctifies us. This means He sets us apart for God, cleanses us and puts us in order so that we can more truly show forth the love of God and the nature of Jesus. Holiness is the work of the Spirit. It is not a work based on self- effort or "trying harder". Our part is to believe God's word, and to yield to

the leadings of the Spirit. It is by the Spirit however that our sanctification is achieved. This process of sanctification occurs mainly in the soul - the mind, the will and the emotions. "Sanctification is possessing the mind of Christ, and all of the mind of Christ." - John Wesley. It happens more or less rapidly depending on how we learn to yield to God, to change our thinking so that it centres on God's love and God's Word, and persist in prayer.

8. He empowers. "But you will receive **power** when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8). The power we receive from Him is power to preach and demonstrate the gospel of the kingdom of God, not in word only, but in power. (1 Corinthians 4:20). Paul said that his message and preaching were not with the persuasive words of human wisdom, but with the demonstration of the SPIRIT and of POWER, that your faith should not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. (1 Corinthians 2:4). There are many kinds of demonstrations of the power of the Spirit. They are sometimes unexpected. Certainly the Spirit wants to give us power to heal the sick and cast out demons. (Matthew 10:1; Mark 16:17,18; John 14:12). This power of the Spirit is often referred to as "the anointing". It is the anointing which enables us to do what Christ wants us to do as sons of God. And that is, to destroy the works of the devil. (1 John 3:8b).

For a born again Christian, the normal path to receiving this power involves at least 3 things.

a. The Baptism (immersion) in the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:5; John 7:37- 39). This is the normal introduction of the believer into the realm of personally flowing in the power of God.

b. Total dedication to God. Dedication to prayer, dedication to love, dedication to win souls for Christ, dedication to focus on the Word and on the voice of the Spirit. This dedication involves self-denial (usually including fasting - going without food for a time), a constant dedication to humbling oneself, understanding the authority we have as believers, learning to hear the voice of the Spirit, faith and boldness.

c. Brokenness. We realise that our own self-will, selfishness, stupidity and pride are the main reasons for our failures in God. We realise in ourselves (not in Christ, but in ourselves) we are rotten, corrupt and unable to do anything of value. (Romans 7:18; John 15:5b). We therefore learn to surrender quickly to the Spirit's voice, not trusting our own minds, nor caring about our own reputation. When we make mistakes, we receive correction meekly. When we have success, we give all the glory to God.

9. He fills us (Ephesians 5:18). We are commanded to be filled continually with the Spirit. This being filled effects our whole personality, our ministry for Christ, and the focus of our minds. It affects our body also. (Romans 8:11; Luke 11:36).

10. He teaches us to pray (Romans 8:26, 27; 1 Corinthians 14:15). The Spirit of God knows what we should [pray](#) and how. We don't. That is why we must let Him help us here. One way is through the special prayer language He gives us when we are baptized in the Spirit. Another way is by inspiring our minds with the prayers that get results. Yet another way is through the deep groanings of intercession He produces in us.

11. He tells us that we are children of God (Romans 8:16).

The Holy Spirit wants to bring us to the place where all these things are part of our lives.

12. He produces in us the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22, 23). As part of our sanctification, the Holy Spirit produces in us love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. These characteristics are formed in us by continual yielding to the Spirit of God.

13. He gives special supernatural gifts (1 Corinthians 12:8-10). These gifts are given as the Spirit decides. However, we are not passive in the reception and operation of these gifts. To use the gifts requires faith, boldness and a degree of sensitivity to the Spirit. These gifts are given to help people by the supernatural wisdom and power of God. They are not the product of the rational mind. Rather they are supernatural operations of the Spirit which occur through those who are open to them. They are useful in evangelism and in every part of Christian ministry. In neglecting them, the church has neglected an important God-ordained means for achieving God's work in the world.

Born of the Spirit, Baptized in the Spirit

Every true Christian is born of the Spirit. As such they have experienced the work of the Holy Spirit in a number of important ways. These ways include but are not limited to: conviction, regeneration and the witness of the Spirit in our lives that we are children of God. However, the dimension of power that God wants for His children can only be reached through the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. It is God's will that every Christian be baptized in the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38, 39). Even though some Christians achieve results without the actual baptism in the Holy Spirit, they would achieve more if they yielded to God so as to receive the Baptism in the Spirit. It is possible for a Christian to recognize many aspects of the Holy Spirit's work and enjoy a measure of His blessing in life and ministry, without ever being baptized in the Spirit in the Biblical way.

Some say that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit no longer exists today. Others take another approach and say that EVERY born again Christian was baptized in the Spirit at his conversion. Both kinds of teaching have the effect of robbing believers of something very important that Christ provided for them as part of their necessary inheritance in this life.

We will see from the Bible that the baptism in the Spirit is not the same as regeneration. It is important that we do not allow tradition - even "evangelical tradition" - to take a higher place than the Word of God in our doctrine and in our lives.

Biblical proof that these are Separate Works

Although the Bible does give examples of people who were baptized in the Spirit at the same time as their regeneration, we will see that this is not always what happens. The Book of Acts reveals that repentance, baptism in water and the baptism in the Holy Spirit, although all part of our salvation package, do not necessarily happen in the same order all the time. It is interesting to note that in Acts, where the Baptism in the Spirit happens to believers at the time of their conversion, the Bible puts emphasis on the fact that the apostles knew they were baptized in the Spirit "for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God" (Acts 10:46; Acts 11:15- 16). We certainly do not believe that speaking in tongues is the proof of being born again. However, we can see that consistently it is the sign accompanying the New Testament Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

It is important to state that every true born again Christian has the Holy Spirit. "Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His." (Romans 8:9). The Holy Spirit is given by God "to those who obey Him" (Acts 5:32). To receive Christ is an act of obedience by which the person submits to the work of the cross and becomes a new person (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The Holy Spirit enters our human spirit when we are born again of the Spirit of God (John 3). Jesus comes into us by his Spirit (John 1:12). As we grow in Christ we produce the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22, 23).

However, there is an empowering by the Holy Spirit which is distinct from being born of God. We get authority (exousia) to be sons of God at the new birth (John 1:12), but we receive power (dunamis) after the Holy Spirit comes upon us and we are filled with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:8)

The apostles received the Holy Spirit in regeneration before the ascension when Jesus breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." (John 20:22). They were born again of the Spirit through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (1 Peter 1:3) at that time. But this was before the day of Pentecost. Jesus told them later to wait for the Promise of the Father in Jerusalem (Acts 1:4), for the Baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5) after they had received the Spirit in regeneration. Therefore in the case of the apostles, the Baptism in the Spirit and being born of the Spirit were two separate events. They were born of the Spirit in John 20:22 before the ascension, but were baptized in the Spirit on the day of Pentecost after the ascension. And it is important to note that only then was the promise of Mark 16:17 fulfilled in the lives of the believers then, for beginning at Pentecost "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:4).

The Samaritans believed the gospel and were baptized (Acts 8:12). Many were healed and delivered. They were born again through repentance and faith in Christ, but it was obvious to Philip that something was missing in their experience. Under Philip's ministry the believers were not baptized in the Spirit. So later, Peter and John came down that these Samaritan believers might receive the Holy Spirit as they ought to receive Him

(Acts 8:14-17). The power which the apostles released was so impressive that Simon the famous magician at that time wanted to buy the ability to release this power. Of course this was an evil and foolish desire. But he wanted to be able to impress people further with the same kind of power he was seeing accompany the reception of the Holy Spirit. The Scripture does not lead us to suppose that the reception of the Holy Spirit was some kind of quiet blessing.

Some point out that no record is made of speaking in tongues in this Biblical account. That doesn't mean that it didn't happen. Some early church writers said it did. But what we should learn from this account is that no matter how wonderful our salvation experience of turning to the Lord was, we should not be satisfied with that, but we should go on in God until we receive the Spirit in mighty demonstration and power.

Further proof that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit does not always or even usually occur at the moment of repentance and faith can be seen in the life of Paul (formerly Saul). Saul met Jesus on the road to Damascus and confessed Him as Lord, which meant he was converted (Acts 9:3-8; Rom. 10:9). But God knew that was not all that Paul needed, Three days later, God had Ananias lay hands on Saul so that he would receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17). But did Paul speak in tongues then? Let Paul himself speak here. In writing to the Corinthians he said "I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all." (1 Corinthians 14:18). Not so much in church, of course, but outside the meetings in private so as to build himself up. In this way, his preaching was both understandable and powerful (1 Corinthians 14:19; 2:1-4).

Cornelius' household and close friends were baptized in the Spirit at the moment of their conversion. How did Peter know this? "For he heard them speak with tongues and magnify God." (Acts 10:46). These people received the Holy Spirit just as the apostles (Acts 10:47). Peter realized that they were not only born again, but also baptized in the Holy Spirit, at that time (Acts 11:15, 16). Why? "For they heard them speak with tongues and magnifying God" (Acts 10:46). That settled the issue for Peter. In the Bible, the speaking in unknown tongues is a Biblical sign of the true New Testament baptism in the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:4, Acts 19:6, Mark 16:17). Let us remember that God did not trust the writing of the New Testament to anyone who did not speak in tongues. And people who despise tongues because their churches don't believe in it make the same kind of mistake as those in formal traditionalistic churches who reject the idea of regeneration by the Spirit at the moment of repentance and faith because it contradicts the long-held dogmas of the church. The Bible must settle the issue - not our traditions, theologies and lack of experience. And the Bible says, "Desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues." (1 Corinthians 14:39).

The Ephesian believers in Acts 19 were not true Christians in the full sense of the word when Paul met them. They only knew the John's baptism of repentance. They did not even know there was given a Holy Spirit. After Paul explained to them about Jesus "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied." (Acts 19:5, 6). Here we see that Paul was interested in these disciples' relationship with

the Holy Spirit. He showed them their need to be baptized in water and the Holy Spirit. Once again, speaking in tongues is revealed to have accompanied this initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the believers.

To add to the testimony of the Scriptures, there are, scattered throughout church history, and especially in this 20th century, there are many thousands and now tens of millions of people who have testified to having received this power from God some time after their initial conversion to Christ.

In summary then, the Scripture shows that being born of God is not always happening at the same time as being baptized in the Spirit. The Scripture further shows that it is always desirable and God's will for people to be filled with the Holy Spirit in such a way as to be clothed with the power of God and to speak with other tongues. (Ephesians 5:18; 1 Corinthians 14:5a). All this and much more is promised to the believer who earnestly seeks a relationship of submission to the Word of God and to the Holy Spirit.

Purpose of the Baptism in the Spirit

The purpose of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is manifold. He is poured out so that all the 13 works and purposes of the Holy Spirit mentioned above might be. The Holy Spirit of course will want to do these things in every believer, not just those actually **baptized** in the Spirit. But these things are much more easily and naturally realized in those who have been baptized in the Spirit and speak in tongues. To achieve His purposes in the believer's life, the Holy Spirit usually requires the voluntary submission of the believer. We must trust God's Spirit to lead us in our battle with the world, the flesh and the devil.

In short, the purpose of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is that men and women will become not only children of God, but children of God like Jesus the Son of God in nature, holiness and power. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit gives us the same possibilities of relationship to the Father and power ministry as Jesus had in His earthly ministry. God wants us to move into these possibilities. The Scriptures make this intention of God clear to us in Scriptures such as John 14:12 and John 17:22. God does not expect us to do the works of Jesus and to be holy as He is holy without having available to us the same measure of the Holy Spirit as Jesus had. But like Jesus, we need to be completely dependent as submissive to the Holy Spirit if we want His purposes in and through us to be fully accomplished. For the baptism in the Spirit is no substitute for the day-by-day choices the believer must make to keep submitting to the revealed will of God.

The main purpose of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit in this life then is to give us more power to demonstrate Christ and win people to Him, so that they can be saved. (Acts 1:8). All other things being equal, the believer baptized in the Spirit will have more success in preaching the gospel, because the Holy Spirit is freer to work through him. The Holy Spirit has many ways to convince people. The Holy Spirit gives us power to heal the sick and cast out demons (Mark 16:17, 18) so that people can see and know that Jesus is alive and that his salvation is real and makes a difference. It is much easier to lead people to Christ after they have been healed through Christ's power by the laying on

of hands of the Spirit-filled believer, for example. With the Holy Spirit working through many believers, there are actually greater possibilities for the effective proclamation of the gospel of the Kingdom that there were in the days of Jesus' earthly ministry. The Baptism in the Spirit therefore is an essential ingredient in the plan of God to multiply Jesus' earthly ministry of preaching, healing and casting out demons so that He can touch the whole world with its billions of people.

Speaking in tongues - What, Why, When?

“Speaking in tongues” refers in general to speaking in languages unknown to the mind of the speaker, by the power of the Holy Spirit. “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Acts 2:4). They may be tongues of men or of angels (1 Corinthians 13:1). It is something which is happening in our time also! (Read the section towards the end of the lecture - are Tongues for Today?) There are many misunderstandings to do with speaking in tongues in many churches today. Therefore it is important to study carefully everything that follows in this lesson.

On occasions, the hearers may understand what is being said (Acts 2:8), but usually they do not (1 Corinthians 14:11). The speaker does not speak with his mind or understanding, but with his spirit (1 Corinthians 14:14). In the case of tongues inspired by the Holy Spirit (we are not dealing here with satanic manifestations of tongues), the speaker speaks words as the Holy Spirit gives him utterance. In general, he speaks not to men but to God (1 Corinthians 14:2), although God can and does give messages in tongues to people through speakers who do not know what they are saying. In most cases, however, such messages will require interpretation or they are without value to the hearer. (1 Corinthians 14:9, 11, 27).

There are therefore three types of tongues:

(1) Praying in tongues. Tongues from man to God, for private edification, prayer and praise to God, and messages in tongues from God to man. Obviously tongues to God (1 Corinthians 14:2) require no interpretation, since God understands all languages.

(2) Prophecies in tongues (with interpretation) (1 Corinthians 14:5- 9).

There are also messages in tongues from God to man. Tongues which form a message to people require interpretation in most cases. This kind of tongues is a spiritual gift for the edification of others. It was of this gift and ministry that Paul was speaking of when he taught that not all speak in tongues (1 Corinthians 12:28-30). In those verses it is talking about **ministries** in the church - not about the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. According to Mark 16:17 all can speak in tongues in the sense mentioned in 1 Corinthians 14:2 - prayer in tongues to God - see point (1). But not all those baptized in the Holy Spirit will prophesy or give messages in tongues.

(3) However, in the case where the speaker is speaking by the spirit words in a human language understood by the hearers but not by himself, it can be said that tongues are a sign for the unbelieving (Acts 2:8; 1 Corinthians 14:22). This kind of sign is happening sometimes even in our days.

Jesus said, "And these signs will follow **those who believe**: In my name they will cast out demons, **they will speak with new tongues.**" (Mark 16:17). We have seen from the Book of Acts that this promise of speaking in tongues was fulfilled in the lives of believers when they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. Although not all true Christians today speak in tongues, nevertheless, they may, they can and they should - when they are baptized in the Holy Spirit! This is the will of God for all Christians. Paul said, "I wish you all spoke with other tongues" (1 Corinthians 14:5) and "Do not forbid to speak with tongues." (1 Corinthians 14:39) Some Christian leaders discourage speaking in tongues or even forbid it because they teach that it is not Biblical or not for today. Who or what gives them the right to say that? Who gives any preacher the right to say what parts of the New Testament are and what parts are not relevant for the believer today? "**ALL SCRIPTURE** is inspired by God and is **profitable** for **doctrine**, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, **that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**" (2 Timothy 3:16, 17).

Praying in tongues can be done anywhere and at almost any time after you are baptized in the Holy Spirit. (1 Timothy 2:8). You can pray in tongues while travelling, while reading, while listening as well as while kneeling in prayer. We will now consider several reasons why it is good for Christians to spend a lot of their time praying in tongues.

1. He who speaks in an unknown tongue speaks to God (1 Corinthians 14:2). That is, he prays. But the prayers he prays are prayed with his spirit in words given by the Holy Spirit. Therefore these prayers will be effective because they are according to the will of God.

2. Speaking in tongues enables us to [pray much](#). God says, "Pray without ceasing." (1 Thessalonians 5:17). While there are many forms of prayer it is great to have the ability to pray in tongues at any time, without taxing the mind. The mind can rest or do something else while the spirit prays. This ability will help us to be "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:18) even when our minds are tired and we don't know how or what to pray. (Romans 8:26, 27)

3. Speaking in tongues allows us to pray for things and situations we don't know about. There are a lot of important things happening or threatening to happen in life that we don't know about. But praying in tongues helps us to pray for these things also - that God steps in and changes these things or people we don't know about and we certainly don't know how to pray for.

4. "He who speaks in an unknown tongue edifies himself." (1 Corinthians 14:4). This means that speaking in tongues builds up our spiritual life. Jude exhorts the Christians as follows: "But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith, praying in the

Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God." (Jude 20, 21). Much speaking in tongues helps us to be deeply conscious of the fact that God lives in us. Speaking in tongues therefore strengthens our relationship with God which will result in greater love and faith being known in and through us than we would otherwise experience.

5. Speaking in tongues can be a spiritual gift to help others, when translated. It also helps us to train our spirits to hear the voice of God and to operate in the other gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:8-10). Especially in Western culture, we have been trained to base all our speaking, thinking and actions on reasoning that we can understand. However, the place where God speaks to us first is in our spirits. Our spirit is the part of us through which we hear the voice of God. It is not through rational processes or deduction that we arrive at what God is saying. We don't arrive at the experiential knowledge of God through philosophy (1 Corinthians 1:21), but through revelation by the Holy Spirit. That does not mean that God is illogical or irrational, but that He transcends natural knowledge and brings us extra knowledge we can't obtain by natural reasoning. By speaking in tongues much and meditating on the Word of God, or waiting silently in the presence of God, and by stepping out in faith, we will learn to hear and obey the voice of the Holy Spirit.

6. We should imitate Paul (1 Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 4:9), who spoke in tongues more than all the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 14:18), and they were a church that were proud of their gifts and especially of speaking in tongues! The majority of God's people with a significant healing ministry like John G. Lake or Smith Wigglesworth testify that speaking in tongues was a very important key to their ministry.

7. Speaking in tongues refreshes our spirits and our minds. Isaiah 28:11-12 speaks of a rest that comes to those who accept the blessing of speaking in tongues. Our minds can rest while we speak in tongues and we can receive power from God through it which affects our physical health positively also. (Romans 8:11).

8. Speaking in tongues helps God get control of our tongues. We must yield our tongues to God when we speak in tongues. This is a good habit to get into, since the tongue is by nature the most unruly member of our bodies, the most dangerous and the hardest to control. (James 3:8). By speaking in tongues much we learn to quiet our minds and quiet our tongues from saying wrong and hurtful things. Instead, we train our tongues to speak things that are positive and life-giving.

It is therefore important for every Christian to speak much in tongues, so as to be of the greatest usefulness to others and to God in the work of the Kingdom of God.

THE PROMISE IS FOR YOU

In Acts 2:39 Peter says "For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself."

We may be far off from the day of Pentecost but the promise is for us if God has called us to Himself.

What is "the promise"? It is the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).

"And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:49). See also Acts 1:4.

This is the promise recorded in Joel 2:28-32 and Acts 2:17-21.

"And it shall be in the last days, God says, that I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all mankind; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams (Acts 2:17).

Before "the last days" the Holy Spirit was only poured out upon specially chosen servants of God, especially prophets, priests and kings. But now, the Bible teaches us, all Christians are royal priests (1 Peter 2:9). The Holy Spirit can be poured out on all mankind (Acts 2:17), so this certainly includes you. The applicable time period for the promise, the last days, is the time between Christ's ascension and second coming. The last days aren't over yet as Acts 2:19, 20 have not yet been fulfilled. Therefore the promise is still fully applicable to all believers today.

How to Receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

We now arrive to the very important question - how to receive the promise of the Father; how to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. The word of God gives us the answers here.

Remember, if you are a Christian, you have the Holy Spirit already (Romans 8:9). The word "receive" is used in the sense of making a guest welcome. The Holy Spirit is holy, and also a gentleman. He will not barge in if you don't want Him to. His power is freely available to those who will trust and obey (Acts 5:32).

It is not essential to have hands laid on you to receive the Holy Spirit, but it is helpful provided the believer who lays hands on you is spirit-filled and of good character. There is a spiritual impartation that comes with the laying on of hands. We see the laying on of hands mentioned in connection with receiving the Holy Spirit in Acts 8:17, Acts 9:12 and Acts 19:6. It's important to realize that we receive the Holy Spirit by faith, and not merely by the laying on of hands.

This is what needs to happen for you to be mightily filled with the Holy Spirit.

REPENTANCE ([necessary for salvation](#). See Acts 17:30; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38)

Examine yourself. Be honest with yourself and God. God demands thorough repentance from ALL KNOWN SIN. Decide to live for God wholeheartedly. Confess and forsake

your sins, trusting Jesus for forgiveness (Prov. 28:13; 1 John 1:9). If you have unforgiveness in your heart towards anyone, you must forgive that person (Mark 11:25)

RENOUNCE EVIL POWER

If you have ever dabbled in false religions or ANY form of the occult (including astrology) you must renounce that evil power now in the name of Jesus. It is from Satan and his demons.

If you are in doubt about some practice or habit then renounce that too (Romans 14:23). God's power and demon power don't mix well!

THIRST AFTER GOD

Jesus explains in John 7:37, 38 "If any man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water'".

The next verse tells us that this refers to the Holy Spirit.

We must have a desire to experience more in God in order to be filled with the Spirit. The more intense our desire is, the more powerfully we will be baptized in the Holy Spirit. We should never give up seeking God. Faith is born out of desire.

ASK IN FAITH

Jesus said, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him" (Luke 11:13).

"Ask and you will receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:24)

We can have faith because we know from God's word the promises such as these. See also Acts 2:17, 38-39. It is obviously God's will to keep his promises.

DRINK

"We have all been made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13). In Hebrew and Greek the word for spirit is the same as the word for breath. When coming to God to be baptized in the Spirit, it is sometimes helpful after prayer to take a few deep breaths in faith, and as it were, to breath in the Holy Spirit. We should come with a thirsty heart to Jesus and drink. (John 7:37- 39).

RECEIVE

We receive the Holy Spirit as a gift, not on the basis of works, but by "hearing with faith" (Galatians 3:5). We don't receive by doing outward things; we must simply believe that we receive.

Mark 11:24 "Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they shall be granted you."

YIELD TO GOD

As the expression of our faith in God's word, we yield control of our tongue to God. This yielding is an ACTIVE thing - WE do the speaking, and the Holy Spirit gives the language.

Paul says "For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful" (1 Corinthians 14:14).

Acts 2:4 says "And they ... began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance (Margin reads "ability to speak out").

You must begin speaking, trusting God to give the language. Do not worry about whether you understand the sounds you make - you will make the sounds according to the language that the Holy Spirit gives you.

Keep speaking in tongues, allowing the Holy Spirit to flood your spirit, soul and body, drenching you in his presence. Keep receiving until you are absolutely full of the Holy Spirit. Begin to praise God in your new language from God, thanking him for what he has done!

Some Common Questions

Are tongues for today?

Yes, today multitudes experience the power and blessing of God as they speak in other tongues (languages given by the Holy Spirit). God has never withdrawn tongues from the church, but they largely died out through unbelief, ignorance and apostasy - the predominating characteristics of the institutional church for hundreds of years. We know tongues, prophecies and knowledge will cease when the perfect comes (i.e. Jesus comes again and the Kingdom of God is fully manifest) but then they will be swallowed up into something far greater. (1 Corinthians 13:82). Even throughout church history men and women have spoken in tongues (e.g. Charles Finney (see his autobiography), the Huguenots and many other groups) but this has been largely ignored or suppressed until the 20th century, where God is restoring more Biblical truth.

Certainly, the New Testament is not outdated. We ought to speak in tongues for the same reasons as the early church did. If you start with the unproven assumption that the supernatural

is not for today, large portions of the Scriptures become irrelevant, describing a God whose ways have fundamentally changed. But all Scripture is profitable (2 Timothy 3:16).

How do I know it's from God?

We know on the basis of God's promise in his Word. God is our Father. If we ask Him for a good thing he will not give us something of no value that will waste our time, or worse yet, a demonic counterfeit.

"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!" (Matthew 7:11). In Luke 11:13 Jesus says in identical fashion that God will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask. It is clear then that our loving Father wants to give us what we ask for, not something evil.

But isn't love the better way?

Of course love is the more excellent way. But love does not replace the gifts, nor the need for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. "Pursue love, **and** eagerly desire the spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy." (1 Corinthians 14:1). God's will is not one or the other - but **both**. If we had to choose between love and the gifts of course we should choose love (1 Corinthians 13:1), for without love we are nothing. But there is nothing to say we must choose one or the other. In fact, all our practicing of the gifts of the Holy Spirit should be done in a loving way, with a motivation of love for all that we do.

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit should cause us to receive and reveal a greater measure of God's love than we would otherwise know. And speaking in tongues is a form of praying in the Holy Spirit which helps us to keep ourselves in the love of God.

Be filled with the Spirit continually.

Ephesians 5:18 tells us, "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled continually with the Spirit." The Greek tense for filled implies the idea of keeping on being filled. It has been stated that it takes just as much consecration to remain filled with the Spirit as it does to get filled with the Spirit or baptized in the Spirit in the first place. Perhaps it takes more.

In any case, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is an introduction to the realm of the Holy Spirit. We must continue to "walk by the Spirit", and so, "not fulfill the lusts of the flesh". It is possible to begin in the Spirit and then later "fall from grace" (Galatians 3:3; 5:4). This happens if we turn back to the law and ignore the leading of the Holy Spirit. Therefore we must not become proud and self-satisfied with the idea that we have been baptized in the Holy Spirit, but we must continually humble ourselves, deny the flesh and be led by the Spirit day by day (Luke 9:23).

The Holy Spirit wants us to [meditate on the Word](#) and on good things (Philippians 4:8). Let us not grieve Him. Let us be obedient to Him. Let us talk to Him and continue in a wonderful relationship with Him. Then the purposes of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit will be achieved in our lives. It would be good to re-read this lesson and meditate more on what the Holy Spirit wants to do in us,

Praise be to God for His wonderful gift!

[Ps. John Iuliano's teaching on the Baptism in the Holy Spirit](#)

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