

How to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit?

Lesson #4
May 15 and 22, 2002

Introduction: In the first week of our *Holy Spirit* seminar, we asked the question, “*Who is the Holy Spirit?*” In summary, we noted:

- The Holy Spirit is God.
- The Holy Spirit is a real Person (a distinct divine person).
- The Holy Spirit is a real Person who lives in real people.
- The Holy Spirit is the “breath of God,” the life-giving presence of our Creator and Lord who lives within our lives.

The following two weeks we asked the question, “*What does the Holy Spirit do?*” We noted “*The Top Ten Things the Holy Spirit Does For Us Today.*”

1. The Holy Spirit makes known to us what Jesus has done for us.
2. The Holy Spirit convicts (convinces) us.
3. The Holy Spirit produces spiritual life in us.
4. The Holy Spirit lives in us, continually giving us spiritual life.
5. The Holy Spirit assures us that we are saved, that we are children of God.
6. The Holy Spirit gives us power over the flesh.
7. The Holy Spirit brings forth the fruits of righteousness in believers’ lives.
8. The Holy Spirit helps us pray.
9. The Holy Spirit counsels us and guides us into truth, the truth of Christ.
10. The Holy Spirit empowers us for service.

We noted: *Trying to serve God without the power of the Holy Spirit is like trying to navigate the Atlantic Ocean in a row boat.*

In our last two sessions we asked and answered the question, “What is the baptism in the Holy Spirit? *The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a spiritual experience, based on the events and teaching of Acts 2:1 – 4, in which the follower of Christ is immersed in (or filled with) the Holy Spirit. This baptism, which is distinct from, and subsequent to, salvation is available to all of Christ’s followers, and is received by faith to those who ask.*

We noted several specific aspects of the baptism in the Holy Spirit!

- The baptism in the Holy Spirit is referred to several ways in Scripture, including “baptized in the Holy Spirit,” “filled with the Holy Spirit,” the “outpouring” of the Holy Spirit, “the gift of the Holy Spirit,” and the “promise.

For some people, promises “*are like pie-crusts, lightly made and easily broken.*”
But not so with God!

- The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a promise to all believers (Joel 2:28, 29; Matthew 3:11; Acts 2:38, 39; Acts 1:4; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:5 – 8).

- The baptism in the Holy Spirit produces additional spiritual power in our lives! (Acts 1:8; 4:31; 7:55; 13:9, 10)

Tonight and next week we ask and answer the question, “*How do we receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit?*”

- I. Believe that you need the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8; Luke 24:49).
- II. Believe that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is God’s promise for you (Ephesians 5:18).
 - A. “Some believers who have had difficulty receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit, are inclined to believe that only a few achieve this remarkable experience. They try ever so hard but every effort seems to end in failure and disappointment. Their minds become battlefields of questions and doubts as they ponder why they cannot receive the Holy Spirit baptism. They do everything they know to do but with no visible results”
(Doyle Jones, *Be Filled With The Spirit*, page 16).
 - B. God never commands anything He doesn’t intend to be accomplished. We can be assured of this: God will do everything in His power to fill us if we want to be filled. Remember, God is on your side!
- III. Be aware of the doubts, questions, and objections that Satan might put in your mind. (This list is adapted from Doyle Jones’ book, *Be Filled With The Spirit*, pages 17 – 26).
 - A. “*I am not sure that being filled with the Spirit is for me. It’s not for everybody, you know.*”
 1. Remember Joel 2:28, 29
 2. Remember Acts 2:39 and 10:34
 - B. “*I know God wants to fill me but for some reason He hasn’t seen fit to fill me yet. When He gets ready, I am sure He will.*”
 1. God is ready now. He has already poured out the Holy Spirit.
 2. God is ready when you are.
 - C. “*I guess I’m just not ready. When I get good enough maybe the Lord will fill me.*”
 1. How good do we have to be to receive God’s gift? (Acts 2:38)
 2. Never tell someone, “There are things you must give up in your life in order to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit.” If a person is ready to go to heaven, that person is ready to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit.
 - D. “*I’ve prayed for the baptism in the Holy Spirit before and nothing happened.*”

1. Some things likely did happen. God was likely using that time to prepare you to receive this wonderful gift. Perhaps you weren't ready before.
 2. Remember this truth: "Persistence overcomes resistance" (Luke 11:5 – 13).
- E. *"Maybe I don't have enough patience to tarry (wait) as I should."*
1. Do we have to tarry? Jesus did ask His disciples to "tarry" (Luke 24:49). That was because God, according to His schedule of events, wanted the Spirit to be poured out on the day of Pentecost. So they needed to wait for that day to come.
 2. Other Scriptural references indicate that individuals were filled with the Spirit without long seasons of waiting (Acts 4:31; 8:17; 9:17; 10:44; 19:6).
 3. Tarrying is not a requirement to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit.
- F. *"I'm afraid that the devil might deceive me and the words I speak will be my words and not God's words."*
1. If your heart is pure before God, God will not let you be tricked into receiving from the devil what you are seeking from God (Luke 11:11 – 13).
 2. When you ask Jesus to baptize you in the Holy Spirit and words of another language come into your mind, trust God and know that you are receiving the real deal!
- G. *"I guess I don't have the faith to receive."*
1. When we say that we are defeated before we even begin.
 2. *"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"* (Hebrews 11:6).
 3. At Cornelius' house, the "Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message" (the Word – Acts 10:44).
 4. Your faith will be strengthened as you rehearse, review, and remind yourself of God's promises.
- H. *"I am distracted when I pray to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit."*
1. That's not surprising. Satan is good at distracting us. That's his job.

Illustration: "Dog barking – junior high school basketball game"

2. Jesus' disciples, when they were trying to pray with Jesus in the garden of Gethsemene, were distracted with tiredness.
3. If you're distracted by other peoples' prayers, then pray in private. Do whatever you need to do to keep your eyes and mind on Jesus Christ, the baptizer.

Illustration: Len Mink on motorcycle; Barbara Gwinn on way home from church; Grandma Sorbo in basement of her house, alone

I. *"I'm not a very emotional person, so I don't think this experience is for me."*

1. Receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a spiritual experience with a physical manifestation (speaking in tongues). You may or may not have a highly emotional response.
2. We don't have to fall down, jump up, laugh, or cry to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Illustration: Jim Lindner

3. Do you think each of the 120 who were baptized in the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was a highly emotional person? Did Peter say, "The promise is unto all of you except the unemotional"?

Illustration: "God will fill us if we'll let Him" (file: Holy Spirit)

J. *"I've been taught against the baptism in the Holy Spirit most of my life."*

1. Is what you were taught before consistent with your present understanding of Scripture?
 - a. If so, continue to search the Scriptures and ask God to reveal His truth to you on this matter.
 - b. If not, then continue to stand on God's word and not others' opinions.
2. When your spiritual hunger grows, Jesus will break through the doctrinal barriers.

K. *"What would my family members think?"*

1. Are we trying to please God or other people?
2. Let's let the Lord take care of our family members. Let's seek the Lord!

IV. Be ready to cooperate with Jesus, the baptizer in the Holy Spirit.
(These suggestions are adapted from Doyle Jones' book, *Be Filled With The Spirit*, pages 27 - 33).

A. Create an atmosphere of praise by worshiping and loving Jesus audibly.

1. Those who were first baptized in the Holy Spirit spent time praising God while waiting for the Spirit to be poured out on them (Luke 24:52, 53).
2. When the first century believers spoke in tongues, other people heard them (Acts 2:6). From the practical standpoint, it is easier to speak in tongues if we are praising the Lord out loud. Just a suggestion – not a command.

B. Expect to be filled with the Spirit and speak in tongues (Luke 11:13).

C. Be willing to stop speaking in English or your native language.

1. One cannot speak two languages at the same time.
2. We have to leave the known to receive the unknown, just like Peter had to leave the boat to walk on the water.

D. Receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit just as you receive any other gift.

1. Reach out to take it.
2. Don't beg for it.
3. Thank the Lord for it.

E. When you hear strange sounds or words forming in your mind, speak them.

1. The pattern of Acts 2:4 is important for us today. "They were all filled. . . and they all began to speak. . ." The same pattern is seen in Acts 19:6.
2. The Holy Spirit will not speak for us or force us to speak. We must speak the words ourselves.
3. "You will never speak if you keep waiting for the Spirit to put you into some kind of trance and do it for you. It will be your mouth, your tongue, your voice, but His words" (Doyle Jones, *Be Filled With the Spirit*, page 29).
4. "The miracle is not in the speaking but in the words that are spoken" (Doyle G. Jones, page 29).

Illustration:

- F. *If your lips and your tongue start to quiver and stammer, know that that is the Holy Spirit trying to get you to speak.*
1. You may not hear the words in your mind, but when you speak they will be in your mouth.
 2. Fear usually prevents us from completely yielding and speaking when we have stammering lips. This is where faith is absolutely essential.
- G. Speak, if only a few syllables are present at first.
1. Those words are very likely words of praise to God so go ahead and speak them.
 2. Fluency will come as you continue to pray in the Spirit. Your vocabulary will grow in this new language.
- H. Speak, even if it doesn't sound like a language to you.
1. Many languages and dialects don't sound like languages to us.
Example: Click language (Al Pettenger's grand father)
 2. Remember that we can speak in languages of "men and angels" (I Corinthians 13:1).
 3. "Being filled with the Spirit is not based on your ability to understand the language" (Doyle G. Jones, page 32).
- I. *Realize that you control the flow of the Spirit through you* (I Corinthians 14:32).
- J. *Continue to pray in the Spirit every day.*
1. We are built up in our faith when we pray in the Spirit.
 - a. I Corinthians 14:4
 - b. Jude 20
 2. Paul, the apostle, testified that he prayed in the Spirit more than others (I Corinthians 14:18).

CONCLUSION: Receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit is totally a spiritual experience, not a mechanical and physical one. Above is a list of suggestions, not commandments. Hopefully, they are aids and not hindrances.

Jesus wants to baptize each of us in the Holy Spirit. Let's open our hearts and be ready and receive this gift and blessing.

Illustration:

Questions to be answered in the near future:

“In view of Pastor Palmer's daughter now attending a religious college different than the Assemblies of God, and the possibility of his future grandchildren 'not being taught about the sign of tongues' as he knows it, will he love them any differently if they do not?”

“What are the gifts of the Spirit? Are they for today?”

“What is slaying in the Spirit? Do you believe in it? Give Bible verses.”

“How does the fruit of the Spirit differ from the gifts of the Spirit?”

“Why do so many believers and churches discount the need for the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives?”

“Is there a difference between our heavenly language God gives us to communicate with Him for our edification and the speaking in tongues with interpretation I hear spoken in the assembly?”

“How am I led by the Spirit?”

“Does speaking in tongues proved that you are saved? Why or why not? Give Bible verses.”