

Develop Your Faith 101

Lesson Five - Baptism In The Holy Spirit

1. INTRODUCTION

After Jesus was raised from the dead, He appeared to His disciples numerous times. For the space of forty days He was with them, teaching them about the kingdom of God (Acts 1:3). Yet, they still needed something from God before they would be ready to go out with the good news of Jesus' resurrection, Jesus said in John 1:33 that they needed to be *"baptized in the Holy spirit."*

Jesus told His disciples to wait for the promise of the Father *"which you heard from Me; for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now"* (Acts 1:4, 5). This *"baptism in the Holy Spirit"* was predicted by John before the beginning of Jesus' ministry. *"He who is coming after me (Jesus) is mightier than I; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire"* Matthew 3:11 also read Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, and John 1:33).

The promised day arrived ten days after Jesus' ascension – on the day of Pentecost. On that day the Holy Spirit was sent from the Father by Jesus and all the disciples were *"filled with the Holy Spirit"* (Acts 2:4). This was the church's entrance in to the supernatural realm, for the infilling of the Holy Spirit manifested itself in a supernatural way. The disciples began to speak with languages (which they had never learned and which they did not understand), as the Holy Spirit gave the utterance, or ability to speak (Acts 2:1-4).

The disciples now had the same Holy Spirit that had indwelt Jesus during His ministry, and so they continued that super- natural ministry which He had begun. Thus, the baptism with the Holy Spirit was not the disciples' introduction to the kingdom of God, for they were already a part of that. It was, rather, their introduction into the supernatural, miracle- working power of God's Spirit. This remains today the factor that sets Spirit-filled believers apart: that is, the supernatural. Jesus intends all of His followers to walk in that supernatural power (John 14:12), and so promised all believers the *"baptism with the Holy Spirit."*

II BORN OF THE SPIRIT vs. BAPTIZED WITH THE SPIRIT

At the new birth, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell inside a believer. The scriptures clearly state that anyone who is born again has the Spirit of God within them (Romans 8:9). He is there to teach, admonish, and to bear witness (John 14:26; John 16:8-11; Romans 8:16). However, when a person is born again, he isn't automatically *"baptized with the Spirit"* (filled with the Spirit). Being *"born of the Spirit"* and *"baptized with the Spirit"* are two distinct manifestations of the Spirit of God. No man can be baptized with the Spirit *until* he has been born of the Spirit.

The distinction between being born again (conversion) and the baptism with the Holy Spirit can be seen in the accounts of this manifestation recorded in the book of Acts. On two occasions, believers were prayed for to receive the baptism (or infilling) with the Holy Spirit, *after* they had been converted.

A. The Samaritan Revival –Read Acts 8:4-24

In this account we see that the gospel was being preached and *believed* in the city of Samaria. Those who believed what Philip was preaching were baptized in water, a sign of a person's entrance into the body of Christ. Jesus had said, "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). Thus, these Samaritans were saved, members of the body of Christ, and "*there was much rejoicing in that city*" (Acts 8:8). And yet, they had not yet received the infilling of the Spirit. "For He (the Spirit) *had not yet fallen on any of them*" (Acts 8:16)

We can see from this passage that the new birth and the baptism in the Holy Spirit are *not* one and the same. The Samaritans were born again (saved) when they "*received the Word of God*" (Acts 8:14). But, this did not automatically give them the infilling of the Holy Spirit; that manifestation came when the apostles laid hands on them.

B. Saul's Conversion – Read Acts 9:1-19

Saul's conversion (new birth) took place on the road to Damascus. This is evidenced by the fact that he addressed the risen Christ as "Lord" (Acts 9:5), and then asked Jesus what He wanted him to do (Acts 22:10) and obeyed Him. Saul (subsequently called Paul) said later that this was his witness of the resurrection (I Corinthians 15:8). The man who was led blind into the city of Damascus was a man who had witnessed and believed in the resurrected Christ and had submitted himself to His Lordship.

But Saul, though converted, was not yet "filled with the Holy Spirit." Ananias came and laid his hands on him so that he might receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17). Again, we see a clear distinction between conversion (new birth) and the infilling (or baptism) in the Holy Spirit.

C. Cornelius' Conversion

There are instances where people are saved and filled with the Holy Spirit at the same time, Cornelius and his household had the Holy Spirit fall upon them as they were listening to Peter preach. No appeal was made to Cornelius to repent or confess; the Spirit fell upon him as he believed what Peter was saying about the Lord Jesus (Acts 10:44)

The new birth and the baptism in the Spirit can sometimes occur simultaneously; however, this does *not* mean that these two works of God are one and the same. If that were the case, the Samaritans (who had received the Word and been baptized in water) would not have needed to *afterward* receive the Spirit. If being born again meant the same thing as being filled with the Spirit, the convert Saul would not have needed Ananias to lay his hand on him to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

D. Distinct Works and Distinct Manifestations

Regeneration by the Spirit and the baptism in the Spirit are two *distinct* works of the Spirit of God. They each result in a manifestation of the presence of God within the believer, but those manifestations are not the same. The difference is well illustrated in two statements made by Jesus and recorded in the gospel of John.

1. A well of water

“But whoever drinks of the that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life” (John 4:14). In this statement Jesus refers to the indwelling of the Spirit which occurs when a man is born again.

Water is often used in the Bible as a symbol of God’s Spirit. The Spirit in a born-again believer is a well of water, bringing eternal life to those who possess it. The well is always there to quench a man’s spiritual thirst for God and to sustain him. *Every* born-again believer has this well of the waters of God’s Spirit within him.

2. Rivers of living waters

“He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living waters’” (John 7:38). In this passage the water again refers to the Holy Spirit. But, now Jesus refers to the water as “rivers,” not just a “well.” This helps us to understand the difference between the presence of God’s Spirit in those who are born again and those who are baptized in the Holy Spirit. In the former the Spirit’s presence is like a well, but in the latter, the Spirit’s presence is like *rivers*, which flow outward to give help and sustenance to others.

E. Old Testament Type of The Baptism in The Holy Spirit

In the Old Testament we see a type (a symbol) of the baptism in the Spirit when Israel crossed the Jordan into the Promised Land. Israel’s passing through the Red Sea symbolized water baptism and our separation from the world (Egypt) (Exodus 14:22). But, before the nation could pass into the Promised Land, they had to cross another impassable, physical barrier, the river Jordan. God parted the waters of Joshua 3:14-17 this river as He did the waters of the sea (Joshua 3:14-17). The crossing of the Jordan by the miraculous power of God symbolizes the baptism in the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer.

That the crossing into the Promised Land does *not* symbolize our going to heaven when we die is seen clearly from the fact that Israel still had enemies to fight and defeat when she crossed the river. We will have no enemies to fight in heaven. While we remain on this earth, however, we do have an adversary (Satan) with whom we have to contend.

F. The Difference = Supernatural Power

The Spirit of God indwells all who have Jesus as their Saviour (Romans 8:9-16). God gives His Spirit to all His children to help and guide them, and to testify within them that they are indeed the children of God. But, it is plain from the scriptures that this indwelling of the Spirit at the new birth is not the same as the baptism, or infilling, of the Spirit.

Those who are born again have the Spirit like water in a well, but those who are baptized in the Spirit have that Spirit like the waters of a river. *The difference is not one of kind, but of volume and power.* The baptism in the Spirit gives to a believer a greater manifestation of the presence of God and endues him with the supernatural power of God. *“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you”* (Acts 1:8).

Being baptized in the Spirit is not a requirement for salvation or going to heaven. On the contrary, it is *offered* to those who *believe* (Acts 2:38), that is to those who are already born again. It is, however, a requirement for operating in God’s supernatural power.

III. RECEIVING THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Receiving the infilling or baptism in the Holy Spirit is not a complicated process, in fact, it is not a process at all. It is as simple as getting born again and receiving the Eternal Life of God. The *gift of the Holy Spirit* was poured out on the day of Pentecost and is available today to whomever will ask for it and receive by 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).

A. Only One Requirement

There is only one preliminary requirement which a person must fulfill before he can be a candidate for the baptism in the Spirit: He must be born again, a believer in the Lord Jesus. The infilling of the Spirit is not offered to sinners and those outside of God’s kingdom. To sinners, God offers forgiveness and salvation, the way to be born again. The infilling of God’s Spirit is reserved for those who know Jesus as their Saviour.

This is the **ONLY** prerequisite for receiving this blessing. Some Christians mistakenly believe that we must prove to God that we are holy or worthy enough to receive; God is thought to somehow look to see whether or not we deserve this blessing before He will bestow it. But, the bible calls the infilling of the Spirit a *gift*, bestowed by the Father (Acts 1:4; 2:38). As with all gifts which God gives, this one is given on the basis of God’s grace, and not on the basis of our goodness or worthiness.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is not reserved for those Christians who are holy or mature enough to receive. Cornelius didn’t have to wait until he was “mature” in the Lord before he received (Acts 10:44). The Samaritans didn’t have to wait for years to receive; there was an urgency about them receiving which brought the apostles down from Jerusalem (Acts 8:14-16). This blessing from God has been made available to *every* Christian on the basis of the fact that they are born again.

B. A Free Gift

The baptism is just as much a free gift as is salvation and cannot in any way be earned. As with any gift which God bestows, this one must be received by faith. This means that God will give it when a person asks Him and will not wait until that person is Holy enough or has “tarried” long enough to receive it.

Some mistakenly believe that one must “tarry” for the infilling of the Holy Spirit before one can receive. They base this belief on Jesus’ command to the apostles to “*tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high*” (Luke 24:49 KJV)

1. Tarrying in Jerusalem

Jesus told those disciples to “tarry” in Jerusalem to receive the Holy Spirit when He was sent. Up to that time, the Holy Spirit had not yet been given in fullness because Jesus had not ascended and sat at God’s right hand. After the day of Pentecost, tarrying was no longer necessary, as subsequent accounts of the infilling of the Spirit bear out.

2. Tarrying no longer necessary

That this was a specific command, meant only for the disciples, is seen in the fact that Cornelius and his household did not in any way “tarry” for the Spirit; they received while they were listening to the message. The disciples in Ephesus received when Paul laid his hands on them, and there was no “tarrying” recorded there. The same is true of the Samaritan believers; they received when the apostles laid their hands on them.

C. The Bible Evidence of The Baptism in The Holy Spirit

When a person is baptized in the Holy Spirit, there is a supernatural manifestation or evidence of that inward filling. That manifestation is called “speaking with other tongues (or languages).” Speaking with other tongues is simply speaking in a language which one has never learned and does not understand with his mind. Throughout the book of Acts we find evidence that this sign accompanied the infilling of the Spirit.

1. The Day of Pentecost

On the day of Pentecost, the disciples were baptized in the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus had said they would be (Acts 1:5). When this event took place, they began to speak in other tongues. The languages they were speaking were not intelligible to them, but they were intelligible to the many foreigners which were in the city of Jerusalem at that time (Acts 2:5-7).

This was, of course, a supernatural occurrence, signifying a miraculous work which had taken place within the believers who were gathered in the upper room. “*And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance*” (Acts 2:4).

2. Cornelius' Household

We have previously mentioned how that Cornelius was born again and baptized in the Spirit at the same time. The Holy Spirit “fell on them” as they were listening to Peter preach (Acts 10:44), and they were filled with the Spirit. Peter and his companions knew that these Gentiles had received the Spirit because they heard them speaking in other tongues, “*And all the circumcised believers with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Gentiles also. For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God*” (Acts 10:45, 46).

The Jewish brethren with Peter were truly amazed that Gentiles should receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:45), but they were convinced beyond any shadow of doubt that it was so because they saw the *evidence* of that infilling; the Gentiles were speaking in other tongues.

3. The Ephesian disciples

In his missionary travels Paul came across some disciples in Ephesus who had been taught incorrectly, they were not aware of the existence of the Holy Spirit. After Paul had straightened out their beliefs, he laid his hands on them for them to receive the infilling of the Spirit (Acts 19:1-5). “*And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying*” (Acts 19:6).

Once again we see that the supernatural evidence of the Holy Spirit's infilling was speaking in other tongues, and in this case, prophesying as well.

4. Instances when tongues are implied

In the book of Acts, there are five recorded instances of people receiving the infilling of the Spirit (Acts 2:1-6; 8:14-17; 9:17; 10:44; 19:5-17). In the three that we have discussed, the evidence of speaking in other tongues is stated. In the remaining two, although speaking in tongues is not explicitly mentioned, study of the scriptures will show that it is certainly implied.

a. The Samaritans

The Samaritans received the infilling of the Spirit by the laying on of the apostles' hands. “*Then they (the apostles) began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 8:17). The outward effect that receiving the Spirit had upon those believers was profound enough to catch Simon's attention (Acts 8:18, 19). This outward manifestation had to be more than just joy or exuberance, for these were already present before the apostles arrived (Acts 8:8). What Simon *saw* was so supernatural that it made him covet the authority to lay on hands as the apostles had done.

There is little doubt that the supernatural evidence which Simon witnessed was the same as the foreigners in Jerusalem had witnessed on the day of Pentecost. It was the same evidence that the Jews in Cornelius' house had witnessed. The Samaritans were speaking in other tongues.

b. Paul

Paul was converted on the road to Damascus, when Jesus appeared to Him (Acts 9:5, 6). But, he did not receive the infilling of the Holy Spirit until Ananias came and laid his hands on him (Acts 9:17). Although the scripture does not state here that Paul began to speak in tongues, Paul later told the Corinthian church that he did speak in tongues, more than them all (I Corinthians 14:18). Speaking in tongues was obviously a part of his Christian walk.

Since we have seen from the other four examples that speaking in tongues began when the believers received, there is no reason not to believe that Paul began speaking in tongues when he received.

D. Tongues – A Supernatural River

We can see from the above mentioned scriptures that the Bible evidence of the infilling of the Holy Spirit is speaking with other tongues (i.e. in other languages which are unknown to the speaker). This is an initial sign of the believer's having been baptized in the Spirit.

Again, this is not to say that tongues is an evidence of *salvation*; the Bible does not teach that. When a person is born again and receives the Spirit like a well of water within, the sign is the inner witness of the Spirit and an outward change reflecting what the new birth has wrought within. But, when a person is baptized in the Holy Spirit and receives the Spirit like rivers of living water, then the initial sign of those out flowing, supernatural rivers is speaking in other tongues.

Speaking in tongues goes far beyond just initial evidence. The scriptures show that this supernatural manifestation became a part of the corporate life of the church (I Corinthians 12:7,10), as well as giving great blessing in believers' personal lives (I Corinthians 14:4). The apostles spoke in tongues on the day of Pentecost as an initial sign of receiving the Holy Spirit, but this does not mean that that was the *only* time this phenomenon occurred in their lives. Paul indicated to the Corinthians that he frequently prayed in tongues (I Corinthians 14:18); he said this *after* he had received the infilling of God's Spirit. There are several benefits to praying (speaking) in tongues which we can see from the scriptures.

1. Edification

"One who speaks in tongue edifies himself" (I Corinthians 14:4). The word "edify" means "to buildup." When a person prays in tongues, he is building himself up on the inside: his spirit is being strengthened. *"But you beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit"* (Jude 20). Praying in the Holy Spirit is the same thing as praying in tongues. Those who pray in tongues build themselves up, because their spirits are praying directly to God. *"For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries"* (I Corinthians 14:2). This is a divine, supernatural means by which our spirits can come into direct communication with God.

2. Help in intercession

By praying in tongues, we allow the Holy Spirit to pray through us prayers which are in accordance with the perfect will of God. *“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered”*(Romans 8:26KJV). These “groanings which cannot be uttered” include prayer in other tongues. *“For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit by the Holy Spirit within me prays, but my mind is unproductive”* (I Corinthians 14:14 Amplified).

3. Praying for the unknown

There are times when we simply run out of words to say in prayer, or perhaps times when we don’t even know where to begin to pray with our minds. In these cases the Holy Spirit is there to help us to pray (not to pray *for* us, but help *to* us). Praying in tongues enables us to pray in cases where we do not have complete understanding.

4. Means of worship

Speaking in tongues is also a way of giving thanks and praise unto God. In referring to a man who speaks in tongues during an assembly meeting, Paul says, *“For you are giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified”* (I Corinthians 14:17). The man who speaks in tongues gives thanks well; he himself is praising God, even though that particular giving of thanks does not edify the others around him, because they do not understand it.

5. Public vs. private use

All the benefits listed above (and there are certainly more than the ones listed) are the results of the *private* use of praying in other tongues. There is also a *public* use for speaking in tongues, and this is what the apostle Paul addresses in the fourteenth chapter of I Corinthians.

Many confuse Paul’s statement, “Do all speak in tongues?” (where the answer to this rhetorical question is “No!”), to mean that not all are to use their prayer language (tongues). But, Paul is simply making a statement about the abuse of the public practice of speaking in tongues. If four or five men stand up in the middle of a service and simultaneously address the congregation in other tongues, then nobody in the congregation will be edified.

“I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all; however, in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind, that I may instruct others also” (I Corinthians 14:18, 19). Here Paul makes it plain that he speaks in tongues privately, but when he is addressing the assembly, he would rather speak in a known language so that all can understand and be edified.

The private use of praying in tongues always edifies and helps the Person who does it. But when addressing an assembly, one should not speak in tongues unless there is one to

interpret, so that all may be edified. So we see that God's purpose is that we be edified – whether *individually* through the private use of tongues, or corporately through the public use of tongues and interpretation.

IV. THE DOORWAY TO THE SUPERNATURAL

Jesus' intention for His followers was that they should continue the ministry of preaching, teaching, healing, and deliverance that He had begun. He told His disciples that they would do the same works that He was doing and even greater works, because He was going to the Father (John 14:12). When He went to the Father, He sent the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33) to empower the Church to do those works.

Jesus told the disciples not to leave Jerusalem (to try to continue the earthly ministry He had started) before the Holy Spirit had come upon them (Acts 1:4). After they were baptized in the Holy Spirit, then they were witnesses "*in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth*" (Acts 1:8). And wherever any of them shared the good news, the supernatural power of God was in manifestation (Acts 3:6,7; 5:12,15,16; 6:8; 8:7; 9:34,40; 14:9,10; 19:11,12).

A. The Initial Evidence Is Supernatural

As we have already seen, the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is speaking with other tongues; this is not a natural occurrence, but a supernatural one. Thus, it is fitting that this supernatural infilling of God's Spirit, to empower believers with supernatural power, should be accompanied by supernatural evidence. However, speaking in other tongues is only the beginning of a Spirit-filled believer's walk in the supernatural.

B. The Gifts of The Spirit

The gifts of the Spirit listed in I Corinthians 12 are all *supernatural*. They are not natural abilities, such as speaking ability or musical ability; these kinds of talents can be found in all men, even the unsaved. The gifts of the Spirit are the supernatural workings of God's Spirit through men. The baptism in the Holy Spirit will usher a believer into the working of these gifts.

C. The Supernatural Church

One of the striking characteristics of the early church was the fact that they moved in the realm of the miraculous. The miracle working power of God was not uncommon to the believers in that church. To them it was a matter of course that they should continue the ministry which Jesus had begun, and that they should *conduct* it in the same manner as Jesus had conducted His earthly ministry (Matthew 4:23; Acts 5:14-16).

Jesus told them, “*You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you*” (Acts 1:8). The kind of power Jesus was referring to was demonstrated in the apostles’ ministry, as they went about preaching the word with signs and wonders following. But, God desires every believer to be endued with this same power. God wants all His children to be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

V. SUMMARY – THE SUPERNATURAL RIVER IN THE BELIEVER

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is for every born-again child of God. Every believer has the Spirit within like a well of water, but God wants every believer to also have the Spirit flowing out in power like rivers of water. The river of living water flowing from within is the result of a person being baptized in the Holy Spirit.

When the Holy Spirit is flowing out like a supernatural river, the supernatural things begin to take place. Thus, when the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, they began to speak in foreign languages which they had never learned. This was a supernatural occurrence. They then went out and began to perform the works of Jesus, and even greater works, because they had a supernatural river flowing from within.