



Who's Afraid of the Holy Spirit? – Part 13
Various Scriptures
GCSP – 05/08/2010

We are coming to the end of our study on the Holy Spirit. And while it is obviously a topic that could continue through the rest of this year and still not be exhausted, there also comes a point in time where we can become exhausted. I know this study has been somewhat scattered, as I warned you about from the beginning, and I know there are many aspects of the Holy Spirit that are still left hanging to some extent, but they will have to wait for another time as the Spirit leads.

There is one aspect of the Holy Spirit that we do need to cover though before we move on to other topics of study, and that is the baptism with the Holy Spirit. This will most likely take several weeks to deal with as thoroughly as needed because of all of the confusion and all of the less than biblical teachings that are out there. So I ask you to bear with me, keep your hearts and minds open, and try to see with me what the Scripture says and not just what someone has taught you or told you through the years.

As you have many times already in this study, turn with me in your Bibles to the Book of **Acts**.

Acts 1:4-5; 8; 2:1-4

Let's pray.

We have already seen in these passages and a few others that we looked at during this series that the baptism with the Holy Spirit and being filled with the Holy Spirit, or having the Holy Spirit fall upon you, or having the Holy Spirit poured out on you, or having the promise of the Father on you, are one and the same. We also see in Scripture that being filled with the Spirit (**Ephesians 5:18-20**) and having God's Word dwell richly in you (**Colossians 3:16-17**) are one and the same.

But be careful with that last statement because having God's Word dwell richly in you means infinitely more than just having a good working knowledge of Scripture. Just because you may read your Bible every day it does not necessarily mean you are Spirit-filled. Just because you can find Habakkuk and Amos and Zephaniah without problem does not mean you are Spirit-filled. And even just because you can quote untold verses from your Bible does not mean you are Spirit-filled. Having God's Word dwell richly in you means your thoughts, your words, and your actions are in accordance with God's Word; you are empowered to do everything that the Scripture says and you walk in that power through faith with no reservations.

There are a few other things in these verses in Acts and several other passages we will go to that teach us some principles about being baptized with the Holy Spirit. So tonight I am going to begin to cover five points.

1. What is the baptism with the Holy Spirit?
2. What are the results of baptism with the Holy Spirit?
3. Who needs to be baptized with the Holy Spirit?
4. Who can be baptized with the Holy Spirit?

5. How do you obtain the baptism with the Holy Spirit?

What is the Baptism with the Holy Spirit?

We have somewhat discussed this already but there are some additional principles we need to ponder; the first of which is that the record in Scripture seems to strongly point to the fact that this is a definite experience of which you may know if you have received it or not.

When Jesus told the 120 disciples “...**you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now**” it is very obvious that the experience would be such that they would not mistake that it had happened; otherwise how would they know when to stop waiting and when to begin the ministry of being His witnesses?

Turn with me in your Bibles to **chapter 19** in the Book of **Acts**.

Acts 19:1-7

The end of **verse 2** can also be translated, “**No, we have not even heard whether the Holy Spirit has been given**”, meaning they knew of the promise of the Holy Spirit but had not experienced Him or received that promise as of yet. Paul assures them that the promise has indeed come, baptizes them in water in the name of Jesus, laid hands on them, and the Holy Spirit came upon them.

Don't get wrapped up in the tongues and prophesying just yet, we will deal with that in due time. Right now just focus on the fact that the baptism with the Holy Spirit is a definite experience that is recognizable by the person receiving it.

Secondly, the baptism with the Holy Spirit is a separate event or experience than receiving the Holy Spirit at the time of your salvation or conversion.

Although the general meaning of the word disciple is simply one who follows the teachings of someone, it is evident in this passage the twelve men Paul encounters in Ephesus were already believers; and **Romans 8:9b** tells us, “**But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.**”

And since **Romans 10:9** tells us “...**that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved**” we have to rightly conclude that at the very point of salvation you have the Spirit of Christ (another term simply meaning the Holy Spirit) and thus belong to Jesus.

So it is one thing to be born again and thus receive the Holy Spirit, but it is another thing entirely to be baptized with or filled with the Holy Spirit. I will even go so far as to say that you can be saved and go to heaven when you die without ever experiencing the baptism with or filling of the Holy Spirit in your life; but that is not always the case and I believe it is not God's design for any of us.

Turn with me in your Bibles to **chapter 10** in the Book of **Acts**.

Acts 10:43-46

In this specific case we see the baptism with the Holy Spirit happening simultaneously with receiving the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation. Speaking in tongues and exalting God is present in this instance, but again, do not focus on that just yet.

Turn with me in your Bibles to **chapter 8** in the Book of **Acts**.

Acts 8:14-17

Here we have the same story we saw with Paul in **chapter 19**; the Samaritans had believed and were baptized in water but had not had the Holy Spirit fall on them, or baptize them, until Peter and John prayed for them and laid hands on them. Nothing is said about tongues, prophesying, exalting God or anything else in this instance although it is evident and obvious that they were baptized with the Holy Spirit.

The point in all of this is that it is every Christian's birthright, or new birthright, because of the crucified, risen, and ascended Savior, to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. There is nothing in Scripture that separates one Christian from another in the sense that this one can be baptized with the Holy Spirit and this one cannot; each one of us has this birthright or privilege. The problem is not the availability then but the fact that many simply choose to not claim this birthright for themselves. So while it indeed belongs to them, for one reason or another they have not experienced it as of yet.

There could be many reasons for this, but one common one we are seeing in the Book of Acts thus far is simply not being taught properly. Another is resisting the Holy Spirit's control in your life, and still another is the failure to be obedient to the principles and commands of Scripture.

So what are the consequences of not being baptized with the Holy Spirit?

Turn with me in your Bibles to the Book of **1 Corinthians**.

1 Corinthians 12:4-13

Apart from being baptized with the Holy Spirit you will not manifest the gifts of the Holy Spirit in your life. They are, after all, the gifts of the Holy Spirit not something that is able to be manifest in your life by your own power or by your own choosing. What did Jesus say to the disciples in **Acts 1:8**? - "...**but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you...**" The power of the Holy Spirit or the gifts of the Holy Spirit are not available aside from the baptism with or the filling of the Holy Spirit.

So the consequences of not being filled with the Holy Spirit is that the church will be running on all cylinders; the heavy lifting and the ministry of the church will be accomplished with only a fraction of the power that is available to it because there will only be a handful of people operating in the power of the Holy Spirit while the vast majority will be operating in their own power and abilities.

So there is an obvious experience that will make it evident that you have been baptized with the Holy Spirit, and we can see now that operating in the gifts of the Holy Spirit qualifies, and it is separate from receiving the Holy Spirit at the point of salvation.

Thirdly, the baptism with the Holy Spirit is always connected with the purpose of testimony and service.

Acts 1:8 again; "...**and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.**"

There is not a single passage in the Bible, when the baptism with the Holy Spirit is spoken of or implied, where it is not connected with testimony or service. So while the Holy Spirit has many functions in our lives, teaching us to understand the Scriptures, purifying our lives to make us holy, convicting us of sin, bringing Scripture to mind and words to speak in a given situation, etc, the primary purpose of the baptism with the Holy Spirit is for giving testimony of Jesus Christ and for service within the body of Christ. It is to make us useful for God toward the salvation of souls and for the functioning and edification of the church.

So if your focus is always inward, meaning you truly do not have the desire to witness to unbelievers nor do you have the desire to serve others within the body of Christ, you can then be sure that you have not experienced the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

What Are the Results of the Baptism with the Holy Spirit?

You could really sum up the results of being baptized with the Holy Spirit in one word: Power. Power for every minute aspect of what the Lord wants to accomplish through you; power to witness without fear; power to overcome sin; power to defeat Satan and his demons at every turn; power to live a life that is pleasing to God the Father; power to be obedient to every facet of God's Word, and so much more.

But here is something we must be oh so cautious about: This power is going to look different in each and every one of God's people because each and every one of us has a unique combination of the gifts of the Spirit to enable us to accomplish the unique plans and purposes God has for each of us.

While you are still in **1 Corinthians**, let's look again at how it is worded:

v. 4 - "Now there are varieties of gifts..."

v. 5 - "And there are varieties of ministries..."

v. 6 - "There are varieties of effects..."

v. 7 - "But to each one is given...for the common good"

v. 8-10 - "For to one is given...and to another...to another...and to another...and to another...and to another...and to another...and to another..."

v. 11 - "But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills."

If we all had every gift at all times we would not need each other; there would be no edification because you wouldn't be able to edify me with the gifts you have because I would already have them too, and vice versa.

This is where most in my opinion go astray with their thinking and their understanding of the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Either from your personal experience or seeing the unique manifestation of the Holy Spirit in someone else's life, the leap is made to choose to believe that everyone else has to experience these same things or their baptism isn't genuine. And beloved, that is not what Scripture teaches.

Many still today, because Acts 2, 10, and 19 show manifestations of speaking in tongues as evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit, believe that this is the only way that you can have evidence of baptism of the Holy Spirit. But Paul doesn't say to everyone is given various kinds of tongues but instead shows us that the Holy Spirit chooses who gets what

gifts at what time and in what place. As a matter of fact Paul then makes it clear as day in **verses 28-30**.

1 Corinthians 12:28-30

How clear does Scripture need to be? Why some well-meaning and committed Christians try to explain these verses away and thus twist what Scripture is saying is beyond me.

R.A. Torrey said, "...I saw that the teaching that speaking with tongues was the inevitable and invariable result of being baptized with the Holy Spirit, and that anyone who had not spoken with tongues had not been baptized with the Holy Spirit, was utterly unscriptural and anti-scriptural."

If we desire to believe that one specific gift of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues is the only way to show evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit, then why not the other gifts as well? You say the other gifts are not shown to us in the Book of Acts. Ah, but prophesying shows up on at least three occasions when the Holy Spirit baptized certain believers, yet no one appears to be adamant that you have to prophesy to show evidence of your Spirit baptism.

And outside of the gifts of the Holy Spirit we see the noise of a violent rushing wind accompany the baptism of the Spirit; why doesn't that happen every time? We see tongues as of fire distributing themselves and resting on each one who was baptized with the Holy Spirit; why isn't that required by those who say tongues is? On another occasion there was an earthquake when they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. I think we'd be in trouble if that was a requirement. And several other occasions we see absolutely nothing other than the Bible telling us the Holy Spirit fell upon them; to which some will say, just because it isn't recorded doesn't mean it didn't happen. Well, I think God is smart enough to include it in every example and have Paul write differently if tongues were required every time.

But, you may ask, even if what you say is true, and granted not every instance in the Book of **Acts** shows the evidence of tongues accompanying the baptism with the Holy Spirit, why is it included in so many accounts in the Book of **Acts**? I can't answer that definitively but I can give you one possible answer: The Holy Spirit needed to show the Jews that the gift of salvation and thus the gift of the Holy Spirit was for all people groups not just them. We see Gentiles and Samaritans receiving the same gift because many Jews were slow to recognize this and slow to accept this. And again, I cannot prove that this is the definitive answer in the Book of **Acts** but I can definitively point to what we read in **1 Corinthians 12**.

The danger of making this mistake is not only do we create different classes of Christians but we transfer this same thinking to other gifts of the Holy Spirit as well. We can look back at history and read the accounts of John Wesley, Charles Finney, and D.L. Moody, who all record in their testimonies obtaining the gift of an evangelist when they were baptized with the Holy Spirit, and suddenly believe that every one of us should obtain the gift of an evangelist.

But the gift of an evangelist along with the gift of tongues, and any other spiritual gift for that matter, is distributed by the Holy Spirit as He wills not as we will. And if the Holy Spirit has not given you that gift He most definitely has not empowered you to use that gift. And without the power of the Holy Spirit you will be disappointed and even disillusioned and in a state of despair when you invariably fail in your attempts to use that gift. You will then be

ripe for the attacks of Satan to fill your mind with doubts and fears about anything to do with God.

Beloved, none of us can dictate to the Holy Spirit which gift we need to prove we have been baptized with the Holy Spirit. To do so is to take sovereignty out of the Holy Spirit's hands and put it in yours instead. He decides and Him alone! We can no more choose the gift of tongues as we can choose the gift of healing. We can pray for them and desire them and maybe even see the Holy Spirit give them to us at certain times, but we cannot choose or command them into our lives.

Seek the baptism with the Holy Spirit and then leave it in His hands to endow you with the gift or gifts He chooses to empower you to do the ministry and service that He has chosen for you. He will call you and He will qualify you and He will impart to you every gift you will need to fulfill that calling; and the gift of tongues may or may not be part of that unique mixture He has in store for you.

Having spent the last several moments cautioning you on how you view any particular gift or gifts and how they connect with the baptism with the Holy Spirit, let me restate the most important aspect of this: The evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit is power; power to give testimony and power to do service that otherwise would not be evident in your life apart from the Holy Spirit.

I can't teach God's truth apart from the power of the Holy Spirit. You can't effectively witness for Jesus Christ apart from the power of the Holy Spirit. None of us can genuinely love one another apart from the power of the Holy Spirit; and I mean loving one another the way the Bible tells us to and not just the select few you enjoy hanging out with. No one can prophesy apart from the power of the Holy Spirit, no one can heal apart from the power of the Holy Spirit; no one can have a word of wisdom or a word of knowledge, or any other gift apart from the power of the Holy Spirit.

The power to do anything regarding being a witness or being a genuine, active, effective servant of Jesus Christ that brings edification to the body is the evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit, not tongues or any other specific gift.

And beloved do not get me wrong, I am not forbidding the gift of tongues or in any way teaching that tongues is not a valid gift of the Holy Spirit for today; you just cannot Scripturally prove that it is the holy grail of gifts that is required to receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

So what is the baptism with the Holy Spirit? It is yielding your life to His will for you and surrendering yourself or emptying yourself in order to be filled with Him. And what are the results of being baptized with the Holy Spirit? Power; power to fulfill His calling on your life by endowing you with the spiritual gifts He chooses.

So who needs this baptism and who can have it? Be here next week and we will again look to the Word of God to find out.

Let's pray.