

MANIFESTATIONS OF THE SPIRIT

THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

THE HOLY SPIRIT

When they read the Bible, many people are surprised to find that the Holy Spirit was present at the very dawn of time: *The Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters* (Genesis 1:2), and many are amazed to find out there are approximately 100 references to the Holy Spirit throughout the Old and New Testaments.

When a person comes to Jesus Christ, he receives Christ into his heart. The Spirit of God comes and joins with the spirit of the believer. This “indwelling Spirit” reproduces the life of Jesus in the believer’s life.

WHAT, THEN, IS THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is an empowering for service that takes place in the life of the Christian (see Acts 1:5, 8). In it we are immersed in the Spirit’s life and power.

To illustrate, if we drank water from a glass, then the water would be inside us. However, if we went to the beach and stepped into the ocean, then we would be in the water. We receive, as it were, a drink of the Holy Spirit when we are saved, but when we are baptized in the Spirit, it is as if that initial drink becomes an ocean that completely surrounds us.

When people are saved, they receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which reproduces the life of Jesus. When they receive the outpouring or baptism of the Holy Spirit, this reproduces the ministry of Jesus, including miracles and healings.

WHY DO WE NEED THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT?

We need a power beyond ourselves for service and ministry in Christ’s kingdom.

When Jesus gave the Great Commission (see

Matthew 28:19-20), He knew that His disciples could not fulfill it in their own power. Therefore, He has a special gift in store for them. It was His plan to give them the same power that He had—the power of the Spirit of God. So immediately after giving them the Great Commission, Jesus commanded His disciples not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father promised, *“Which,” He said, “you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now”* (Acts 1:4-5). He further promised: *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth”* (Acts 1:8).

The disciples waited in Jerusalem as Jesus had commanded, and one day when they were all together, *suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance* (Acts 2:2-4). Then Peter explained to the crowd that gathered that they were seeing the working of God’s Spirit and told them about Jesus. The Christian church began with the disciples and the 3,000 people who joined them as a result of that day’s events.

We can undertake making disciples of all nations with some degree of success without the baptism in the Holy Spirit, but when we do, we are undertaking a supernatural task with limited power. It is God’s will—it is His commandment—that we be baptized, or filled, with the Holy Spirit: *Be filled with the Spirit* (Ephesians 5:18).

WHAT SHOULD I DO BEFORE ASKING?

This beautiful experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a free gift, but you must be willing to receive it. Jesus will respond to a totally yielded vessel. He never

asks anything of you that you are incapable of giving, nor does He ever fail to give you something greater in return when you do give your all. The joy He gives through total obedience to Him far outweighs anything you could possibly give up.

There is one more important consideration. In Acts 8, a man named Simon, who was deeply involved in the occult, wanted to buy the gift of the Holy Spirit. Peter sharply rebuked Simon, commanding him to repent. Therefore, if you ever at any time had anything to do with the occult, you must renounce and turn away from all such participation, and you must ask for God's forgiveness and cleansing.

HOW DO I RECEIVE THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT?

First, once you have accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, you just have to ask God to baptize you in the Holy Spirit. The Bible says, *Ask, and it will be given to you* (Luke 11:9).

Second, believe you have in fact received the gift from God. The Apostle Paul, writing to the Galatians, said, *Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?* (Galatians 3:2). The answer, obviously, is faith. You have to believe that if you ask, you will receive.

Pray this prayer if you sincerely desire to receive the baptism in God's Holy Spirit:

Heavenly Father, at this moment I come to You. I thank You that Jesus saved me. I pray that the Holy Spirit might come upon me. Lord Jesus, baptize me now in the Holy Spirit. I receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit right now by faith in Your Word. May the anointing, the glory, and the power of God come upon and into my life right now. May I be empowered for service from this day forward. Thank You, Father, that You have heard my prayer. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for baptizing me in Your Holy Spirit. Amen.

Now, having asked and received, begin to practice the power of the Spirit. An ideal place to begin is where the first apostles did, praising God in a new language. To do this, begin praising God out loud in whatever words come to you. Now let Him give you new words of praise you never heard before. You'll find that this can be a very rewarding experience of communication with God that will help build up your faith. Continue to pray to God each day in the language that the Holy Spirit has given to you.

But this "prayer language" is just one of the gifts that God wants to give you through the baptism in His Spirit.

THE GIFTS AND FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Apostle Paul told the Corinthians that the Holy Spirit would manifest Himself among them in special gifts, of which speaking in tongues was only one: *Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware. ... For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues* (1 Corinthians 12:1, 8-10).

So, in asking for the baptism in the Holy Spirit, you are availing yourself of these gifts for advancing God's kingdom and allowing the Holy Spirit to further cultivate in your life the fruit of righteousness—two great helps in living a life God can use mightily for His glory.

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

By now you can see that the Holy Spirit can be with you and in you to bring new life to your Christian walk. Likewise, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is more than a single experience. It is a continual dependence on the Spirit for guidance and strength in all circumstances. *If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit* (Galatians 5:25).

The baptism in the Holy Spirit cannot be earned. You cannot become "good enough" to receive it. It is a gift from God. The same wonderful power that enables Jesus to open blind eyes, to command the elements of nature, and to live a life pleasing to the Father during His ministry on earth is also available to you. Ask, and it shall be given to you.

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