

Th123 A Study of the Holy Spirit

Th123-17 Why Must Every Christian Be Baptized in the Holy Spirit?

A wise leader not only tells people what they must do; he explains to them why their task is important. He also tells them how what they do fits into the big picture of things. This is what Jesus did. When He commanded His disciples to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, He explained to them the big picture and told them exactly why they needed the experience. He told them, “In a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” Then He explained, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:5, 8).

In this lesson, we will look at the big picture. You need to be able to answer the questions, “Why did Jesus command His disciples to be baptized in the Holy Spirit?” and “Why is it so important for every Christian to receive this experience today?” In answering these questions, we will first restate the primary reason we must all be filled with the Spirit. We will then look at four other important reasons we must all be filled with the Spirit. You will understand how each of these reasons relates to the primary reason.

As you have already learned, the primary reason every follower of Jesus must be baptized in the Holy Spirit is so that they may be empowered as Christ’s witnesses to the lost (Acts 1:8). The Master has ordered each of us to “Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full” (Luke 14:23). He further commands us to “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation” (Mark 16:15). We can do this only through the Spirit’s power. It is important, however, to understand that our witness to the world involves more than just our words. It involves every aspect of our lives. With this in mind, let’s look at four other reasons every Christ follower must be empowered by the Holy Spirit, and how each of those reasons relates to our witness to a lost world.

The second reason every Christian must be baptized in the Holy Spirit is because in the Spirit we find power to live Christ-honoring lives. We discussed this in Lesson 14. However, it bears repeating here. With the baptism in the Holy Spirit comes greater power to live in true holiness and selfless concern for others. Our holy God commands us to be holy because we represent Him to a sinful world. On our own, we could never do this. However, the Spirit’s empowering enables us to overcome temptation and live in honor before God and man. God promises, “I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws” (Ezek 36:27).

Another reason every believer needs to be filled with the Spirit is because, in the words of Paul, “We do not know how to pray as we should.” Our best efforts at prayer are woefully inadequate. However, Paul says that “the Spirit helps our weakness.” He does this by filling us and praying through us “with groans that words cannot express.” Such prayer includes Spirit-inspired prayer in tongues. What’s more, “the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will” (Rom 8:26-27). Paul called this kind of prayer “praying in the Spirit” (1Cor 14:15). Such Spirit-empowered prayer is an essential element of effective witness. Someone has rightly said that the army of God is never so strong as when it marches on its knees. And prayer is never

so powerful as when it is energized by the Holy Spirit.

A fourth reason every Christian must be baptized in the Holy Spirit is because, with the Spirit's infilling, comes a deeper and more active love for God. Paul wrote that "God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us" (Rom 5: 5). He also wrote that "the fruit of the Spirit is love" (Gal 5:22). Thus, when you are filled with the Spirit, and learn to walk daily with the Spirit, you come to know Christ more intimately and love Him more deeply.

The night before Jesus' crucifixion, He met with His disciples in an upper room. There, He told them, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you" (John 14:18). Jesus was promising to send the Holy Spirit whom, He said, would come to take His place. On that same evening, Jesus told His disciples to "remain in my love" (John 15:9). The context of this statement shows that we remain in Christ's love by living in relationship with the Holy Spirit. As we thus live in the Spirit, we experience a deeper relationship with Christ.

Further, the Holy Spirit will create in our hearts a deeper love for those for whom Christ died. Jesus described God's love like this: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son" to die for the sins of all (John 3:16). If you will allow Him, the Holy Spirit will create that same love for the lost in your heart too.

A fifth and final reason every follower of Jesus must be baptized in the Holy is because with Spirit baptism comes power to do the works of Christ. Jesus promised, "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father" (John 14:12). He then explained how this would happen. When He arrived at the Father's throne, He said, "I will ask the Father and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth" (John 14:16-17). Jesus is saying that we can do the same works He did. We can be empowered by the same Holy Spirit who empowered Him to fulfill His ministry (Luke 4:18-19). Being full of the Spirit enables us to repeat Jesus' works in our ministries. These works of Jesus include powerful proclamation of the gospel, life transforming teaching, and miraculous signs and wonders. They demonstrate to the world that the message of the gospel is true and that the kingdom of God has come. For these and other compelling reasons, every disciple of Jesus must be filled with, and remain full of, the Holy Spirit.

This lesson is **important** because in it you have learned why it is essential for every follower of Christ to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and live daily in the Spirit's power. He enables you:

- To witness with boldness
- To live a holy life
- To pray more effectively
- To love Jesus and the lost more deeply
- To do the works of Christ

The **main truth** we learn from this lesson is that being baptized in the Holy Spirit will enable us to more effectively serve Christ and reach out to the lost with His gospel.

Let's now **review** some important truths we have learned from this lesson:

1. List five reasons every follower of Christ must be baptized in Holy Spirit?
A. [PAUSE] If you answered that every follower of Christ must be baptized in the Holy Spirit because He (1) gives power to witness, (2) enables us to live a holy life, (3) enables us to pray more effectively, (4) empowers us to love as Christ loves, and (5) empowers us to do the works of Christ, you answered correctly.
2. How does being full of the Holy Spirit affect our prayer lives?
A. [PAUSE] If you answered that the Holy Spirit will help us by praying through us “with groans that words cannot express,” and that He will intercede through us in accordance to God’s will, you are right.
3. How does being full of the Holy Spirit help us in our relationship with God and with others?
A. [PAUSE] If you answered that we can love God and people more when we are full of the Spirit because God “pours His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us,” you are correct.
4. Jesus promised that His followers would be able to do the same works that He did. How can this be possible?
A. [PAUSE] If you answered that, when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit, He empowers us the same way He empowered Christ to fulfill His ministry, you are right.

Your **assignment** for this lesson is to re-listen to it until you understand each of its teachings. You are then to teach it to others.