

Di223 We Believe

Lesson Di223-17 The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

In our last lesson we talked about power, an important thing in our world. Without it, not much can be done. For example, if the battery in your car or scooter runs down, it isn't going anywhere. It is useless until a new battery is put in or the old battery is recharged. Spiritual power is also very important.

When you became a follower of Christ, the Holy Spirit took up residence in your inner being. Just as Jesus promised, the Holy Spirit became your Counselor, your Teacher, your Guide, and your Comforter (John 14). As you learned in the last lesson, the Holy Spirit came upon leaders, prophets, and kings in the Old Testament. The Spirit enabled them with wisdom, knowledge, and the ability to do great works of faith. Many of them wrote books of the Bible as they were moved upon by the Holy Spirit.

Christians have the ability to live a life that is pleasing to God. But God wants more for us than to just live a good life. He wants us to become powerful soldiers in his army. That is what the baptism in the Holy Spirit is all about. Receiving the Baptism is kind of like getting a fresh new spiritual battery. Another example of power is electricity. Passing through light bulbs, electricity can turn darkness into light. Sent to a motor, electricity can operate tools, appliances, and machines.

The power that comes with the baptism in the Holy Spirit can perform different functions. The primary purpose of his power is described in Acts 1:8: "But 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." The power of the Spirit gives us boldness to tell others about our wonderful God and Savior. We have a mission: to tell others about Christ all over the world!

Peter is a good example of a person before and after the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Before Pentecost Peter boasted, "Even if all fall away, I will not." Jesus confronted Peter with the truth that he would disown Christ three times that very night. Peter answered, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." But just as Jesus had said, Peter later trembled outside Caiaphas' court and angrily denied knowing Jesus (Mark 14:29-31, 66-72).

However, as we look ahead to the Day of Pentecost, we see a much different person! Peter had been baptized in the Holy Spirit. He now had power to boldly witness about the Christ he loved and believed in. Now Peter stood up to the criticisms of the Jerusalem crowd and preached a powerful message. It was after this message that 3,000 people accepted Christ as Savior. This wasn't the same person who had been afraid to admit he knew Christ. The baptism in the Holy Spirit made the difference in his life. The New Testament Church was born on the Day of Pentecost. With the help of the Holy Spirit, Peter had a big part in getting it started.

What are the requirements to receive this gift? First of all, a person must be saved. Peter told the people on the Day of Pentecost to "repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). The second requirement for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is a sincere desire to receive the gift. On the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out, the people were seeking God. They were expecting God to fulfill his promise to them and they were praising and worshipping him. As we ask God in faith, he will fill us with the Holy Spirit.

There were several signs of the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. There was a sound like the blowing of a violent wind from heaven. There were tongues of fire that came to rest on each of the disciples in the Upper Room. All of the 120 disciples began to speak in other tongues. In fact, Jews from every nation under heaven were in Jerusalem and “each one heard them speaking in his own language” (Acts 2:1-6).

Jesus used wind to speak of the Spirit in John 3:8. John the Baptist prophesied that Jesus would baptize with “the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Matt 3:11). Speaking in other tongues, however, is the sign that continued throughout the rest of the New Testament. Tongues evidenced the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Believers spoke with their mouths, but the words did not come from their minds or thinking. The Spirit gave them the utterance which they expressed boldly, loudly, and with anointing and power. Speaking in tongues is the initial physical evidence that a person has received the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Peter and John went to Samaria and prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Spirit. They laid hands on them and the people received the Spirit (Acts 8:15, 17). Peter was preaching in the house of the Roman centurion, Cornelius, when the Holy Spirit fell on his whole household of friends and relatives. “They heard them speak with tongues, and praising God” (Acts 10:46). In Ephesus, Paul laid his hands on believers and the Holy Spirit came on them and “they spoke in tongues and prophesied” (Acts 19:6). Paul spent a year and a half teaching the Corinthians. We know from Paul’s letters that they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues, because Paul gave them guidelines for the gifts of the Spirit including tongues and interpretation (1Cor 12, 14). Paul instructed the Roman believers about praying in the Spirit (Romans 8:26). Speaking in tongues is not a one-time experience, but the beginning of a lifetime of praying in the Spirit and walking in the Spirit.

Our *Statement of Faith*: “We believe the baptism in the Holy Spirit, according to Acts 2:4, is given to empower a believer to witness and to live an overcoming Christian life.” The verse for this lesson is: “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 1:8).

This lesson is **important** because it helps you understand the change in a person when they, like Peter, are baptized in the Holy Spirit. This Baptism is available to any believer who seeks God for more power to testify and to see miracles in their ministry. It is a gift promised by Jesus.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is for all believers. The primary purpose of the Baptism is to be witnesses of Christ all over the world.

Let’s **review** this lesson—

1. What is the main purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit? [Pause.]
 - A. If you answered that the main purpose is to give us power to be witnesses of Christ throughout the world, you are right.
2. What are the two requirements in order to receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit? [Pause.]
 - A. If you answered, “The two requirements are being saved and having a sincere desire to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit,” you are correct.

3. What is the initial physical evidence of having received the baptism in the Holy Spirit? [Pause.]
A. If you answered, “Speaking in tongues as the Spirit enables,” you answered correctly.

Your **assignment** is to memorize the eighth *Statement of Faith*: “We believe the baptism in the Holy Spirit, according to Acts 2:4, is given to empower a believer to witness and to live an overcoming Christian life.” Also, commit to memory: “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 1:8). Tell someone the story of the Day of Pentecost, in your own words. If you have not yet been baptized in the Holy Spirit, pray today for God to give you this power in your life. If you have already received the Baptism, share your testimony with several others and pray for them to receive.

Review all eight *Statements of Faith* until you can say them from memory:

Statement #1: We believe the Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God. They are the revelation of God to man, the unchanging rule of faith and conduct.

Statement #2: We believe the one true God has revealed himself as the eternal Creator of heaven and earth and the Savior of mankind. He has further revealed himself as one being in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Statement #3: We believe the Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, as revealed in the Scriptures by his virgin birth, his sinless life, his miracles, his death on the Cross, his bodily resurrection from the dead, and his position at the right hand of God.

Statement #4: We believe that human beings were created in the image of God for a loving relationship with him. They chose to disobey God, however, and thus experienced physical death and separation from God.

Statement #5: We believe mankind’s only hope of salvation is through the shed blood of Jesus, the Son of God. The gift of eternal life is received when we repent of our sins and confess our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Statement #6: We believe water baptism by immersion is commanded of all who repent and believe on Christ as Savior. Water baptism is a witness to the world that we have died to sin and been raised to new life in Christ.

Statement #7: We believe the Lord’s Supper is a remembrance of Christ’s suffering and death, and a prophecy of his Second Coming. Christ commanded all believers to take Communion until he comes.

Statement #8: We believe the baptism in the Holy Spirit, according to Acts 2:4, is given to empower a believer to witness and to live an overcoming Christian life.