

Th123 A Study of the Holy Spirit

Th123-19 You Can Receive the Holy Spirit Today

Maybe you are now asking, “What is the value of understanding the meaning and importance of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, if I do not personally experience it? This lesson is one of the most important in our study, because we will consider three important matters related to your receiving the Holy Spirit.

First, we will talk about what one must understand before he or she approaches Christ to ask Him for the Spirit. Then, we will discuss how one may actually receive the Holy Spirit by faith. And finally, we will address the related issue of speaking in tongues.

It is important to understand three spiritual truths before one asks God to fill them with the Holy Spirit. First, the seeker must know before he or she can be filled with the Spirit, that they are truly born again. Jesus said, “No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again” (John 3:3). Then later, speaking about those who do not know God, Jesus said, “The world cannot receive [the Holy Spirit], because it neither sees him nor knows him” (John 14:17). Consequently, to be filled with the Spirit, one must first receive Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior. You can do this by repenting of your sins and fully trusting in Christ for salvation. You will then be a candidate for the Spirit’s empowering.

Secondly, in preparation for receiving the Holy Spirit, one must hunger for the things of God. Jesus promised, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled” (Matt 5:6). On another occasion, He cried out, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him” (John 7:37-38). Jesus was speaking about receiving the Spirit. He was saying that He will gladly give His Spirit to those who are thirsty for more of God.

Third, to receive the Spirit, one must be prepared to obey God and become His witness. Peter declared that God gives the Holy Spirit “to those who obey Him” (Acts 5:32). He was talking specifically about obeying Christ’s command to be His witnesses. In other words, if one is prepared to witness for Christ, God is prepared to give him or her His Holy Spirit.

Let’s now talk about how we may receive the promise of the Spirit as our own. Jesus has given us clear instructions. He said,

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him! (Luke 11:9-13).

To the question, “How can one receive the gift of the Holy Spirit?” Jesus answers, you receive by simply asking in faith. God will freely give the Holy Spirit to those who sincerely

believe and ask. Therefore, any follower of Jesus can receive the Holy Spirit by taking three simple “steps of faith.”

First, Jesus taught that we must *ask in faith*. We must simply and sincerely present our request to God, believing that He will hear and answer our prayer. Remember, God is more eager to give you the gift of the Spirit than you are to receive it. With this in mind, sincerely and confidently pray this prayer: “Lord, I believe your promise. I believe that if I ask for the Spirit, you will give me the Spirit. So, right now, in Jesus’ name, I ask you, Give me the Holy Spirit, and empower me as your witness.” As you pray, believe that God is hearing and answering your prayer. Believe that, at this very moment, He is filling you with His Spirit. Be aware of what God is doing for you and in you. You will begin to sense the Spirit’s presence as He comes upon you, just as Jesus promised.

Second, we must *receive by faith*. Receiving the Spirit is a bold, present-tense step of faith. It occurs the moment the promise is fully believed and boldly acted upon. Remember Jesus’ words: “Whatever you ask in prayer, *believe that you have received it*, and it will be yours” (Mark 11:24). This act of faith can be compared to Peter’s step of faith when, at the command of Jesus, he stepped from the boat and began to walk on water. His bold step of faith resulted in a miracle! Once you have sensed the Spirit’s presence within, pray and truly believe this simple prayer: “I am now full of the Holy Spirit.” Consciously sense His presence inside.

Finally, we must *speak in faith*. Like the 120 disciples did on the Day of Pentecost, we must speak as the Spirit enables. Allow the Holy Spirit to gush forth from deep inside, from your “innermost being.” As He does, cooperate with what the Spirit is doing. Yield to Him your vocal organs and lips. You will begin to speak words in a language you have never learned. When this happens, do not be afraid. God is empowering you to be His Spirit-anointed witness.

Now, yield yourself more and more to the Spirit. Let the words flow. Continue to speak, believing God with all of your heart, holding nothing back, fully trusting Him to do His part. Praise the Lord! You have been baptized in the Holy Spirit, and you have been empowered as Christ’s Spirit-inspired spokesperson.

It may be helpful to say a bit more about speaking in tongues, since this is often a new and seemingly strange phenomenon to those who have never before experienced it. It is important to understand that, when you speak in tongues, the words you speak will not come from your mind, as in natural speech. They will come from deep inside, from your spirit. Jesus said, “Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water’” (John 7:38, NKJV) The Bible says that one “who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God; for no one understands him, however in [or “with”] the spirit he speaks mysteries” (1Cor 14:2, NKJV). Paul testified, “For if I pray in a language I don’t understand, my spirit is praying, but I don’t know what I am saying” (1Cor 14:14, TLB).

Your speaking will not be forced. It will be a natural flow of supernatural words. You should simply allow it to happen, and cooperate fully with the Spirit by boldly speaking out in faith. As you do, you will begin to speak words you do not understand, words that are coming

from your spirit, inspired by the Spirit of God. When this happens, do not be afraid. Just let the words flow! God is filling you with His blessed Holy Spirit.

This lesson is **important** because in it we have learned how we can be baptized in the Holy Spirit and empowered as Christ's witness.

The **main truth** we learn from this lesson is that we receive the Holy Spirit by *asking* in faith, *receiving* by faith, and *speaking* in faith.

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

1. Name three things one must do to prepare himself or herself to be filled with the Spirit.
A. [PAUSE] If you answered that to be filled with the Spirit one must be born again, must hunger and thirst after God, and must be prepared to witness for Christ, you are correct.
2. Name the three "steps of faith" one may take to be baptized in the Holy Spirit.
A. [PAUSE] If you said that to be filled with the Spirit one must ask in faith, receive by faith, and speak in faith, you answered correctly.
3. When a person is speaking in tongues, from where are the words coming?
A. [PAUSE] If you answered that, when one speaks in tongues, the words are coming from deep inside, out of the person's spirit, as the Holy Spirit enables them, you are right.

Your **assignment** for this lesson is to apply its truths to your own life. Memorize Jesus' words, "For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened" (Luke 11:10).

Then follow the lesson's instructions and pray until you have been baptized in the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues as the Spirit enables you. Then, teach these truths to a group of Christian friends and pray with them to be filled with the Holy Spirit.